

**All That I Was***Horatius Bonar (1808–1889)*

All that I was, my sin, my guilt,  
 My death, was all my own;  
 All that I am I owe to Thee,  
 My gracious God, alone.

The evil of my former state  
 Was mine, and only mine;  
 The good in which I now rejoice  
 Is Thine, and only Thine.

The darkness of my former state,  
 The bondage, all was mine;  
 The light of life in which I walk,  
 The liberty, is Thine.

Thy Word first made me feel my sin,  
 It taught me to believe;  
 Then, in believing, peace I found,  
 And now I live, I live!

All that I am, e'en here on earth,  
 All that I hope to be,  
 When Jesus comes and glory dawns,  
 I owe it, Lord, to Thee.

**ΤΩ ΚΡΟΝΟΥ ΚΑΙΡΩ***In the Nick of Time***Pollution***Kevin T. Bauder*

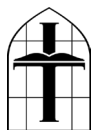
One of the reasons I went to seminary in Colorado was because of the mountains. The Rockies were not my only reason. They weren't even the most important reason. Some might think that they were a carnal reason, though I disagree. Nevertheless, the natural beauty of those high peaks certainly entered into my choice.

I enjoyed them as thoroughly as I thought I would. I liked camping and hiking behind Rampart Range. During the summers I loved backpacking in the Eagle's Nest Wilderness. The view east out onto the plains from high on Mount Hermon Road was one of the grandest I've ever seen. I particularly relished hunting: every November a classmate and I would pack into the snows of the Flat Tops Wilderness to shoot mule deer and elk. Part of me still wishes that I were in the Mountain West.

The first year I was in Colorado, however, a funny thing happened. I took an assistant pastorate with a pastor who had grown up near Greeley, and he introduced me to the high plains. In time I came to love the plains even more than I loved the mountains (if that's possible). Something about the combination of buffalo grass, prickly pear, and yucca over unbroken miles was just enchanting. The remoteness of the plains appealed to me, as did their vast openness. I had plenty of company with the pronghorn, the rabbits, the rattlesnakes, and the raptors.

My favorite place was Pawnee Buttes. The buttes stand on the boundary of the Pawnee National Grassland at the edge of the Colorado Piedmont, a drop-off where the floor of the plains falls away hundreds of feet in an escarpment of chalk bluffs. These bluffs are carved and latticed with a network of little canyons. A mile or so out from the bluffs, the two Pawnee Buttes rise some 300 feet. Their peaks are taller even than the plains above the escarpment. To me this site was lonely, wild, and breathtaking. I never got tired of it.

During those years I did lots of hiking around the bluffs and the buttes. Birds of prey nested in the bluffs—enough of them to be called a colony, though they were of different species. The first eagle I saw in the wild was at



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Pawnee Buttes. Horned toads also lived there, and I found porcupines back in those bluffs.

Mule deer lived in those canyons, too. In fact, the biggest deer I ever saw were there. In the West, you measure a deer's antlers against its body width. A deer with antlers of a full body width is a decent trophy. At Pawnee Buttes I saw deer whose antlers stretched a full body width on either side of their torsos—magnificent animals. At the time I had a rifle in my hand—but the season was closed. No matter. The sight was unforgettable.

One of the most chilling moments I ever experienced occurred in those bluffs. I had followed a narrow canyon for perhaps half a mile into the bluffs when I became aware of a sort of electrical hum in the air. I couldn't locate the sound, so I stood very still and tried to focus on its direction. It seemed to be coming from everywhere at once. That was when I realized that the cliffs on both sides of me were pockmarked with thousands of tiny burrows made by ground-dwelling bumblebees. You can believe that I backed out of that canyon very slowly and gently.

During my six years in Colorado I visited Pawnee Buttes many times. I never, ever met another person. It was so remote that nobody went there. It was like my own private Western preserve. I loved to think that those bluffs and buttes were virtually unchanged since pioneers had settled the West.

When I left Colorado I spent six years in Iowa, then another seven or eight in Texas. Eventually I relocated to Minnesota. On a trip westward I thought I'd take my children to see the Pawnee Buttes.

I said earlier that the buttes were located on the edge of the Pawnee National Grassland. They were bounded by private property all along the northern edge, and one of the buttes actually stood on private land. During the years that I was gone, the owners of that property had built windmills all along the horizon. Dozens—scores—hundreds of those mechanical monstrosities now formed the backdrop for every angle from which the buttes could be viewed. The remoteness, wildness, openness, and solitude of the site had been destroyed.

Worse yet, the Forest Service had decided that the site needed improving. I don't know who they were expecting to visit, but the feds had built a wooden board walkway for access from a paved parking lot. Nonexistent tourists were supposed to stay on the walkway because otherwise they might disturb the raptors, dontcha know. You could no longer get close to anything that really mattered.

In short, both the rancher who owned the land and the federal agency that controlled the site had fallen under the sway of the environmentalists. The net effect was utterly to wreck everything that made that environment

worth visiting. The Pawnee Buttes are no longer breathtaking. They're ugly. If you ask me, that's pollution of the very worst sort.

Scripture does not teach that we must preserve the created order in untouched condition, but I do think we should at least preserve some pristine sites. Pawnee Buttes should have been one of those sites. It's too late now. The place has been polluted. I don't intend to go back.



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This essay is by Kevin T. Bauder, Research Professor of Systematic Theology at Central Baptist Theological Seminary. Not every one of the professors, students, or alumni of Central Seminary necessarily agrees with every opinion that it expresses.

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