

# Highland Messenger.

LIFE IS ONLY TO BE VALUED AS IT IS USEFULLY EMPLOYED.

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## MISCELLANEOUS.

From the South-Western Christian Advocate.  
**Geology.**

Geology is a term derived from two Greek words, and literally imports the science of the earth. It treats of the physical history of our globe, investigates its structure, and unfolds the character and causes of the changes in the organic and inorganic kingdoms of nature.

The different character of soils and rocks—the regular stratification which they sometimes exhibit, the various beds and veins of metals and coal, the petrifications and other fossils which are found in all countries—the immense mountain ranges that stretch across states and continents, together with the agency of water, and fire in producing changes on the earth's crust, have doubtless excited the attention of men in every age and prompted the desire to know the physical history of the planet we inhabit. Accordingly we find the earliest records of history revealing traditions and speculations on this topic. But as the facilities for acquiring correct views upon it were deficient, as might naturally be expected of the ardent and imaginative but splendid but baseless theories, apparently vying with each other in propagating the most visionary and irrational hypotheses. Yet, as often occurs in the infancy of other sciences, we occasionally see these theorists striking upon important truths and are astonished they did not follow out these views and at once achieve the science.

As illustrative of these remarks and as introductory to the subject, it may not amiss to give, in this number, a short history of the progress of Geology.

The doctrine of the alternate destruction and renovation of the earth, marking a long succession of periods, each occupying many thousand ages, is taught in the sacred book of the Hindoos; a work admitted to have been composed at least nine centuries before Christ.

At a very early period the marine shells which were found upon the hills that surround the valley of the Nile attracted the attention of the Egyptian Priests; and Plutarch says that one of the celebrated hymns which Orpheus brought from Egypt, to Greece related to this subject. The Egyptian, like the Hindoo system, assigned definite periods to these great revolutions, which they ascribe to conflagrations and deluges, whereby the gods punished human crimes and purified the earth. Hence too arose the poetical fiction of the golden and iron ages.

Pythagoras, Plato and Aristotle were aware that the surface of the earth has undergone violent revolutions and speculated upon the causes and periods of those convulsions.

During the middle ages a long and bitter controversy arose whether the fossil remains of animals and plants are truly the remains of organized bodies or merely "sports of nature." And scarcely had a hundred years elapsed since this question before it was pronounced, that, to deny the deluge of Noah insufficient to account for the existence of the remains of extinct genera and species to be a dangerous heresy. But, greatly to her credit, the church of Rome has redeemed herself from the imputation of persecuting this science; for recently this "dangerous heresy" has been avowed and successfully defended in a course of very learned lectures delivered in the hearing of the Pope by one of the Professors of the University of Rome.

In the 17th century, Leibnitz, the celebrated mathematician, represented the earth as having been originally a burning luminous mass, which has been cooling ever since its creation—that as its crust became cool, vapors condensed, and a great ocean was thus formed which retreated into caverns formed by the expansive power of heat.

The alleged increasing temperature of the earth as we descend into it, and the splendid experiments of Sir H. Davy proving that the earths are oxides and may be reduced to metallic bases, have given in the opinion of some, considerable plausibility to this hypothesis.

Hooke taught that England once enjoyed a tropical climate, which he inferred from the difference in size and structure between the fossils found in England and the existing species. This change of climate he attributed to an alteration of the position of the earth's axis. He opposed the popular notion that marine fossils are to be referred to Noah's flood. He held that nature had become debilitated—that earthquakes had become less frequent and powerful, and that the grand mountain chains had been elevated in a few months during the earth's pristine energy.

In 1695 Woodward came forward with a theory professedly resting on the bible. He said the flood dissolved the globe—that its strata had settled down from this promiscuous mass; and, in proof of it, he insisted that marine bodies are lodged in the strata according to their gravity. But his

proof needs proof, or rather is disproved by facts.

Burnett revived the doctrine of a change in the inclination of the earth's axis—explained how the primeval earth enjoyed so mild a climate—how the earth fissured by the sun's rays, poured out the waters of the deluge from a central abyss—predicted the conflagration of the globe and the raising of a new heavens and earth out of a second chaos.

