

Published every THURSDAY by BARNES & Co., at their office, Corner of Prince William and Church Streets, Arlington, N. B.

The Christian Visitor

Hold fast the form of sound words. - 2d Timothy, 1:13. SAINT JOHN, N. B., THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 1863.

For the Christian Visitor. BUILDING SOCIETIES. No. 1007.

Mr. Editor—In accordance with an intimation in my last letter, I will now make a few extracts from the minutes of a large and influential meeting of the friends and members of the Liverpool Co-operative Society, held in St. George's Hall on the evening of Monday, 10th day of February last. Mr. George Melly, one of the principal speakers, said it was with feelings of profound respect for the few working men who originated this Society twelve years ago; and who had carried on its business until it had culminated in the noble building in Camden Street, in which the business of the Society would henceforth be carried on. He believed this was the first time the people had met in St. George's Hall to congratulate themselves on their own success, and well did they deserve the great advertisement which this meeting would give them. If we look on what has been done by the promoters of this association, during the past twelve years, we find the ample justification of the saying that "union is strength." No laws made by our Legislators can make people provident, industrious or moral; we must all stand in the strength of our own manhood. Great movements had been originated by the wealthier classes to regenerate and improve the condition of the poorer classes; to raise them in the social scale, complete success had not attended the most philanthropic reforms; but this reform, inaugurated by the people themselves, and which has been, and can be successfully carried out by every individual at his own fireside, as facts will show. Twelve years ago thirty-four individuals united together to hire a room in Button Street for the sale of soap, candles and a few other articles in the grocery line, with a capital of £300—their cash receipts during the first year were £317—their profits were £5 per cent. on the capital; and 1s. 4d. in the pound on purchases. This shows a saving of £11 13s. 4d. per cent. on their weekly purchases. Five years passed away, and the 34 had increased to 400 members, with a capital of £1,350—the receipts over the counter during the year had risen to £4,125—five years more passed away, and in 1862 the members had increased to 3800, with a capital close on £9000—while the receipts over the counter touched £50,000. Ladies and gentlemen, with that new store of yours in one's eye, it requires no prophetic gaze to enable one to see how the business of the Society is to progress. Mr. Melly entered largely into the statistics of these Societies, showing how men were taught through them a better knowledge of political economy, and a truer appreciation of the shares in which capital and labour should divide the profits arising from a common enterprise. In making a brief allusion to the cotton famine, and what had been its effect on Co-operative Societies; of all knowledge, that learned in and through co-operative stores had been the most valuable and enduring, and had borne good fruit in this day of trial. I have not exhausted this interesting subject, but fear I run some risk of exhausting your spare space. Having to leave the city for a few weeks, I would respectfully invite the intelligent Secretary of the Building Society to supply your readers and the public with the doings of this Society, and how its operations are calculated to benefit investing and borrowing members. I know he has written often and intelligently already. I venture to assert that it is a hard task to undertake to enlighten or educate the public mind, but my motto is persevere, persevere, persevere.

I am, dear sir, very respectfully yours, A MEMBER.

For the Christian Visitor. GEOLOGICAL TEACHINGS.

Fossils, and what they are good for.

A fossil is a body buried in the earth by any natural cause. The word "fossil" is from the Latin, and means "something dug up." As generally used, it is restricted to the remains of animals and plants found imbedded in the rocks of our globe. These remains are not rare; any one living in the vicinity of a coal mine can easily collect an abundance of fossil-plants from the shale brought up from the mine. Whole beds of rock are found completely filled with them in the Joggins and Pictou mines, for instance, in Nova Scotia; at Sydney, Cape Breton; and at Bathurst, Newcastle, and Lancaster, New Brunswick. Fossil shells, corals, and other animals may be found in the greatest profusion in the rocks at Windsor, Nictaux, Bear River, Steiwieck, Amessig, and numerous other places in Nova Scotia, and at Restigouche, near Gasquetown, and elsewhere in New Brunswick. All over the globe, the remains of plants and animals are found in the bedded or stratified rocks, in numberless instances making up of themselves whole beds of rock.

Now it would be as difficult a thing to tell you exactly what fossils are good for, as it would be to explain to you the use of some of our modern Spherical Trigonometry, so I shall not attempt to do anything more than to give you a very general idea of their use, and of the part they play in the deciphering of the story of the earth.

