“Transformed Snowflakes”

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Have you ever heard the legend of the snowdrop? The story is that an angel who was sent to comfort Eve when she was greatly distressed by the first fall of snow, took some of the beautiful snow-crystals in his hand, and at his touch they were transformed into sweet blossoms. These pure white snowdrops he gave to Eve as a pledge that sun and summer should return and cover the earth again with the fair flowers for which she mourned.

Of course this is only a legend, but we might call it a parable, for there is in it a lesson of truth for us. The little snowdrop, as well as many other things that we see in nature, is indeed a transformed snow-flake, for “the rain cometh down and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth and maketh it bring forth and bud.”

The white “lilies of the sky” do not long keep the beautiful shapes into which they are crystallised by the frost. They melt and sink into the earth, or swell the streams that flow through the land to water it.

And as they make the earth “bring forth and bud,” the melted snowflakes again take beautiful form in the flowers of earth. For the plants suck them up by their roots, and change them in the flowers, grain, and fruit, to “give seed to the sower and bread to the eater.”

The “sky lilies” are God’s little messengers. They come to us in the cold, bleak weather, when the earth is bare, as a pledge of the lilies of the field that through their instrumentality He will make it to bloom again in the glad spring-time.

Here are some lines in which some one tells how the earth comforted a little snowflake that hesitated to fall from the sky, thinking that would be the end of it:—

“O no,” said the Earth, “thou shall not lie
Neglected and lone, on my lap to die,
Thou pure and delicate child of the sky;
For thou wilt be safe in my keeping;
But, then, I must give thee a lovelier form,
Thou’ll not be a part of the wintry storm.
But revive when the sunbeams are yellowed and warm,
And the flowers from my bosom are keeping.

“And then thou shalt have the choice to be

Restored in the lilies that decks the lea,
In the jasmine bloom, the anemone,
Or aught of thy spotless whiteness;
To melt and be cast in a glittering bead,
With pearls that the night scatters over the mead,
In the cup where the bee and the firefly feed,
Regaining thy dazzling brightness."

But this particular little flake did not choose any of these things. It did not want to be born again in the dew or the flowers, but to return to its native home in the skies, that it might form a part of the beautiful rainbow that God paints on the clouds, to remind us of His promise.

This is another of the snowflake's transformations. Many of them, when they have become soiled by the mire of earth, are melted and carried out by the air into the blue heavens again, where, purified, they float in billowy clouds over our heads.

"I stood beside my window one stormy winter day,
And watched the light, white snow-flakes flutter past;
And I saw, though each one wandered its silent separate way,
They all sank down upon the ground at last.
'So we must lie down too,' I said, 'When life is past'

"From out the self-same window, when soft spring days were come,
I watched the fair white clouds that sailed the blue.
Could those bright pearly wonders, far up in heaven's high dome,
Be the old wintry snow-banks that I knew?
'So we shall one day rise again,' I whispered, 'too.'

And these are not all of the snowflake's transformations. The bird may drink them up and change them into a sweet song. The bee and the butterfly sip the honey from the flowers which the snow has caused to grow, and change it into life and energy for their swift flight. The grains and fruit into which the snowflakes have been transformed, are changed into the rosy cheeks and sparkling eyes of little children, and strike the body and mind in men and women.

God tells us of how He sends the rain and snow to water the earth and make it bring forth and bud, to teach us of the working of His word in our own hearts. He says, "So shall My word be that goeth forth out of My mouth."

As the snow changes the earth and makes it beautiful, and fruitful so the Word of God will change the heart that receives it, and make it blossom and bud, and bring forth the flowers of His grace, and the fruits of His Spirit.