Whiston followed Burnett; but Newton having disproved a change in the axis of the earth, he attributed the deluge to the approach of a comet, which by the condensation of its vapoury tail, and by drawing the water of the ocean over the land had flooded the earth. He proposed so to interpret the first chapter of Genesis that the doctrine of the earth having existed long prior to the formation of man might no longer be regarded as heretical. In this suggestion he was in advance of his age.

The Italian Geologists refuted and ridiculed the system of Burnett, Whiston and Woodward, and declared that sound philosophy as well as religion had suffered by perpetually mixing up the sacred writings with questions in physical science. Several eminent divines contended that the truth of the Bible was involved in the question of "the origin of springs," and maintained, in opposition to an enlightened Italian Geologist, that springs flow by subterranean syphons and cavities in the sea upwards, losing their saltiness in the progress! Thus his zeal without knowledge frequently exposed the word of God to the attacks of his foes.

Passing by a host of writers we hasten to notice Werner—a man who for a long time wielded an influence in Geology similar to that which his great countryman Luther exercised in divinity. He was vastly superior to his predecessors and collected and imparted much valuable information. His great error consisted in attributing too much to the action of water and not enough to fire—maintaining that even basalt and other volcanic rocks are "chemical precipitates" from water. His was called the Neptunian theory, and inculcated the doctrine of an original "menstruum or chaotic fluid" which held in solution all the materials of the globe, and from which his "universal formations" had been each in succession simultaneously precipitated over the whole earth. The amiability of his character, his ardor and eloquence in pursuing and explaining his favorite science, combined with his intimate knowledge of mineralogy gave a new impulse to the study of Geology, and a number of foreigners flocked into Saxony to attend the lectures of this celebrated professor. This was an era in Geology.

Hutton, of Edinburgh, was cotemporary with Werner, and was his great rival and antagonist. He contended for the igneous origin of basalt and the other rocks of that class—that volcanoes had not come into play in modern times, as Werner supposed; objected to the introduction of imaginary causes in producing the phenomena of Geology, and advocating the permanent agency of the same causes in nature. "The ruins of an older world," he said, "were visible in our planet; the strata that now compose our continents have been once beneath the sea, and formed out of the waste of pre-existing continents." He declared that he found "no traces of a beginning—no prospect of an end"—that "the oldest rocks are of a derivative nature, the last of our antecedent series, and that, perhaps, one of many pre-existing worlds." Hutton, like Werner, had considerable acquaintance with mineralogy and Chemistry, but neither of them knew much on the subject of organic remains, a department of this science which subsequently contributed more than any thing else to unravel the mystery of Geology. Hutton was accused of the heresy of materialism and much angry and violent feeling was exhibited against him. The illustrious Playfair illustrated and defended the theory of Hutton, but neither learning nor genius could stem the current of popular superstition originating in a misapprehension of the Bible. His was called the *Volcanian* theory.

Voltaire, true to his infidel principles, attacked the popular opinion among the Catholics in France which attributed fossil shells to the deluge, by denying that they were true shells, but "sports of nature." Still he knew better, and has admitted it in his other writings.

The controversy between the Neptunists and Volcanists continued to rage—most of the literary men of the time taking side with one or the other theory; but the contest had led to the discovery of many important facts illustrative of the subject, and excited a general spirit of enquiry and observation. The public mind had become at last disgusted with the hypotheses, and many learned men sought, by travelling to distant countries and by close and patient inspection of nature, to arrive at just and satisfactory conclusions. The relations of certain mineral groups in the order of their superposition—their mineralogical character—and the fossils peculiar to certain formations were severally investigated by the most distinguished scholars, and Chemistry, Comparative Anatomy, Zoology, Botany and Natural Philosophy all contributed to illustrate the science of Geology and to give it the station which it now so deservedly holds as one of the most interesting departments of natural science.

