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## Poetry.

### Empty Hands.

At dawn the call was heard,  
And busy reapers stirred  
Along the highway leading to the wheat,  
"Wilt reap with us?" they said.  
I smiled and shook my head.  
"Disturb me not," said I; "my dreams are sweet."

I sat with folded hands,  
And saw across the lands  
The waiting harvest shining on the hill;  
I heard the reapers sing  
Their songs of harvesting,  
And thought to go, but dreamed and waited still.

The day at last was done,  
And homeward, one by one,  
The reapers went, well laden as they passed;  
Theirs was no misspent day,  
No long hours dreamed away  
In sloth, that turns to sting the soul at last.

A reaper lingered near.  
"What!" cried he; "idle here?  
Where are the sheaves your hands have bound to-day?"  
"Alas!" I made reply,  
"I let the day pass by,  
Until too late to work. I dreamed the hours away."

"O foolish one!" he said,  
And sadly shook his head,  
"The dreaming soul is in the way of death.  
The harvest soon is o'er;  
Rouse up and dream no more!  
Act, for the summer fadeth like a breath."

"What if the Master came  
To-night, and called your name,  
Asking how many sheaves your hands had made?"  
If at the Lord's commands  
You showed but empty hands,  
Condemned, your dreaming soul would stand dismayed."

Filled with strange terror then,  
Lest chance come not again,  
I sought the wheat-fields while the others slept.

"Perhaps ere break of day  
The Lord will come this way,"  
A voice kept saying, till, with grief, I wept.

Through all the long, still night,  
Among the wheat-fields white  
I reaped and bound the sheaves of yellow grain.

I dared not pause to rest,  
Such fear possessed my breast;  
So for my dreams I paid the price of pain.

But when the morning broke,  
And rested reapers woke,  
My heart leaped up as sunrise kissed the lands.

For, came he soon or late,  
The Lord of the estate  
Would find me bearing not the shame of empty hands.

Woman's Work in the Great Harvest-Field.

## Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.  
Luthardt's Apologetical Discourses.

Translated from the German for the Christian Messenger, by Prof. D. M. Welton.

FOURTH DISCOURSE.

The Creation of the World.

Let us now turn to the question of Geology.

In the first place we must assure ourselves of its facts.

The earth was not created in its present form with the different kinds of life now upon it, but it was fashioned by degrees. This fact of Geology is indisputable. Whether, according to the Plutonian theory, we think of the earth as at first a glowing molten ball, whose surface was solidified by gradual cooling and then covered with water; or, according to the Neptunian theory, suppose that at the beginning its entire material was in a watery condition, which then first began to crystallize and separate itself from the water—in either case it first appears as a chaotic mass which gradually takes an organized form and becomes the abode of life, advancing from the lower organisms of plants and animals to ever higher ones, till finally man comes upon the scene.

The chronological order of the various formations of mountain chains and of the strata of the earth is determined partly by the position in which they

are arranged one above the other, partly by the petrifications which they contain, and which enable us clearly to perceive a progress of development. The primitive mountains contain no petrifications. These are found first in the so-called transition rocks, to which also the fossil coal-formations pertain. In them are found the first specimens of organisms in the crustaceous trilobites, the bi-valved mollusks, the echinodermata, insects, fishes, reptiles, &c. But what is especially characteristic of this first period is its extraordinary vegetation. A mighty vegetable kingdom is here buried, consisting of immense shave-grass, tree-high ferns, but especially of bog-mosses which grew in rankest luxuriance and covered the marshy ground. How great these vegetable growths were may be judged from the vast extent of the coal-beds which, by the lixivious action of the water, were formed from them. The east coast of England alone contains 338,500 million hundred weight of fossil coal. And then think of the great coal districts on the Saar and Ruhr, and in America! And of the still greater ones which have been recently discovered in Russia! What a vegetable world must that have been which is here buried! On the other hand the remains of animals in it are proportionally small.

Following this coal period after the somewhat limited Zechstein Formation are the Prias Formation (the Variegated Sandstone, the Shell Limestone, and the Upper New Red Sandstone), the Jura Formation and the Chalk Formation: these are all included under the name of the Secondary Formations. Here also are found remains of plants, but animal remains become more conspicuous. There are first of all the remains of water-animals and amphibia, —mollusks, fishes, reptiles, especially lizards; also single birds. Afterwards come the Mammalia. These belong—if we judge from the foot-prints which have been found in the Jura Formation—to the so-called Tertiary Period, for they approach ever nearer to present living species. Bears, hyenas, horses, elephants, rhinoceroses and such like animals are the chief representatives of the still living species of this period, of which the forests turned to brown coal in the earth are the buried memorial. The Tertiary Period runs into the Diluvial and Alluvial Period in which we have the present form and productions of the earth. To this last Period belong the ape races and finally man.

