

**WELLS OF BACA: OR,
SOLACES OF THE CHRISTIAN
MOURNER, AND OTHER
THOUGHTS ON BEREAVEMENT**

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Wells of Baca: Or, Solaces of the Christian Mourner, and Other Thoughts on Bereavement by
John Ross Macduff

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JOHN ROSS MACDUFF

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Wells of Baca ;

OR,

SOLACES OF THE CHRISTIAN MOURNER,

AND

OTHER THOUGHTS ON BEREAVEMENT.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"THE FAITHFUL PROMISER," "NIGHT WATCHES,"

NO. 22.

"Who passing through the valley of BACA (weeping), make it
a WELL." — Psalm lxxxiv. 6.

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TO
THE BEREAVED CHRISTIAN,
MOURNING THE LOSS
OF THOSE WHO HAVE FALLEN
"ASLEEP IN JESUS,"

THIS
Tribute of Sympathy

IS INSCRIBED.

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PREFACE
TO THE AMERICAN EDITION.

“EVERY heart knoweth its own bitterness,” and “a stranger is not permitted to intermeddle,”—yet we are commanded to “bear one another’s burdens;” and hence the law and duty of human sympathy. While it is true that there is a grief which no human power can relieve, and scarcely mitigate, it is no less true that the subjects of such grief are better fitted to endure their sorrow when assured of the tender sympathy of friends, than when left to pine away in lonely grief. Experience in the furnace of affliction is the best preparative to enable us to afford grateful succor to bereaved friends.

It is not well to shrink from society and refuse to be comforted. God chastens in love, and we do not wisely to close our eyes to the proofs of his goodness, or our ears to the consolatory suggestions of Christian friendship. By excluding friends,

we often debar ourselves from much valuable consolation—while by bidding them welcome we oftentimes “entertain angels unawares.”

We do well to weep in affliction, but not to abide in the “wells of weeping.” We should go upon the Mount of Vision daily, that we may see the field of duty spread out before us, and may learn how to honor God and bless our race, even when smarting under the rod. Afflictions certainly fail to accomplish what God intends when they lead us to wrap ourselves up in selfish sorrow, and neglect to perform what Providence indicates as our duty, in the constant and energetic discharge of our regular calling.

Affliction does us good when it burns off the dross, and burnishes the gold for present use and beauty. “Our sorrow becomes excessive when it withdraws the heart from God; when it drives us from the path of ordinary duty; when it destroys our enjoyment of the comforts which remain; when it impairs our sympathy with the griefs or joys of others; when it checks us in prayer, or in the exercises of faith, and love, and gratitude to our God and Saviour. Such feelings of grief are evidently immoderate, and ‘such sorrow worketh death.’”

The “WELLS OF BACA” is happily adapted to minister consolation to bruised and bleeding

hearts. It frankly admits the extent and depth of their sorrow, and tolerates a comparison between their past and present condition; it unfolds the nature of affliction, its source, and intent, and legitimate effect; while the furnace is exposed to view, the true solace is plainly pointed out, and the believer's crown is made to shine in Gospel purity and brilliancy.

This little volume has already afforded comfort to many sorrowing hearts, and has shown where alone the aching heads of God's afflicted children may find rest and ease. It is republished at the request of one who derived comfort from its perusal, and desired that it might be reprinted, that she might give a copy to her afflicted friends. May she—though now dead—be enabled by this little volume to address words of consolation to many stricken hearts.

ROXBURY, December, 1853.