The Geological Society of London, founded in 1807, has conducted greatly to

this end. They have multiplied and recorded observations and patiently waited for such an accumulation of well authenticated facts as justify a general system of Geology. Bakewell, De La Bache, Buckland, Sedgwick, Murchison, Phillips, Syell and Mantell, of England, have contributed by the masterly productions of their pens to raise Geology to the reputation of a science. Germany has done her part in this noble work, especially in the department of mineralogical Geology. France has produced among others her Cuvier and Brogniart, whose work "On the Mineral Geography and organic Remains of the neighborhood of Paris" is a monument of science. The U. States can also boast of her Silliman, Maclure, Hitchcock, Johnson, Dana, Eaton, and last, though not least, her Troost—who, though not a native, is an adopted and favorite son; and who, to a profound knowledge of chemistry and mineralogy has added much practical Geological information acquired by years of toilsome travel and patient observation.

Many of the states of the Union, aware of the importance of Geology, have engaged the services of talented gentlemen to make Geological surveys, and a mass of facts is now collected and being collected from the wide spread limits of our country which is not only to secure fame to the enterprising individuals engaged in these pursuits, and contribute to the comfort and wealth of the community, but to settle points still in dispute among the trans-Atlantic Geologists. How wide and interesting is the field which our vast continent presents to the American student of natural science!

ROBERT PAINE.  
La Grange Coll. Ala., Feb. 4, 1841.

[From Chambers' Edinburg Journal.]  
**Thrilling Narrative.**

REMARKABLE CONDUCT OF A LITTLE GIRL.

The following extraordinary act was performed by a child in Lyons not long ago, according to a continental paper:

An unfortunate artisan, the father of a family, was deprived of work by the depressed state of his trade, during the whole winter. It was with great difficulty that he could get a morsel of food now and then, for his furnished wife and children. Things grew worse and worse with him, and at length, on attempting to rise one morning for the purpose of going out as usual, in quest of employment, he fell back in a fainting condition beside his wife, who had already been confined to her bed by illness for two months. The poor man felt himself ill and his strength entirely gone. He had two boys yet in mere childhood, and one girl about 12 or 13 years old. For a long time the whole charge of the household had fallen on this girl. She had tended the sick-bed of her mother, and had watched over her little brothers with more than parental care. Now when the father too was taken ill, there seemed to be not a vestige of hope in the family, except in the exertions that might be made by her, young as she was.

The first thought of the little girl was to seek for work, proportioned to her strength. But that the family might not starve in the meantime, she resolved to go to one of the houses of charity where food was given out, she had heard, to the poor and needy. The person to whom she addressed herself, accordingly inscribed her name in the list of applicants, and told her to come back again in a day or two, when the case would have been deliberated upon. Alas, during this deliberation her parents and brothers would starve! The girl stated this, but was informed that the formalities mentioned were indispensable. She came again into the street, and, almost agonized by the knowledge how anxiously she was expected with bread at home, she resolved to ask charity from passers in the public ways.

No one heeded the modest, unobtrusive appeal of her outstretched hand. Her heart was too full to permit her to speak. Could any one have seen the torturing anxiety that filled her breast, she must have been pitied and relieved. As the case stood, it is not, perhaps, surprising that some rude being menaced her with the police. She was frightened. Shivering with cold and crying bitterly, she fled homeward. When she mounted the stairs and opened the door, the first word she heard was the cries of her brothers for something to eat—bread!! She saw her father soothing and supporting her fainting mother, and heard him say—"Bread! she dies for the want of food."

"I have no bread," cried the poor girl, with anguish in her tones.

The cry of disappointment and despair which came at these words from her father and brothers, caused her to recall what she had said, and conceal the truth. "I have not got it yet," she exclaimed, "but I will have it immediately. I have given the baker the money, he was serving some rich people, and he told me to wait or come back. I came to tell that it would soon be here."

After these words, without waiting for a reply she left the house again. A thought had entered her head, and maddened by the distresses of those she loved so dearly, she had instantaneously resolved to put it into execution. She ran from one street to another, till she saw a baker's shop in which there appeared to be no person, and then, summoning all her determination, she entered, lifted a loaf, and fled! The shopkeeper saw her from behind. He cried loudly, ran out after her, and pointed her out to the people passing by. The girl ran on. She was pursued, and finally a man seized the loaf which she carried. The object of her desire taken away, she had no motive to proceed, and was seized at once.