In the first place, I must ask you to take for granted a few things, which, starting as some of them may be, I can assure you are capable of being most satisfactorily proved. It has been proved beyond the possibility of doubt, that the earth is many millions of years old, instead of some 6,000, as is generally believed. This does not in any way affect our belief in the Bible, though it nevertheless demands a different interpretation of the Mosaic account of creation than that generally received. The earth was once in a melted, liquid state. It has gradually cooled down until a crust of solid rock, about a hundred miles thick, has formed all over its surface. Below that depth all is now a molten mass. All rocks were formed in two ways—by fire or water. All massive rocks, such as the granites, &c., occurring in irregular masses, without being imbedded in strata, have cooled down to their present form from a liquid state. Those rocks which are in beds, such as sandstones, slates, limestones, &c., were formed by the action of water; they are called stratified rocks. Every one knows that rivers and streams are continually wearing away the land; and that all along the sea shore the waves are carrying on the same destructive work. Did you ever think of what becomes of the mass of sand, and clay, and mud, which rivers are ever bearing down, and pouring into the ocean? It is not a trifling amount, as you may easily satisfy yourself. It is well known that the mineral matter which is thus cast into the sea settles there, forming thick beds of great extent. Every one who has ever been in the Basin of Minas must have noticed how very muddy the water is; the red mud with which the water is charged is derived from the wearing down of the red sandstone cliffs on the shore. This mud is deposited in beds, visible at

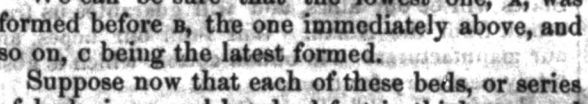
low tide, extending all along the shore. Farmers in Cornwall and elsewhere, who use this mud as a fertilizer, know that it is divided into layers, and that it is often very easy to determine how much was deposited by a certain tide.

What becomes of the remains of plants and animals which may be brought down by rivers and swept into the sea, as well as of those which live in the sea, such as fish, shells, corals, &c.? Their remains accumulating on the sea bottom, become buried in the beds there forming, and are preserved.

Now it is a thing satisfactorily proved, that ever since there has been water on the surface of the globe, beds of mineral matter have been accumulating, which by pressure, or other agencies, have hardened into rock. These beds contain the remains of many of the plants and animals which lived during the time they were deposited.

It has been ascertained beyond a doubt that the animals and plants now living have not been living ever since the creation, that there was a time when none of them existed, and when the earth was peopled by a set of animals and plants entirely different; and, not only this, but that ever since the beginning of life on earth, sets of animals and plants have lived successively one after the other for long periods of time, each set dying away, suddenly, at the end of each period, while a new and entirely different set was created to take its place. The number of these sets is now ascertained to be about sixty; its length of time each lived was without doubt many thousands of years.

If it be true, as it really is, that ever since life has existed on earth, extensive and thick beds of mineral matter have been deposited, each holding imbedded in it the remains of the beings living at the time when it was formed, could it not be determined in what order the different beds of rock were formed, it could be easily made out what was the order, in which the various sets of animals and plants followed one another. Now this can be done, and, for a great part of the earth's surface, it has already been done. Where we have a number of beds of rock, say three, lying one upon another thus:



We can be sure that the lowest one, A, was formed before B, the one immediately above, and so on, C being the latest formed.

Suppose now that each of these beds, or series of beds, is several hundred feet in thickness, and that the highest animals to be found in the lowest bed, A, are Fish, while the highest plants are Ferns; that the highest animals whose remains are found imbedded in the next bed are Reptiles, while the highest plants are Pines, for instance, and that the remains of Oaks, and of the higher quadrupeds, and, near the upper part of Man, occur in the bed C, what can be learned? Why, this much, at least: that the animals and plants whose remains are found in the bed A lived during the period in which the bed A was forming; that they are older than those found in the bed B, and very much older than those in bed C. But how much older? We can not answer that question, because we do not know just how long it took for one of the beds to be deposited; but it may fairly be inferred that a layer of mineral matter of many hundreds of square miles in extent and of two or three thousand feet in thickness (for such are often the dimensions of the series of strata we find in the earth's crust), must have been a long while in forming, and, judging from the rapidity with which they are deposited nowadays, many thousands of years.

