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A SNOW PARABLE.

Softly falls the snow and slowly, slowly,
O'er the solitude of wild and hill;
Winds are breathing desolate and lowly
Where the wearied world is lying still.

All the dismal blackness of the city
Lies enshrouded with a perfect white;
God, in wonderful eternal pity
Sends his snowy message through the night.

Like a cloak of pardon and remission
Falls the snow on city, den and street—
Emblem of the contrite heart's condition,
Earnest of forgiving love complete.

Where the sin and sadness are unsleeping,
Lies a purity which is not theirs;
Thro' the night there comes a sound of weeping,
Thro' the night there comes a voice of prayers.

Turn, O hungry souls that tire of sinning,
Take the peace which earth can never give!

Leave the by-gone for a new beginning,
Leave the dreariness of death, and live.

Softly falls the snow and slowly, slowly,
O'er the solitude of street and mart:
Hear, O Father! Thou art holy—
Lay its whiteness on the sinner's heart.

A. L. SALMON.

THE BIRTH AND GROWTH OF THE EARTH.

[ON the evening of Friday, the 25th of January, a lecture on the above named subject was delivered at the Social Hall, under the auspices of the Student's Society of the Latter-day Saints' College, by Dr. J. E. Talmage, the Principal of that worthy institution. The lecture had been delivered several times before in different parts of the Territory, and has long been famous among the people; it is therefore with sincere pleasure, and full confidence of appreciation on the part of our readers, that we present herewith a report of the discourse. The speaker's remarks were illustrated by the aid of a pair of wonderful oxy-calcium stereopticons, producing magnificent dissolving effects of the views, which were mostly

hand paintings by eminent specialists. There were thirty-seven views in all, each about eight feet in diameter, this limit being determined by the size of the room, though the apparatus was capable of producing as fine a picture of three times the size.

The sketches given below are no attempt to reproduce beautiful views exhibited during the lecture, the scenic effects of which could not be represented in anything less than paintings or steel engravings.

The hall on the occasion was completely filled; and it was found necessary to crowd nearly one hundred and fifty spectators behind the scenery, and then great numbers were unable to gain admittance. The lecture occupied an hour and a quarter in delivery; and was listened to throughout with spellbound attention, as befitted so masterly an effort. The subject was handled in such a way as to convince the audience that truth is truth, in science as in religion.—Ed.]

Dr. Talmage said:

Ladies and Gentlemen:—We have assembled to glance at the headings of a chapter or two in the greatest of all works of history; a history which deals with every condition of the times upon which it treats, and speaks not simply of monarchies and wars. We are to spend a brief hour in perusing, though perhaps in a very imperfect manner, a small part of the great book of Nature; to scan the volume of creation; to hear the outlines of the story of the earth.

There are but few recent human records bearing upon our subject. The science dealing with the earth, is among the youngest of the great divisions of natural history. About two centuries ago, a work was published in England entitled the "Theory of the Earth," and the author speaks of it in his preface, as the account of a world that had been completely lost from the memory of man and the

records of time. Strange though it may seem to us, man learned to lift his eyes toward the sky and to wonder, and marvel, and perhaps to worship, because of the miracle which there he witnessed, long before he thought to gaze upon the earth, and to learn the lessons that lay recorded beneath his feet. Is this perhaps a manifestation of the human tendency to yearn after the distant and the unattainable, to the neglect of the present and the possible?

This earth-history is recorded upon material far more enduring than fibrous paper, or sheep-skin parchment, those books are the rocks and stones of the earth. And humble objects though they be, they have a strange story to tell.

Ruskin has beautifully said that there are few objects out of which more can be learned than out of stones. "They seem to have been created especially to reward a patient observer. Nearly all other objects in nature can be seen to some extent without patience, and are pleasant even in being half seen. Trees, clouds and rivers are enjoyable even by the careless. But the stone under foot has nothing for carelessness but stumbling; no pleasure is to be had out of it, nor food, nor good of any kind; nothing but symbolism of the hard heart and the unfatherly gift. Yet do but give it some reverence and watchfulness, and there is bread of thought in it more than in any other lowly feature of all the landscape."

But we are told that the teachings of the rocks implant within the student's mind a disregard for the words of his Creator, and make of him an infidel. We hear solemn declarations that there is danger lest the contemplation of beauty in the design should argue the non-existence of a designer. Some have taught that the light of modern discovery and research has thrown