They conveyed her towards the office; a crowd as usual having gathered in attendance. The poor girl threw around her despairing glances, which seemed to seek some favorable object from whom to ask mercy. At last, when she had been brought to the court of the police office, and was in waiting for the order to enter, she saw before her a little girl of her own age, who appeared to look on her with a glance full of kindness and compassion. Under the impulse of the moment, still thinking of her family, she whispered to the stranger the cause of her act of theft.

"Father and mother, and my two brothers are dying for the want of bread!" said she.

"Where?" asked the little girl anxiously.

"Rue ———, No. 10, ———." She had only time to add the name of her parents to this communication, when she was carried in before the commissioner of the police.

Meanwhile, the poor family at home suffered all the miseries of suspense. Fears of their child's safety, were added to the other afflictions of the parents. At length they heard footsteps ascending the stairs. An eager cry of hope was uttered by all the four unfortunates, but alas! a stranger appeared in the place of their own little one. Yet the stranger appeared to them like an angel. Her cheeks had a beautiful bloom, and long flaxen hair fell in curls upon her shoulders. She brought them bread, and a small basket of other provisions. "Your girl," she said, "will not be back perhaps to-day; but keep up your spirits, see what she has sent you." After these encouraging words, the young messenger of good put into the hands of the father five francs, and then turning around to cast a look of pity and satisfaction on the poor family, who were overcome with emotion, she disappeared.

The history of these five francs is the most remarkable part of this affair. This little benevolent fairy was, (it is almost unnecessary to say,) the same pitying spectator who had been addressed by the abstractor of the loaf at the police office. As soon as she had heard what was said there, she had gone away, resolved to take some meat to the poor family. But she remembered that her mamma was from home that day, and was at a loss how to procure money or food, until she bethought herself of a resource of a strange kind. She recollected a hair-dresser, who lived near her mother's house who knew her family. He often commended her beautiful hair and told her to come to him whenever she wished to have it cut, and he would give her a louis-dor for it. This used to make her proud and pleased, but she now thought of it in a different way. In order to procure money for the assistance of a starving family, she went straight to the hair-dresser, put him in mind of his promise, and offered to let him cut off her pretty locks for what he thought them worth.

Naturally surprised by such an application, the hair-dresser, who was a kind and intelligent man, made inquiry into the cause of his young friend's visit. Her secret was easily drawn from her, and it caused the hair-dresser almost to shed tears of pleasure. He feigned to comply with the conditions proposed, and gave the bargained fifteen francs, promising to come and claim his purchase at some future day. The little girl then bought provisions, got a basket, and set out on her errand of mercy. But before she returned, the hair-dresser had gone to her mother's, found that lady at home, and related to her the whole circumstance. So that when the possessor of the golden tresses came back, she was gratified by being received in the open arms of her blessed and praising parent.

When the story was told at the police office by the hair-dresser, the abstractor of the loaf was visited by no very severe punishment. The singular circumstances connected with the case, raised many friends to the artisan and his family, and he was soon restored to health and comfort.

**Louis Philippe, the King of the French.**

HIS POSITION—HIS POLICY—HIS FAMILY.

The present King of the French is justly regarded, by all correct observers, as one of the most extraordinary men of the day, and is likely to shine in the pages of history as a Prince of great wisdom, energy and firmness. His career since the celebrated revolution of July, 1830 has been marked by almost every vicissitude to which monarchy is liable. He has been compelled time and again to change his ministers; attempt after attempt has been made upon his life; various popular tumults have broken out in his capital, and he was very recently threatened with a conflict with four of the most powerful European nations. Even the war spirit of France, excited in a great measure by the mistaken policy of the Prime Minister, has been resisted, and with success, by the "Monarch of the Barricades," and at the last dates, the French capital was quiet. Peace had again unfurled her bloodless banner, and the wise, virtuous Louis Philippe was exerting himself to the utmost for the happiness of his people.