This is—speaking in general terms—the result which has been reached by Geology. We must not only acknowledge the diligence, the perseverance, and the penetration which have marked geological investigations, but also concede that by these investigations the history of the formation of the crust of our earth must be regarded as established. It is affirmed, however, that the Biblical account stands in direct contradiction to this history. It is an expression of a childish way of contemplating the primitive time, according to which God, as an earthly worker, makes one thing after another and joins part to part till the whole is finished. Natural Science presents us with another picture. Out of the bosom of nature, by the might of indwelling forces and laws, ever new and higher formations are produced; vast periods of time—many millions of years pass away, till the earth reaches the stage of its present perfection. Of all these great periods of successive earth-formations with their corresponding plant and animal worlds, we read nothing in Scripture. This discrepancy must be acknowledged. If then—the objector continues—the first page of the Bible contains such a manifest error, is it worth while to turn over the pages which follow?

Are the Bible and Geology really so contradictory and irreconcilable?

When we observe anything in an old, thoroughly-tried friend or hear anything concerning him which we cannot understand, shall we immediately perplex ourselves concerning him or pre-judge him, and not rather withhold our judgment till a later time brings us

the necessary explanation? Such an old, thoroughly-tried friend is the Bible to us.

If we meet with enigmas and contradictions therein which we are unable to solve, let us rather listen to reason and expect their solution in the future, than precipitately pronounce judgment on them beforehand. For are we sure we understand them as we perhaps believe they should be understood? Can not another explanation still be proposed to us? When Copernicus put forth his system, did any feel constrained in the interest of the Bible to oppose him? This opposition is silenced, and the Bible is as true to believers since the time of Copernicus as it was to believers before him. They have perceived that the Bible was given not to teach astronomy, but the way of salvation, and that it speaks of the motions of the heavenly bodies in the popular sense as they appear to the eye, as men could alone understand their appearance, and as we still speak of them at the present day. So in our understanding of the Bible some misapprehension might still cling to us and for the time prevail, without our coming hereby to think anything less of the Bible. And as we have no need to allow ourselves to be thus prejudiced against our Bible so we need not unnecessarily entertain uneasy suspicion against the investigations of the human intellect and suppose that we must immediately defeat these investigations by quoting against them the literal words of Scripture. It is a necessity of the human mind and according to the will of God that man investigate. History shows that he will search into things even when he has been forbidden to do so, that a real advancement is hereby made in knowledge. If inquiry be only carried on in the spirit of an earnest, humble love of truth, the blessing of God will not be withheld. God favors the upright. Indeed the way of human inquiry after truth leads through error. In no instance is it otherwise. In fact the profoundest investigation in the realm of natural science will willingly confess that many a thing that is now regarded as settled may hereafter be shown to be error. It is only superficiality which at once takes hastily formed opinions for established truths. And it is only a reprehensible abuse of science, from its real or supposed results to hasten to forge weapons with which to combat religious faith. With this abuse, science itself has nothing to do, neither its true and worthy representatives. It is only the act of way-layers.

For the Christian Messenger.

The Theological Union.

For some time the Baptists of Ontario have been discussing questions relating to their educational institutions, and they appear now to have reached definite conclusions. It is expected that, without any call on the denomination at large, a Baptist Theological school will be founded in Toronto. The character of the school thus to be founded is not very clearly foreshadowed, but it is to be the peer of the best Baptist Theological schools on this continent. The Institute at Woodstock is to be continued, an endowment is to be raised for it, and candidates for the ministry are expected to pursue English and Classical studies there before entering the Theological school in Toronto. This school may also draw some students from the Academical grade of the public schools of the Province. The expectation is, also, that it will receive the patronage of the Baptists in the Eastern Provinces and in time become the educational centre of the denomination—throughout the Dominion.

As our friends in Ontario have formed their scheme with a measure that reaches even unto us, we shall be excused if we give it a little examination. Let us suppose that the buildings of the contemplated Theological Hall are erected, the Library purchased and in its place, and the professorships, of which there shall be a goodly number,