But how do you know that some of the animals we find in bed A might not have lived while bed B was forming, and that these beds always occur in the same order, wherever they occur?

We go to some other place, and there we find a bed containing fossils like those in bed A, and immediately above it is another bed with fossils like those in bed C. In another place we find a bed like A, with another like A above it. Wherever we may go, all over the world, though one of the beds may from some reason or other be wanting, we always find them in the same relative position, and always with fossils of the same general character. We never find bed A above C, or bed B below A, and fossils found in bed A are not found in bed B, and so on. Having then studied these great beds of rock all over the world, wherever they occur, for, at any given time, wherever there is sea, rock-strata are accumulating, we are prepared to show, that for a period of many thousands of years, the highest animals on earth were Fishes, and the highest plants were Ferns; that at the end of this period all these animals and plants died out, and a new set was created, of which the highest were Reptiles and Pines; that these died out, and in their higher period were followed by higher types.

We are prepared to prove that, during the first period, man did not exist, else surely his remains, or some work of his hands would have been preserved in the rocks. No trace of him being found, after a most careful examination, until we come to the highest part of the upper bed, where his bones occur buried with numerous works of art, it is conclusively proved that man did not exist until the close of the third period. What else can we learn? We have observed that in the lowest bed Fish were the highest animals, in the next Reptiles, and in the next the higher animals, and Man. We thus see that animals were successively introduced upon earth, according to their rank. Fish came first, then Reptiles, and then, the most highly organized, Man. The same is true of plants, for Ferns came first, Pines which stand above them, next, and Oaks, which stand highest of the three, last.

The case which I have just been considering is not a mere supposed one. The stratified rocks are divided into three great divisions, the lowest or oldest of which is called the Primary, or Palaeozoic age; the next above, the Secondary age; and the uppermost or youngest, the Tertiary age. The Primary rocks are about 60,000 feet in thickness, the Secondary between 4 to 5,000, and the Tertiary about 2,000. The Primary rocks are noted for their abundant remains of fish, while they contain no remains of animals so highly organized as reptiles, and their plants are of a low order, ferns, clubmosses, and the like. Reptiles and birds, and some inferior quadrupeds, are found in the Secondary rocks, with plants of a higher type, but the age is characterized by its great abundance of reptiles. It is not until we reach the Tertiary strata that we meet with quadrupeds such as the horse, cow, bear, lion, elephant, &c. (mammals), and not until we reach the beds now being deposited, that we discover any trace of man; and flowering plants, like the rose tribe, do not make their appearance until they are found in the beds of the third age. The strata containing the remains of man, many geologists separate from those of the tertiary age, calling them those of the Age of Man.

time in collecting and studying the remains of animals and plants which are found so abundantly in the rocks. So it would seem, to one who knew nothing of literature, to a savage, for instance, a foolish thing for the child to spend time in studying the crooked letters of the alphabet. A single fossil is a trivial thing, so is a single letter; but, from the careful study of the many, there may be derived truth as palpable, as from the study of the combinations of the alphabet, that form the visible expressions of the ideas of great men. Fossils are like hieroglyphics, from which, together with the study of the rocks themselves, we may decipher the world's ancient history.

Has it not been well worth the labor that great men, like Werner, and Hutton, and Von Buch, Humboldt, and D'Orbigny, and Agassiz, Sir Charles Lyell, and Sir Roderick Murchison, and a host of others, have expended in this study, when they have enabled us to look so far back into the earth's history that the short period of man's existence on earth dwindles down to but yesterday; when the records of revolutions of enormous extent, have been deciphered; when they have enabled us to watch the growth of continents, and have explained to us how mountains were made; when they have told us of the creation and extinction of thousands upon thousands of beings, ages long gone by; when they have enabled us to trace out God's plan in creation; to recognize the plan upon which animals were constructed; and to watch the successive introduction upon earth of animals of higher and higher type, until, at last, when God had completely fitted the earth for him, He introduced man upon it to be his lord possessor?

It is worth the while of the antiquarian to puzzle over the hieroglyphics which roughen some Egyptian monument, or to pore over the burnt papyrus of Heracleum, in the hope of adding something to our knowledge of man's history, discovering, perchance, the account of some cruel war; it is the time ill spent, though it be not money-bringing, that the geologist gives to the deciphering from nature's hieroglyphics of some record of the peaceful reign of Jehovah, and of some of his plans and purposes!

