

**OUR GLORIFIED. POEMS AND
PASSAGES OF CONSOLATION
ESPECIALLY FOR THOSE
BEREAVED BY THE LOSS OF
CHILDREN**

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Our Glorified. Poems and Passages of Consolation Especially for Those Bereaved by the Loss of Children by Elizabeth Howard Foxcroft

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ELIZABETH HOWARD FOXCROFT

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OUR GLORIFIED

Poems and Passages of Consolation

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EDITED BY

ELIZABETH HOWARD FOXCROFT

Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.—*Matth. v. 4.*

BOSTON 1890
LEE AND SHEPARD PUBLISHERS
10 MILK STREET NEXT "THE OLD SOUTH MEETING HOUSE"
NEW YORK CHAS. T. DILLINGHAM
718 AND 720 BROADWAY

INTRODUCTION

It may be that this little collection will have an added value to those whom it may reach, if they understand the motive which prompted it, and the circumstances under which it was prepared. It was begun by Mrs. Foxcroft while she was under the shadow of a great bereavement, the loss of her cherished daughter, Beth, by a most distressing death, in October, 1885. It was finished and in readiness for publication, a few days before God's messenger came, without warning, to take her from her busy life, and her labors for the Master's little ones, to be again with the child for whom she had longed with intense desire. These poems and words of consolation, therefore, have a special sacredness to those who know the comfort which they brought to the heart of the compiler, and which, she hoped, might be conveyed to others who were suffering under a like bereavement. In addition to the feeling and sympathy imparted by those who wrote them, they are charged with the over-

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flowing tenderness of the sorrowing mother who found in them some alleviation for her grief. It seems not too much to hope that they may prove to be messages of consolation to many stricken parents.

Mrs. Foxcroft had an outreaching love for children which would have enabled her, in some measure, even had her own home not been bereft, to know what it is to have the light of childhood go out from a home. Her life was, in an unusual degree, devoted to the service of children. Born in Columbus, Ohio, April 21, 1850, she was but fifteen years old when she began with joy, the work of teaching the children of the poor, in a mission school in her native city. From that time until the hour of her death, which found her preparing for her class, she was never long withdrawn from her chosen work. Removing in November, 1871, to Cambridge, Mass., where she was married in September, 1872, she entered almost immediately as a teacher, the Sunday school of the North Avenue Congregational church. In February, 1878, she assumed charge of the Primary Department of the school, which she retained until her death. The department, when she took it, was small, but it grew, under her tireless labor, until it numbered one hundred and sixty children. A book in which she kept the names of all those who passed through her department, bore the inscription, in her writing, "The

children whom Thou hast given me." This expresses the spirit of her work. She knew every child by face and name, had for every one a pleasant smile and word, and allowed no birthday to pass without sending some memento, a card, or a loving letter or both.

Out of this labor for children grew a work still more peculiarly her own, the establishment of the Monday class in 1883. This is composed of boys and girls between the ages of ten and seventeen, who gather at certain seasons on Monday afternoons, at the close of the school session, for religious instruction and guidance. The class was begun because Mrs. Foxcroft felt that as children left her department, they passed from her influence, and she could do little for them unless she could get them together to talk with them. She gave the invitation to the first meeting with hesitation. Thirty boys and girls responded to it, and she began the work of systematic instruction in Bible history and biography, and in moral and religious truth. Her earnestness, her tact, her varied resources, and most of all her loving manner, drew a constantly increasing number of young people about her. No denominational lines were recognized or thought of. Boys and girls from any church or from no church were welcomed. All that was asked was kind and reverent attention, and this was given to an extent which brought the keenest gratification to her heart:

From year to year the numbers grew, until the enrolment of actual present membership reached three hundred and fifty. Lessons in Bible chronology and geography, the names of the books of the Bible, in order and by groups, the chief persons and events in each epoch of Bible history, the journeys of Paul, the map of Palestine, the manners and customs of the people in Bible lands and times, with talks upon Bible heroes, the boys and girls of the Bible, the parables, principles of conduct, and, above all and underlying all, the faith that is in Christ Jesus, — these were her themes. Prayer, singing, and the repeating of passages of Scripture, filled out the hour. There was no attempt at mere entertainment, and it was a cause of unceasing surprise and gratification to Mrs. Foxcroft that so many boys and girls were not only willing, but eager, to attend the class. Three years ago, she succeeded in securing money to establish a Lending Library in connection with the class. This contains over three hundred volumes of the best week-day books, — fiction, biography, history, travels, and adventures, with a few simple volumes of science. In eleven weeks, in the spring of 1888, the distribution reached over 2200 volumes, and only two were lost or unaccounted for.

From all this busy work for His own little ones, God took her, at noon, on Sunday, Oct. 14, 1888. She was to have assisted that evening in the gradu-

ation of thirty children from her room to the Intermediate Department of the Sunday school. Her last work that morning was the getting ready the certificates of graduation. The next afternoon she was to have begun a new series of lessons with the Monday class. But it was not to be. On Monday afternoon, more than two hundred and eighty boys and girls gathered at their accustomed place of meeting, but it was to listen with tearful eyes to words of affectionate tribute to the teacher whom they had hoped to meet. The next afternoon, the church was completely filled at the hour appointed for her funeral, and at the close of the service the five hundred children, who, in the Primary Department or in the Monday Class, had been under her direct care and instruction, went forward to view her face for the last time, and to drop a flower in memory of her. So closed a life, which, though it measured but little more than half of the allotted threescore years and ten, was crowded, fruitful, and in a sense, complete. What she was in her own home, how incessant her watchfulness, how eager and unselfish her love, how tender and devoted her care for her own children, — this cannot be told. It is Christlike to love children and labor for them as she did. In the streets of the Heavenly City, which, as she used to like to say, are "full of boys and girls," He who took little children in His arms to bless them must surely have something for her

to do. We cannot understand this providence of God; but we know whom we have believed, and are persuaded that He is able to keep that which we have committed unto Him against that day.

FRANK FOXCROFT.

CAMBRIDGE, Oct. 25, 1888.