

Nature at length,
 As fain that man should rest
 Gives up her deeper secrets to his prayer ;
 To his behest
 Her mighty forces shall obedience yield,
 Her empire he shall share,
 Yea! he shall wield
 All her resistless strength ;
 Even that which heaved the mountains, and which
 moves
 The starry wheels in their unerring grooves.

With grind and groan,
 With clank and moan,
 Their task the prisoned forces ply :—
 The great wheels fly
 As if they wove the web of fate ;
 And to and fro, amid the roar,
 Squallid creatures pace the floor ;
 Slaves of those iron wheels are they,
 Bound their impulse to obey,
 And upon their bidding wait ;
 While to their service dumb,
 Not only men are given,
 But childish troops are driven,
 And women come,
 Till every heart with weariness is numb.

Still nature grants
 Fresh creatures of her power man's needs to
 serve.
 Lo! a fierce creature pants
 To do his bidding and his burdens bear ;
 And its keen nerve
 Flath the tamed lightning in his service spent ;
 As laden with its message forth it went,
 Nor moved the midnight air.

But faster beat
 The hearts to whom that message comes.
 "Haste! make the task complete ;
 Haste! let the rousing drums
 Gather strong men to do the work of war!"
 And wide and far,
 As speeds the message, hands their labour ply
 Faster; the forge upon the midnight sky
 Sends up a steadier glare,
 While instruments of death shriek bodings of de-
 spair.

Now he shall rest!
 The mighty mother takes him to her breast.
 O mockery! this is not the rest he craves—
 This dread, this utter stillness is the grave's.

What voice doth dare
 Say "I will" to the universal prayer?
 Above the din
 The strife and sin.
 Of toiling centuries, sounds the bidding blest!
 "Come, I will give you rest."
 (Not to lay down your burdens, but to hear!
 'Tis but to learn the yoke of love to wear.)
 And weariest of the weary, as was meet,
 Walking those centuries with bleeding feet,
 Obeyed, and found that Rest unutterably sweet.
 ISA CRAIG.

—o—
 "What is the ground of your hope?"

THE following interesting letter, in answer to the above question, we submit to the reader, under the conviction that it will speak home to the experience of very many, and may serve to warn ministers when dealing with young converts:—

MY DEAR SIR,—Most cheerfully do I accede to your request, as I believe that request is in perfect harmony with the injunction of the Apostle Peter, who exhorted the believers to whom he wrote to "sanctify the Lord God in their hearts, and to be ready always to give an answer to every man that asked them a reason of the hope that was in them, with meekness and fear." But, dear sir, before showing you clearly and distinctly the ground of my hope that maketh not ashamed, permit me briefly to lead your mind to my past religious, or rather irreligious history; for truly I was then without God and without hope in the world. All my profession of religion was founded on *feeling*—*excited feeling*; and I am afraid many are pursuing the same course of iniquity, for "as in water face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man." Well do I remember the period when my mother, who was a pious Christian, and who certainly had overleaped the boundary wall of her own system, and had appropriated a whole Saviour to herself, pressed earnestly on my attention the solemn duty of joining the church to which she belonged. From my infancy I had been rather of a religious cast of mind: and having arrived at the age of eighteen, these facts were urged as weighty reasons why I should make a public profession of religion. After repeated entreaties, I at last consented to apply for membership. During the interim that elapsed between my consenting and application, I experienced great misgivings of heart that all was not right. Yet sometimes it bore upon my mind, that I was as good as most, and better than many professors in the church; at other times that I was, or might be, a Christian by birth, having been born of godly parents; or I might grow into it by degrees. Such were some of Satan's suggestions which he busily plied me with, to delude my poor guilty soul. At last I resolved to go forward, thinking that if I was wrong, the minister would detect my error, and set me right. I determined to answer frankly whatever questions he might put to me. One afternoon I called on the minister, who received me very kindly, to whom I made known in few words my intentions. He highly approved of my resolution, and being seated, he began by making a few preliminary remarks on the duty of Christians uniting together as a church, to commemorate the dying love of the Lord Jesus; he then put a few questions from the Shorter Catechism, to which I gave prompt and satisfactory replies, as I had them all by rote when at school. He took for granted that I was acquainted with the Confession of Faith, and other standards of the church; and thus passed off my examination for a church of Christ. There was more of feeling than *faithfulness* displayed. On parting, he said, that he was so well pleased with the amount of information which I possessed and my previous good character, I need not call back