The study of nature is, rightly considered, the study of God's works, and His works should be studied as one would the works of an eminent artist, viewing them as the visible expression of the conceptions of a great mind. This world is a great scroll, written all over, within and without, with the thoughts of the Eternal. Shall we who would attempt their reading be ever assailed by that vexing question, "eui homo?" Soul is more valuable than body. By-and-by man will be ready to concede that soul-property, which we may carry away with us to the Spirit world, is more valuable than body-property; for money, worldly wealth, belongs not to man's soul, but to his body; soul-wealth may never be diminished, its union with man's soul is eternal; but worldly riches, though they tarry through life, always "take to themselves wings and fly away" when death comes.

THE DOOR OF HEAVEN. It was a fearful time when the steamboat Tyro was lost. It was long ago, and almost every one has forgotten it, except the few who had friends on it, and they are almost all gone. The Tyro was a small boat, and the passengers were few and poor, so it has passed from the public mind. All the day the bright sun had shone down on the peaceful lake, and everything seemed safe and secure. The passengers had no thought of danger as the night came on.

A little boy knelt down to say his evening prayers, and as he looked out and saw the western sky all aglow with the glory of the going day, he asked, "Mamma! isn't that the door of heaven, with bright curtains all around it?" "Yes, my boy," said his mother, "heaven's doors are all around us." "Well, that is the one that I want to go in at, because it is the prettiest; and the child prayed his prayer and went to sleep.

It was never known how, whether the pilot fell asleep at his post, or the lights went out, but when midnight came, there was a crash, a shiver, and cries of terror. The steamer had come into collision with a schooner and was sinking. The little boy awoke. He cried, "Mamma, where are you?" and his mother's arms held him firm, even while they sank together into the dark waters. They came to the surface, and the mother caught something floating and held fast to it. "Jamie! Jamie!" she said, "hold me very tight."

"Mamma, are you going to heaven? I don't like this way—I'm afraid." "Never fear, child, God will meet you," and with all her strength the mother lifted the child upon the floating log, and then dropped it, and went home through the flood-gates below. "Mamma! mamma! where are you?" cried Jamie, but there came no answer. No one noticed the child afloat, for every one sought to save his own life, and the day was born, raw and cold, and was dying again, when Jamie floated on shore. The little fellow was hungry, very hungry, but there again was the glorious golden gate of heaven, and Jamie thought it was wider open than the night before, and as soon as he could crawl off from the bale to the land, he began to run as fast as he could, straight toward the west. Jamie's feet tottered. He was too weak to run, so he walked straight on, a long, long way, until the west began to grow dim in his sight. Jamie saw a man coming toward him, but he did not stop. The man noticed that the child's clothes were wet, that he had been in the water, and he tried to stay him.

"Little boy, where are you going?" he asked. "I can't stop now," said Jamie; "I'm afraid I shall be too late." "Too late! where are you going that way? there is no house there," the man cried after him, for Jamie did not stop an instant. "See there, it's shut," said Jamie, "and I'm afraid the doors will be shut." "Whose house, boy?" "Why, God's beautiful house, to be sure. Don't you know it? It is heaven. See! It grows dark; and Jamie made one more effort, and fell to the ground, fainting with hunger. The man lifted him up in his arms, and Jamie lisped, "Mamma said God would come to meet me, and then he fell asleep. When he awoke, he found himself in a strange place, with strangers about him.

"Come, my darling, you must eat some of this," said a soft voice, and the light of the candle was carefully shaded from Jamie's eyes. Jamie's last thought was of heaven, and his first question was, "Did I get there? Did He meet me?" And a little girl standing by the bed answered, "Yes, little boy. Father met you and brought you home." "God's your father too, is He?" asked Jamie, not yet fully conscious of his present state; "then we'll go home together." Jamie recovered, and grew to manhood—grew to a good and glorious manhood, and to the time when his Redeemer called him home, Jamie never forgot the western door for which he had striven. He never looked upon the gorgeous purples, golden, and crimson glory of the sunset, without hearing again, in his mind, the words of his mother. "Yes, my boy, heaven's doors are all about us." And Jamie's wish was granted him. One night the shining light came through the parted curtains, and Jamie went home with the day, and Jesus met him. For He loved him—Jamie, who long years before had gone down to the dark flood-gates below to meet Jamie's mother—Jamie, who always watches and waits to hear the coming feet of those who seek the gates of heaven.—Tract Journal.