Perhaps no greater calamity could happen to Europe, in the present condition of affairs, than the death of this representative of the Bourbons. It should be remembered that he holds the throne by no regular tenure; that he was placed there in a moment of great difficulty and excitement, principally through the agency of La Fayette; that he is not entitled to the eminent position by any immediate ancestral right;

and that even now, a doubt exists in the minds of a large body of the French people, whether a succession would, in the event of his death, be permitted to either of his sons. Seeing this condition of affairs, and thoroughly conversant with the temper of his countrymen, the French monarch has, at every opportunity, sent his children among the people, and mingled them up in military affairs, in order if possible to soften the prejudices of the popular mind, and to inspire a degree of confidence and affection. Doubtless he has succeeded to some extent, but not to the extent necessary; and thus his death, we fear, will lead to another serious and perhaps dreadful convulsion.

A late number of Blackwood's Magazine has an article devoted to Louis Philippe, which accords him high praise. The writer states, that he "now stands forth the sole barrier to France, against her own phrenzy. The popular cry, the provincial parties, even the journals of his own ministers assail him. Yet he has hitherto stood firm. The position becomes a king, but a patriot still more. He might survive a war, but the monarchy and the constitution would run the most extreme peril. On the main firmness with which he shall show himself the ruler of opinion during the next six months, may depend a question higher than even that of peace or war; the question whether France will not be revolutionized, her government inflamed into a fierce, loose, and desperate democracy, and the final punishment inflicted on its political crimes in a new invasion of the armies of Europe, a total partition of her territory, and the extinction of her power of evil for ever among nations."

These doctrines may seem wild, but they nevertheless, possess more truth than would at first arrest attention. The Governments of the Old World, whether right or wrong, see the necessity of standing by each other, and resisting any rash or headlong change in the general system. This may be considered peculiarly and impressively the policy of Russia; and on reviewing the recent movements of the four powers with regard to Mehemet Ali in Syria, one cannot but be forcibly struck with a conviction that something more serious and almonitory was designed than the mere adjustment of the Eastern difficulty. Under these circumstances, therefore, and with this view, the conduct of Louis Philippe, in braving popular clamour and excitement at home, and even in perilling his own position on the throne, for the sake of his country, cannot but challenge admiration. He was born in 1773, and is consequently sixty-seven years of age. General Cass states that his health is vigorous. Of his family, we are told that the Duke of Orleans, his eldest son, is now 30; tall, graceful in his movements, and handsome. He acts a sort of Viceroi, sometimes attends the armies, sometimes travels through France on a tour of inspection, and is always in readiness to allay public tumults or promote the royal will.

The younger sons are "the Duke of Nemours, the Prince de Joinville, the Duke of Anjou, and the Duke of Montpensier. The King knows the value of activity in turning men to many uses; and he therefore keeps them all employed as much as he can. The Duke of Nemours is a soldier, and has served in Algiers." The Prince de Joinville is a Captain in the Navy, and behaved bravely at Vera Cruz. He had the command of the squadron recently sent to St. Helena for the remains of Napoleon. The two younger sons are said to be fine young men, and are destined for the army. Surely under such circumstances, the Monarch of the Barricades occupies a proud position among the Kings of Europe; a position, the duties of which he appears anxious to discharge, not only with credit to himself, but in a manner at once calculated to promote the happiness of his countrymen, and the general interest of mankind.—*Phil. Inquirer.*

From the Pilot.  
**Point-Just-Enough and Topsy Island.**

A recent Publication contains a *serio-comico* description of the navigation of Drunken Sea, from which we take the following description of Point-Just-Enough, and Topsy Island. The writer seems well acquainted with the difficulties and peculiar character of the navigation:

"The longitude and latitude of Point-Just-Enough never having been exactly ascertained, either from its being situated, as already mentioned, in a floating island, or whatever other cause, geographers have found it very difficult to assign the precise limits of Pleasant Bay. It is perhaps to get rid of this difficulty, that some geographers describe Pleasant Bay as extending the whole way from Soberland to Topsy Island. But whether it be or be not geographically correct to apply the name of Pleasant Bay to that part of the Drunken Sea which lies between Point-Just-Enough and Topsy Island, it is quite certain that there is no part of this sea where the sky is so bright, the air so fresh and exhilarating or the motion of the water lively and buoyant as it is here.

