

“Flowers and Butterflies”

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All things in this earth that God has made belong to you, the flowers, trees, bees, butterflies, birds, fishes and animals. He has given them all to the children of men.

Do you not feel a special interest in that which is your own? Do you not want to learn all you can about it, and to understand it?

When you know that every living thing in the earth was given to the human family by the One who made it, you will look at all things with the same loving interest that Adam had when God brought all the animals before him, and he gave to each its name.

The names that he gave showed that he understood the nature and habits of the animals, for each name told the truth about the creature to which it was given.

There are many things that people now learn that will not be of any use to them in the Kingdom of God, the new earth. But the knowledge of God's works is something that we shall never have to leave behind us. These will be our study and our delight in the world to come, and so they may and should be here and now.

The names that men now give to God's works are not like the names that Adam gave, something that will tell at once their nature and characteristics. They are often long and hard, and must be translated before we can understand them at all. And very often they are the names of the men who first noticed or made a special study of them, and serve rather to keep them in remembrance than to reveal the truth of God's works.

But if we learn all we can about the things themselves, so that we know them and recognise them wherever we see them, we need not be troubled about remembering their hard, scientific names, for these will be left behind, and each creature will have its own new name again. This will be the restoration of the name first given to it by Adam, for “whatsoever the man called every living creature, that was the name thereof.”

This beautiful spring season, when everything is awaking to new life,—is a good time to notice and consider the wonderful works of God.

We have been speaking lately about the flowers and plants, and how they are all

“Voices from the silent sod,
Speaking of the perfect God.”

Watch the flowers, and “consider the lilies, how they grow,” how they put forth the beautiful blossoms containing the seed by which they are multiplied and continue to grow.

This will lead you to study also the insects that you see among the flowers, without whose help their seed could not ripen and bring forth new plants. For the insects help the flowers by carrying the pollen or flower dust from one plant to another. In helping

the flowers they are helping themselves too, for they live on the sweet honey hidden in the blossoms.

One of the first that you will notice is the beautiful butterfly, as lovely and delicate as the blossoms themselves, and like them "speaking of the perfect God." There is the same life,—the life of God,—in plant and butterfly, and in many things it reveals itself in the same way. We will notice a few things in which flowers and butterflies are alike.

The first that you will think of is their beauty. More beautiful than "Solomon in all his glory" the butterflies are arrayed like the lilies of the field; not in a garment put on from the outside, but in that which is the outward form and expression of the life of God within.

God meant all His children to be clothed in this way; not as we now clothe ourselves, with a garment that hides, put on from the outside, but with a garment that reveals the beauty of the inner life, the beauty of His own character shining forth from within.

"Let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us." This is how it will be with all who find a home in the new earth of which we have been speaking. God's glory will shine forth from them and clothe them with brightness and beauty. So if you want to live there, and be clothed with His beauty, you must now let Him change you by His Holy Spirit into the beauty of His own character.

There is another way in which the butterfly is like a flower. You would little think that from a hard brown seed or a rough bulb could come the lovely blossom of the lily or hyacinth, the delicate beauty of the sweet pea, or the lovely odour of the violet or mignonette.

Neither would you think, to look at a chrysalis or cocoon, of the beautiful winged butterfly hidden there, waiting for the time of its unfolding.

Both flower and butterfly teach us a lesson of hope—the hope of the resurrection of the dead through the life of Jesus Christ. But notice that all the hope of the future glory is in the seed, and in the chrysalis. For all the beauty of both blossom and butterfly is only the unfolding of what was hidden in seed and chrysalis.

So God's Word tells us that "Christ in you" is "the hope of glory." Christ must be in the hearts of all who will rise to show that glory and beauty in His kingdom. And will be but the unfolding of Christ in them, now received into the heart by faith.

Let the flowers and the butterflies often remind you of these things, and pray that Christ may be formed within you so that you may now show to those around you His love and grace, and when He comes may be clothed with His glory and beauty to show it forth in His kingdom for ever.

"Jesus, Thy blood and righteousness
My beauty are, my glorious dress;
'Mid flaming worlds in these arrayed
With joy shall I lift up my head."