SAINT JOHN, N. B., THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 1863.

Table with columns: Age of Man, Tertiary Age, Secondary Age, Palaeozoic or Primary Age, Age of Mammals, Age of Reptiles, Age of Fish.

During each of these ages a number of sets of animals and plants, of entirely different species, lived one after the other, about sixty in all, as above said. Thus all the stratified rocks are divided into as many minor groups. Each of these sets contained in all probability as great a variety of species as are now living, whence it follows that the number of extinct species is probably sixty times as great as the living. The fossil animals now known far exceed in number those now living. Thus the number of living species in one of the orders of shells (Brachiopoda), is only about 60, while the number of species known to exist in the fossil state is over 1,800.

After a certain number of these sets had lived, the surface of the earth was disturbed by the upheaval of mountain chains; for all mountains have not been formed at the same time, some having been upheaved during early geological times, like the Laurentian hills, which are the oldest mountains of this continent; others have been thrown up at a more recent date. This minor divisions of the earth's strata, containing different sets of fossils, and which the geologist calls periods, are grouped together under larger heads, under the name of epochs, an epoch comprising all those periods formed between the times of two great mountain-upheavals. Thus the Chalk rocks were formed between the times of two great mountain upheavals, and they consist of some eleven or more periods. Each of these periods has a name; but I will not complicate matters by giving them. This diagram shows how, just before the lowest period of the chalk rocks was formed, and immediately after the deposition of the newest, or uppermost, mountain-chains were thrown up:

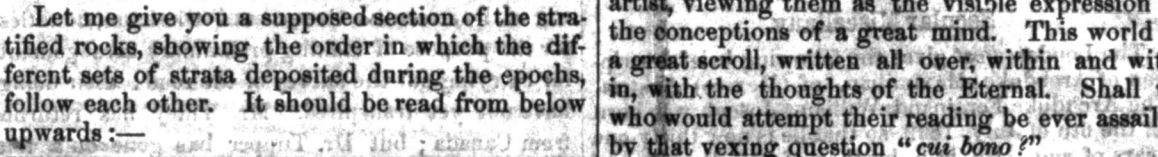


Table with columns: Age of Man, Recent, Pliocene, Miocene, Eocene, Chalk, Jurassic, Permian, Carboniferous, Devonian, Silurian, Azoic. Rows describe fossils and geological features for each period.

As the fossils of each period have a peculiar cast, and are entirely different from those of every other period, they lend us the most important aid in the identification of the period to which any given fossiliferous strata may belong.

Suppose that you should go to some land never before visited by the geologist, and should there find a number of beds of rock full of shells, plants, and other fossils. Bring them home and put them in the hands of a geologist, and he will be able to tell you, though he may never have seen a representative of one of the species before, just to what epoch the beds belong, and perhaps, even to what period. Thus, you see, that in tracing out the rock-strata of a country, the fossils play a most important part, a fragment of a leaf, or of a shell, often settling a question, which might otherwise have baffled the labor of years.

On the last diagram I have shown a few of the characteristic minerals of certain epochs. Gold, for instance, belongs exclusively to the lower beds of the Silurian epoch, or to such modern gravels or sands, &c., which have been formed by the wearing down of these rocks. It is not to be found in the rocks of any other epoch, and it is, of course, useless to look in them for it. Yet I have seen men gold-prospecting in Devonian and Carboniferous rocks. It is only the lower Silurian rocks of Nova Scotia that afford gold, and these form a sort of belt, occupying the Atlantic coast of the Province, being quite narrow at its northern end, broadening much toward the western extremity of the province. In the northern parts of the province, these rocks, wherever they occur, are almost always overlaid by beds of Devonian and Carboniferous age, the latter occupying extensive tracts. Now it would be just as useless to look for gold, in Nova Scotia, in any other than lower Silurian rocks, as it would be to fish for codfish in a fresh-water lake; but ever since the first discovery of gold in that Province, rocks of a Carboniferous and Devonian age, have been most carefully and fruitlessly examined for the precious metal.

