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THE FLOWER AND THE STONE.

BY ESTHER THORNE.

"Who hath the virtue to express the rare
 And curious virtues, both of herbs and stones?"
 —GEORGE HERBERT.

God's sunlight and his dews alike do fall
 Upon the stone, upon the flower;
 The stone remains a stone for all;
 The tender sunshine, genial dew;
 The flower, in beauty and fragrance ever new,
 Groweth apace, by sun and shower.
 Not a dull stone, unmoved by grief or joy,
 Unchanged by all Thy gracious showers and
 dews,

But sanctified to sweet and blessed use,
 Glad in Thy service all my life to employ,

Lord, let me be Thy flower!
 One of the least of all Thy growing things,
 Here by the wayside creeping lowly,
 Springing from some chance-scattered seed
 Am I a flower, or but a weed?
 I know not; yet the life within me sings,
 And yearns for work divine and holy.
 Since Thou hast let me spring and grow
 Here in Thy Garden for an hour,
 Surely my life is not in vain;
 And ere I yield it back again
 Perhaps the reason I shall know
 Why I was a wayside flower.

Some birds may drink the drops of dew
 My tiny chalice holds, and rise anew,
 Singing and soaring, to the sky;
 Some bee may gather honey here,
 Adding to treasures sweet and clear;
 Sheltered by me, as in a nest,
 After the Summer day, may rest,
 Some wearied butterfly.

Only a stone am I,
 Barren and cold and dry;

The gracious moisture of the showers and dew,
 Bathing my surface, leaves me hard and dead,
 The blessed sunshine warms me but an hour;
 Such partial warmth has with its brightness fled,
 Leaving me cold and heavy as before.

Love every morning new,
 Upon my dull inertia has no power;
 Hard by the roadside do I lie,
 Oft trampled under foot by passer-by,
 A stone and nothing more.

But though I lie thus low,
 If in long years such grace may come to me,
 Crushed into powder let it be,
 By foot of man or beast along the way,
 If from my dust, in any future day,
 One of Thy flowers may grow!
 Yet even a stone may be

Adorned and treasured, and most fair to see,
 When Thou dost write thy name upon it; meet
 For the King's use, a signet for His hand.
 O Mystery, which none can understand,
 How things so poor can be
 Made precious as fair gems within thy sight,
 Not by inherent light,
 Or any power or beauty of their own,
 But the King's Name alone!
 No flower, however sweet,
 Within Thy garden growing, is more dear,
 No rose or lily, in its brightness clear,
 Is any whiter, or more free from shame,
 Than the poor stone which bears the Monarch's
 Name.

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LIKE CHRIST: HE HIMSELF CALLS US TO IT.

'I have given you an example, that ye also should do
 even as I have done to you.'—JOHN xiii. 15.

It is Jesus Christ, the beloved Redeemer of our
 souls, who speaks thus. He had just, humbling
 Himself to do the work of the slave, washed His
 disciples' feet. In doing so His love has rendered
 to the body the service of which it stood in
 need at the supper table. At the same time He
 had set forth, in a striking symbol, what He had
 done for their souls in cleansing them from sin.
 In this twofold work of love He has thus set be-
 fore them, just before parting, in one significant
 act, the whole work of His life as a ministry of
 blessing to body and to soul. And as He sits
 down He says: 'I have given you an example; that
 ye also should do, EVEN AS I have done to you.'
 All that they had seen in Him, and experienced
 from Him, is thus made the rule of their life:
 'EVEN AS I have done, DO YE ALSO.'

The word of the blessed Saviour is for us too.
 To each one who knows that the Lord has wash-
 ed away his sin, too, the command comes with
 all the touching force of one of the last words of
 Him who is going out to die for us; 'EVEN AS I
 have done to you, SO DO YE ALSO.' Jesus Christ
 does indeed ask every one of us in everything to
 act just as we have seen Him do. What He has
 done to ourselves, and still does each day, we are
 to do over again to others. In his condescending,
 pardoning, saving love, He is our example; each
 of us is to be the copy and image of the Master.

The thought comes at once: Alas! how little
 have I lived thus; how little have I ever known
 that I was expected thus to live! And yet, He
 is my Lord; He loves me, and I love Him; I dare
 not entertain the thought of living otherwise than
 He would have me. What can I do but open my
 heart to His word, and fix my gaze on His ex-

ample, until it exercises its divine power upon
 me, and draws me with irresistible force to cry:
 Lord, even as Thou hast done, so will I do also.

The power of an example depends chiefly on
 two things. The one is the attractiveness of what
 it gives us to see, and the other the personal re-
 lation and influence of him in whom it is seen.
 In both aspects, what power there is in our Lord's
 example!

Or, is there really anything very attractive in
 our Lord's example? I ask it in all earnest, be-
 cause, to judge by the conduct of many of His
 disciples, it would really seem as if it were not so.
 O that the Spirit of God would open our eyes to
 see the heavenly beauty of the likeness of the
 only-begotten Son!

We know whom the Lord Jesus is. He is the
 Son of the all-glorious God, one with the Father
 in nature and glory and perfection. When He
 was on earth it could be said of Him, 'We show
 you that eternal life which was with the Father,
 and was manifested unto us.' In Him we see
 God. In Him we see how God would act were
 He here in our place on earth. In Him all that
 is beautiful and lovely and perfect in the heavenly
 world is revealed to us in the form of an earthly
 life. If we want to see what is really counted
 noble and glorious in the heavenly world, if we
 would see what is really Divine, we have only to
 look at Jesus; in all He does the glory of God is
 shown forth.

But oh, the blindness of God's children; this
 heavenly beauty has to many of them no attrac-
 tion; there is no form or comeliness that they
 should desire it.

The manners and the way of living in the court
 of an earthly king exercise influence throughout
 the empire. The example it gives is imitated by all
 who belong to the nobility or the higher classes.
 But the example of the King of heaven, who came
 and dwelt in the flesh, that we might see how we
 might here on earth live a God-like life, alas!
 with how few of his followers does it really find
 imitation. When we look upon Jesus, His obedi-
 ence to the will of the Father, His humiliation to
 be the servant of the most unworthy, His love as
 manifested in the entire giving up and sacrificing
 of Himself, we see the most wondrous and glori-
 ous thing heaven has to show; in heaven itself
 we shall see nothing greater or brighter. Surely
 such an example, given of God on very purpose
 to make the imitation attractive and possible,
 ought to win us. Is it not enough to stir all that
 is within us with a holy jealousy and with joy un-
 utterable as we hear the message, 'I have given
 you an example, that even as I have done, ye
 should also do'?

This is not all. The power of an example con-
 sists not only in its own intrinsic excellence, but
 also in the personal relation to him who gives it.
 Jesus had not washed the feet of others in pres-
 ence of His disciples; it was when He had washed
 their feet that He said: 'Even as I have done to
 you, ye should also do.' It is the consciousness
 of a personal relationship to Christ that enforces
 the command: Do as I have done. It is the ex-
 perience of what Jesus has done to me that is the
 strength in which I can go and do the same to
 others. He does not ask that I shall do more than
 has been done to me. But not less either. Even
 as I have done to you. He does not ask that I
 shall humble myself as a servant deeper than He