It happens, therefore, as might be expected, that many of those who leave Soberland, with the intention of going no farther than Point-Just-Enough, do yet, when they arrive at that Point, extend their voyage to Topsy Island, and tempted by the increasing beauty of the scene, the favoring wind and current, and the easy landing which the shore of the island presents at no great distance. Besides those who thus

voluntarily extend their voyage from Point-Just-Enough to Topsy Island, there are others who, over-shooting the Point either through ignorance or inadvertence, mistake in their attempt to tack, and are carried to the Island by the force of the wind and current.

As it generally happens that those who have once visited Topsy Island in either of the ways just mentioned, return to it again direct from Soberland, and repeat their visit with great regularity during the remainder of their lives, Topsy Island is always full of visitors. The sensations experienced on this Island, differ only in degree from those which are felt at Point-Just-Enough. The pulse and heart beat a little quicker and stronger, the eyes become brighter, the skin hotter, the face more flushed, the voice louder, the gestures more vehement, the conversation less connected, the ideas rambling and incoherent.

"Some dance, some sing, some swear, some fight, all stagger about; some become loyal, others philosophical; all are voracious, disinterested, magnanimous, chivalrous. It is usual to remain several hours, and even to pass the night upon the Island. A few remain upon it for several hours together; but as it is discreditable to be seen upon it in the morning, those who regard appearances, usually leave for Soberland sometime before day-break; many fall asleep on the Island, and are carried in that state to their boats. In the morning all awake unrefreshed with a parched mouth, hot skin, red eyes, aching head, and no appetite for breakfast, and spend the day drinking soda water at the great fountain in the quay of Soberland, which looks towards Pleasant Bay, and longing for evening in order to return to Topsy Island, or at least as far as Point-Just-Enough."

**Things certain in 1841.**

The year 1841 will be a very eventful one—to every body who gets married.

Throughout the whole course of the year whenever the moon wanes the nights will grow dark.

Those who have debts to pay, and no cash will lose their credit.

It is probable that if there is no business doing, people will complain of hard times, but it is certain that those who hang themselves will escape starving to death.

Many a man will grow rich this year in a dream.

If the incumbent of a fat office should die, there will be a dozen feet ready to step into one pair of shoes.

He who marries during this year will ruff a great risk—that is, if he does it in a hurry.

He who steals a match, will make tattlers gossip, and get himself into a scrape.

He who is penniless this year will not grieve much at the fall of stocks.

That grows without growing wiser, will be a long time coming to the years of discretion.

He who wants to borrow money, will know the value of it.

He who laughs at his own dull jokes, and hunts for a cat with three tails, or becomes an applicant for office, will rival honest Dogberry, and be content to "write himself an ass."

There will be more books published this year than will find purchasers—more rhymes written than will find readers, and more bills made out than will find payers.

If a man builds a house this year without counting the cost, he will know more at the end of his undertaking than at the beginning.

If any body jumps overboard without knowing how to swim, it is two to one that he gets drowned.

If any one lends an umbrella, it is two to one that he is obliged to go home in the rain for his pains.

There will be a great noise about the country—whenever it thunders, and a dust will be kicked up—by coach horses—unless the roads are McAdamized.

Whoever makes the discovery that the world is given to lying, will only do what Jack Fallstaff has done before him.

Many an old sinner will resolve to turn over a new leaf this year, but the new leaf will turn out a blank.

Many a fond fool will jump into a honey pot, and find it mustard, without being able to say, with the fly, "I'm off."

Many things will be wondered at this year, and turn out not to be miracles.

Finally we are of opinion, that this will be a wonderful year—just like all that have gone before it. Politicians will make fools of themselves, pettifoggers will make fools of others, and women with pretty faces will make fools both of themselves and others. The world will go round and round back to the place from which it set out and this will be the course of many a man who should be up and doing. There will be a great cry and little wool, as at the shearing of pigs or a session of Congress.

**GOOD FIGHTING.**—In the trial of some patriot prisoners at Kingston, Upper Canada, a British officer disclosed on oath the fact, that the British loss in the "Windmill" affair, at Prescott, two years since, was 442 killed. This, for execution, considering the number of Patriots engaged (180) beats San Jacinto, which is often quoted as the most remarkable in that respect among the hotly contested fields of modern times—the patriots killed, it will be seen, almost three to one, a fact which sufficiently accounts for the exasperation of the British troops on that occasion, and caused them to refuse quarters.