To guide one in the search for minerals, maps are now constructed which show the areas occupied in different countries by the rocks of different ages. Prof. Dawson has published the latest and best geological map of Nova Scotia, while that of Dr. Robb is the best of New Brunswick. On the former map the sections of the countries occupied by rocks of the lower silurian age are quite accurately shown for Nova Scotia, and one may see where it is safe to look for gold. Coal, though it occurs in limited quantities in almost all stratified rocks, is almost entirely confined to those of the carboniferous epoch. Now, I know a man who was talking of searching for coal in the slates of the lower silurian of Nova Scotia, which, you see by the diagram, lie far below the genuine coal-bearing rocks. Thousands of dollars, in time and money, have been wasted in mining operations in rocks which any tyro in geology could pronounce barren of the sought-for mineral. We see then the importance of geological surveys, mapping out the districts occupied by certain rocks. This would be a task of immense difficulty, were it not for the fossils, for the rock-beds are so buried by earth and covered by forest, that it would be impossible accurately to trace them out; but by the aid of fossils they may easily be recognized anywhere. It seems, I doubt not, to those who know nothing of geology, a frivolous thing to spend

that were not common to each. With reference to the duties of wives, Peter was very explicit upon this subject in the third chapter of his first epistle. "Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your husbands; that if any obey not the Word, they also may without the Word be won by the conversation of the wives; while they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear, whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair and of wearing of gold or of putting on of apparel. But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible—even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price." Upon special occasions a goodly woman might lawfully put on her ornaments as well as other women; but upon ordinary occasions it would be better for her to wear nothing but the "ornament of a meek and quiet spirit." Ornaments were valued for their cost, and "a meek and quiet spirit" was "of great price in the sight of God." Those foolish women who were pleased with having an eye report to spread, had nothing of such price as a meek and quiet spirit. "For after this manner in the old time the holy women, also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands, even as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord." That word "lord" was the only good word in the sentence spoken by Sarah; and the one good word was noticed, as Christ always noticed what was good in his creatures. In the same way a husband ought to notice what was good in his wife. Should he see something to blame in her, or be suspicious of anything deserving blame, he had better be silent, unless he could mend it. Mr. Spurgeon said that if he ended the marriage ceremony there, it might be said that it was like the Church Service—beginning with "dearly beloved" and ending with "amen," which he feared many marriages did. He should conclude it with a hymn, in which every one might join; for the occasion was one of rejoicing, and he was glad that the bride did not indulge in the silly whim of crying, as if she were at a funeral. A hymn was then sung; after which Mr. Spurgeon pronounced a blessing on the newly-wedded couple, and prayed that their joys might be like the grapes of Eschol—so many that less than two could not carry them.

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"Little boy, where are you going?" he asked. "I can't stop now," said Jamie; "I'm afraid I shall be too late." "Too late! where are you going that way? there is no house there," the man cried after him, for Jamie did not stop an instant. "See there, it's shut," said Jamie, "and I'm afraid the doors will be shut." "Whose house, boy?" "Why, God's beautiful house, to be sure. Don't you know it? It is heaven. See! It grows dark; and Jamie made one more effort, and fell to the ground, fainting with hunger. The man lifted him up in his arms, and Jamie lisped, "Mamma said God would come to meet me, and then he fell asleep. When he awoke, he found himself in a strange place, with strangers about him.

"Come, my darling, you must eat some of this," said a soft voice, and the light of the candle was carefully shaded from Jamie's eyes. Jamie's last thought was of heaven, and his first question was, "Did I get there? Did He meet me?" And a little girl standing by the bed answered, "Yes, little boy. Father met you and brought you home." "God's your father too, is He?" asked Jamie, not yet fully conscious of his present state; "then we'll go home together." Jamie recovered, and grew to manhood—grew to a good and glorious manhood, and to the time when his Redeemer called him home, Jamie never forgot the western door for which he had striven. He never looked upon the gorgeous purples, golden, and crimson glory of the sunset, without hearing again, in his mind, the words of his mother. "Yes, my boy, heaven's doors are all about us." And Jamie's wish was granted him. One night the shining light came through the parted curtains, and Jamie went home with the day, and Jesus met him. For He loved him—Jamie, who long years before had gone down to the dark flood-gates below to meet Jamie's mother—Jamie, who always watches and waits to hear the coming feet of those who seek the gates of heaven.—Tract Journal.

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