

'COMFORTED OF GOD', THOUGHTS FOR MOURNERS

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'Comforted of God', thoughts for mourners by L. C. S.

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"COMFORTED OF GOD"

Thoughts for Mourners

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THOUGHTS FOR MOURNERS

BY

L. C. S.

With a Preface

BY

THE VERY REV. EDWARD MEYRICK GOULBURN, D.D.
DEAN OF NORWICH

"BE STRONG, AND HE SHALL COMFORT THEE."
Psalms xxvii. 16

"'Tis sweet, as year by year we lose
Friends out of sight, in Faith to muse
How grows in Paradise our store



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Dedication

TO

THE SWEET MEMORY OF THOSE DEAR TO ME

WHO ARE GONE TO THEIR REST

This little book

IS AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED

L. C. S.

PREFACE

THE writer of this little Manual has, I think, touched with great adroitness, in the different sections of it, the various chords of feeling which are awakened by a trying bereavement. The two main points on which our thoughts turn under such circumstances are, the present condition of the deceased (on the hypothesis that he has departed this life in God's faith and fear), and our relations to him, once so intimate and near, now apparently so ruptured and remote.

The first of these points is touched upon in chap. viii. No doubt, as is there intimated, we are left in great darkness on the subject of the state of the blessed dead, and *for wise and good reasons*. Perhaps, however, hardly enough is made of the consolatory intimations given by the word "Paradise," as denoting their abode. The earthly paradise was a fair garden, adorned with foliage of every hue, overhung by a rich profusion of

fruits, and watered by a noble river noiselessly gliding through it (Gen. ii. 8-10); and this is the imagery under which we are led to think of the heavenly paradise, with its "green pastures" and "waters of comfort," by whose margin the good Shepherd leads the sheep, weary and wayworn with the pilgrimage of life, and "maketh" them "to lie down." (Psalm xxiii. 2-4.) How totally different from the city imagery (Rev. xxi. 10, &c., 24-26), which represents the condition of the righteous *after the Resurrection*, when, the body having been re-united to the soul, the activities of a new and glorified existence will commence! Doubtless the experiences of Paradise cannot be directly conveyed to us, as one said after having been caught away thither (2 Cor. xii. 4); but we may learn something of them "in a glass, darkly," through the medium of the inspired imagery.

The second point is touched upon in chap. ix. Those who die in God's faith and fear are "with Christ" after their departure (Phil. i. 23 and Luke xxiii. 43), and have a much more intimate intercourse with Him than can be here enjoyed. We too are with Him, or rather perhaps He with us, in the exercises of private and public devotion, and specially (as pointed out in chap. x.) in the Sacrament of the Eucharist. By approaching

to *Him* then in these exercises we really (although spiritually) draw nigh to *them*, and obtain that nearness to them after which the sorrowing heart yearns; for it is impossible that two radii of a circle should approximate to the centre without at the same time approximating to one another.

May God teach some mourners, by means of this Manual, how to fulfil the precept which He gives by His holy apostle—"that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which are laid asleep through Jesus" (such is the true force of the original words, "who fell asleep, and now are asleep," to use a large paraphrase, "under the shadow and shelter of His mediation") "will God bring with Him." (1 Thess. iv. 13, 14.)

E. M. G.

DEANERY, NORWICH,

July 1st, 1880.

