

**RAYS OF SUNLIGHT  
FOR DARK DAYS**

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Rays of Sunlight for Dark Days by Charles John Vaughan

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**CHARLES JOHN VAUGHAN**

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RAYs OF SUNLIGHT FOR DARK DAYS.

# RAYS OF SUNLIGHT

FOR

## DARK DAYS.

Take wing, my soul, and mount up higher,  
Since earth fulfils not thy desire.

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WITH A PREFACE BY

CHARLES JOHN VAUGHAN, D.D.

VICAR OF DONCASTER, AND CHAPLAIN IN ORDINARY TO THE QUEEN.

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## PREFACE.

Books of Comfort for Mourners are very numerous. And so common is sorrow in the world, and so various the mould in which human hearts are cast, that there is a demand, less or greater, for every one of them.

There may be those to whom this little Volume will come home with more truth and power than some of those which have preceded it in the same endeavour.

The effort to console must guard against many things, if it would be effectual.

Sorrow is a great test of truth. Nothing which has the slightest tinge of unreality, whether in the form of exaggeration or of

affectation, has a chance of acceptance with persons in deep trouble. There must be, as a first condition, the recognition of the existence in the sufferer's case of that which is hard to bear; and there must be, as a second condition, the presentation of that which is perfectly supporting, because absolutely true, to meet it, if a man would minister with any effect to one on whom pain or loss, anxiety or desolation, has laid a heavy hand. Too often there is an attempt to ignore the sorrow; to treat it as if it were made too much of; almost to reprove it, as if it were fanciful or voluntary. It is difficult for health and sickness, ease and distress, a whole heart and a wounded heart, to meet and sympathize: grief is suspicious of gladness, and is slow to be persuaded that he who comes to the house of mourning



from the dwelling of cheerfulness can bring with him a just appreciation of the calamity which he seeks to soothe. To be able to *weep with them that weep* is a necessary requisite in one who would be, in the Divine sense, *a son of consolation*.

It is the first object of sorrow, if we recognize in it any object at all, that it be felt. If there is a remedial purpose in it, or if there is even a chastising and a humbling purpose in it, this can only be answered by the entrance of the pain itself into the very soul's soul. This is what an inexperienced comforter will not let it do. He acts, with his spiritual comfort, just as he thinks it wrong and shocking for another to act with his worldly comfort. He counts it a great sin to drown sorrow by letting in the din of the world upon it: but

does he not himself seek to overbear sorrow in an opposite manner, by haste and precipitation in administering the remedies of the Gospel? Truths which will be valuable and efficacious a month hence, may themselves be inoperative and inaudible to-day. And the wise physician, like Him whose hand is working with him from above, will abide and watch his time. He will be satisfied, in the first instance, that the soul should lay itself low and let the wave pass over it. Its foot must touch the bottom of the deep waters, before it can safely rise again to their surface. All that we can desire to hear from the rent heart, in the first hours of anguish, is the simple confession, *It is the Lord.*

And here sometimes is the defect of books which would comfort the mourner. They

precipitate consolation. They do not convey the impression of the writer's having first suffered. If he had, he would know more of the first crush and of the first bewilderment of sorrow. He would not only make allowance for the difficulty of accepting solace, but he would scarcely desire that solace to be too instantly accepted. The certainty that God is at work; the "whatsoever your sickness is, know you certainly that it is God's visitation;" would be almost enough for his first lesson. He would know that in that one point there is not only a groundwork of infallible truth, but also an element of unassailable consolation. If I am in God's hands, then, whatever the process, whatever the end, all must be well. But if I am expected, when all life is a blank, to see it instantly repeopled with