amply endowed; then the question arises, For what sort of students is this provision made? Probably the reply will be, Candidates for the ministry who are graduates with University degrees, or who have had some equivalent preliminary course of study. The greater number of these must come from the Institute at Woodstock, or must take part of their studies there and the rest in the University College. How many students thus prepared for their work would annually present themselves for theological studies, we cannot very exactly determine; but it is almost certain that the number will not be large. The hope is that this may be augmented by additions from Wolfville. Even if there were no Theological school among the Baptists of the Lower Provinces, it is not probable that many of the graduates of Acadia would find their way to so distant a place of study. Our friends in the west seem continually to forget that it is as far from Halifax to Toronto as it is from Toronto to Halifax. As there are first-class Theological schools nearer to us, it is quite certain that the graduates who might leave us annually to join the students from Woodstock would not, when thus united, form a large class. Our Theological Scheme, as we are expected to style it, might hold high rank for the quality of the work which it might carry on with such students; but would it meet the wants of the country and satisfy our people? It will be many years before our churches will adopt the rule that ministers must all be College graduates. Probably the condition of the denomination farther west is much the same as in these Provinces, and consequently in both sections, churches will continue to call into their service men who have not pursued long courses of preparatory training, and young men who cannot afford to pursue such prolonged courses will seek admission into the ministry. The result would be that the exclusiveness which we have supposed to attach to the Toronto School, would have to be dropped, and students of various grades of qualification and intending to study for longer or shorter time would be admitted; or else other schools would be formed to accommodate this class. If the last expedient be tried we at once have raised into prospect all the evils of divided interests. If the former be tried, then there will be danger, that when the homogeneity of its body of students is impaired, the reputation of the school for thorough and extensive scholarship will be injured and its power to attract graduates of colleges will be diminished. In this condition the school, instead of supplementing Woodstock, is almost sure to become its rival. As it gathers numbers, it will draw many who should have academical training and as the need of this is felt, a remedy will be sought by employing some of the educational agencies which will be found in the city. Such a mingling of classes and interests will not be for the advantage of either general or theological education. But there is no probability that candidates for the ministry who can give only two or three years to general and professional study, will go to Toronto from the Lower Provinces for that study. They will more naturally seek ordination without any previous preparation. It will be found necessary to continue in these Provinces a Theological school to supply the demand which is thus almost certain to rise.

It appears, therefore, that the proposed scheme of Ontario Baptists, if successfully carried out, so far as all that money may effect, is concerned, gives faint promise of that union and concentration which its friends desire. We may agree that it would be exceedingly pleasant to see the east and the west unite in one Theological Seminary, and also, that it might be for the best if all who enter the ministry in our denomination would take a full course of seven or ten years; but a careful examination of the situation convinces us that we are subject to a necessity in the nature of the case that is invincible by any amount of money that can be obtained for theological education within

the limits of our denomination. We of the east may unite with our brethren of the west in deploring certain evils, and we may all unite in the wish that in certain respects the condition of our churches could be changed; but the thought will nevertheless be suggested that possibly such a change might not be all for the better. The friends of the Toronto plan most admit that their solution of the difficulties, if it should be tried, is only tentative and that it may be attended by unforeseen circumstances of an unfavorable character; and they will not be surprised, therefore, to learn that we are still inclined to hold by the policy accepted by the Baptists of the Maritime Provinces. There is as yet no reason for modifying that policy. By adhering to it and earnestly sustaining it, we should be best prepared to meet the developments of the future.

W. S.

## Helpless Sorrow.

Perhaps even now, within the circle of your acquaintance, you may be able to remember some on whose brow sadness ever sits enshrouded; some in whose sky not one star is ever seen to shine, and in whose blighted heart no blessed hope of better days is dawning. They were born to trouble and to nothing else. Beneath the cloud they go always, and are never once seen beyond the valley of the shadow of death. When the morning comes they say, "Would God it were even," and at even they say, "Would God it were morning." All time is a time of trouble, and it hangs heavily upon them. It can hardly be said that they have any days; because the rising of the sun is like the going down of the same, and it is night all the time where they sojourn. And they have their songs in the night; but these are all sorrowful, and are set to some mournful tune, that sounds like the sighing of the stormy wind, or the moaning of the melancholy sea. Passing through the valley Baca, they can dig no well for their refreshment. You never see them smiling and happy; but on the contrary they are as solemn and as gloomy as the grave. And why are they so sorrowful? Why, just because there is to them such a total failure of all their temporal blessings. In their painful experience the fig-tree does not blossom, and there is no fruit in the vines; the labor of the olive fails, and the fields yield no meat; the flock is cut off from the fold, and there is no herd in the stalls. Every hope is blasted. Every comfort is clean gone; every shadowing gourd is withered; and every well-spring of pleasure is dried up. In this personal history they find ample proof of the proverb that one sorrow never comes alone, and when it does it is sometimes the forerunner of a troop. That which the palmerworm hath left hath the locust eaten; and that which the locust hath left hath the cankerworm eaten, and that which the cankerworm hath left hath the caterpillar eaten.

Without controversy such was the case of the upright man of the land of Uz.

When such sorrows are sent upon us, we should rejoice, because they come at the command of God. Seasons of famine are just as much from him as fruitful seasons; the "black horses" of adversity are sent out by him as well as the "white horses" of prosperity. We must look above and beyond the second and apparent causes to God—the first, the last and only efficient cause—the cause of causes.—Beauty for Ashes.

Is it wise to spend all the missionary funds that can be gathered in a year for a few weeks labor, and then to leave the little companies of Christian babes to starve?

It is an error to overburden the mind with too extended consultation of helps. Text study thoroughly done, with only such use of helps as is necessary to illuminate places otherwise dark, is enough for any teacher.