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## Poetry.

### FINISHING THE WORK.

BY LORD KINLOCH.

Ever in life is a work to do,  
Long enduring, and ne'er gone through;  
Seeming to end, and began anew.

Knowledge hath still more to know;  
Wealth hath greater to which to grow;  
Every race hath farther to go.

Say not, 'e'en at thy latest date,  
"Now I have naught but to rest and wait;"  
Something will take thee without the gate.

What if thine earthly task be o'er,  
Still is another for thee in store,  
Heavenward walking, and heavenly lore:

Graces to nurture; snares to shun;  
Sins to get rid of, one by one:  
This is a work which will ne'er be done.

Only One, when he bowed the head,  
Where on the cross he for thee had bled,  
Rightly then, "It is finished," said.

Well on thy bed of death for thee  
If ever said it may fitly be,  
"Christ has finished my work for me."

## Religious.

### THE RIVER! THE RIVER!

BY W. J. R. TAYLOR, D. D.

Sir Samuel Baker, in his "Tributaries of the Nile," gives a vivid description of his seven days' journey across the burning desert, to the mouth of the great Atbara, one of the principal affluents of the mighty river whose mysterious sources he has successfully explored. He escaped with his brave and noble wife and his company of attendants upon the banks of the dry channel, where for many a week the only water to be found was in the large deep pools, in which a few hippopotami were at home, and to which thirsty herds of animals, and flocks of birds came to drink at morning and at evening. At the close of a hot and sultry day, suddenly, a sound was heard which seemed to him like the low mutterings of distant thunder breaking upon the silence of the parched land, and growing deeper as it continued. But soon the natives recognized the tones—and as with one voice they shouted, "The river! the river!" They had long been waiting for its joyful advent. Onward it came, sounding through the African forests like Niagara in its resistless rush, and heralding its coming with its own trump and thunder. In the course of a few hours it was pouring its broad, deep volumes of waters, brought down from the Abyssinian mountains, filling the great channel from shore to shore, and hastening to its meeting with the Nile, to swell its majestic floods, to overflow the land of Egypt, to bring fertility and laughing harvests, and plenty for man and beast, and then to empty its vast tides of soil and water over the new Delta which it is forming in the Mediterranean sea.

Is there not something analogous to this annual process of nature, in the kingdom of God? How often is a single soul, or a church, or a whole community like that sunburnt region, when the heavens are as brass above them, and the earth as iron beneath their feet, when the channels of spiritual life are bare and dry, and the "soul crieth out for God in a dry and thirsty land where no water is." But soon the Spirit of God begins to pour out the early and the latter rain upon the desert mountains, and "the streams in the south" fill up the empty torrent-courses, and then the waters flow out and onwards blessing all that wait for them. With joy unspeakable, the thirsty children of God recognize the sound of his many waters. The river! the river! is coming, and they welcome it with songs of gladness. So to longing souls are restored the joys of God's salvation and churches are "filled with the Spirit." Like the river, these "times of refreshing," come "from the presence of the Lord," and they turn the wilderness into his garden.

Then, by separate channels, all their tributaries pour their wealth into the one great central stream. More fruitful and mysterious than Egypt's mighty river—it blesses all that dwell upon its banks, the evil as well as the good, and finally loses itself, in the eternal sea of Jehovah's love and glory. "There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High." Even now we wait to catch the distant murmur of its waters. Nations are watching for its coming, "Until the Spirit be poured out from on high," and unborn millions shall yet greet it with their welcome, "The river! the river! the river of God!"—*Ch. Weekly.*

### WORKING MEMBERS.

How few there are who take part in the active duties of religion. Some of our churches, and in comparison with the whole number of professing members, the majority are not active workers. They seem to feel, but they do not act. We trust that the light is within them but they do not let it shine out. They profess to feel interested in the welfare of religion and their own churches, and wish them success; but they make no actions, nor do any deeds, by which it may be visible to all that they have a heart to work and do work. There seems to be a disposition in the minds of many, to be simple recipients of the blessings of the gospel, without dispensing or being the means of dispensing, these blessings to others. Christ said to the man out of whom he had cast the evil spirit, and who afterwards sat at his feet clothed in his right mind, "Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee." So every Christian, every member of the church, should feel that he is sent forth to say and to do something for Christ. To come to church, listen to the truth, pay our pew rent, give to our benevolent societies, and honor and respect religion; all this is well, but is it all? Does it give the evidence of an earnest Christian worker? It is a kind of *silent* Christian life—a sort of *latent* zeal, which accomplishes nothing. Ah, no. If we want to be earnest workers for Christ and in our church, we must go into the prayer-meeting, into the Sabbath-school; engage in the tract cause; interest ourselves in our various missions; ascertain their wants; read the accounts and letters of missionaries; give ourselves and get others to give; speak out for Christ by prayer in our families, in public; talk to our friends and neighbours, and constrain them to come to Jesus; in a word, we must say and do something for Christ and His cause. Oh, if it were possible so to arouse the professing membership of our church that they would become workers—all doing something for Christ's cause and the church of their adoption, we would soon see a different state of things throughout the bounds of our beloved Zion. May the Lord hasten the time.—*Christian Treasury.*

### WOMEN'S CURSE.

Woman, there are some things that you can do, and this is one: you can make drinking unpopular and disgraceful among the young. You can utterly discountenance all drinking in your own houses, and you can hold in suspicion every young man who touches the cup. You know that no young man who drinks can safely be trusted with the happiness of any woman, and that he is as unfit as a man can be for woman's society. Have this understood: that every young man who drinks is socially proscribed. Bring up your children to regard drinking as not only dangerous but disgraceful. Place temptation in no man's way. Recognize the living, terrible fact that wine has always been, and is to day, the curse of your sex; that it steals the hearts of men away from you, that it dries up your prosperity, that it endangers your safety, that it can only bring you evil. If social custom compels you

to present wine at your feasts, rebel against it, and make a social custom in the interests of virtue and purity. The matter is very much in your own hands. The women of the country, in what is called polite society, can do more to make the nation temperate than all the legislators and tumultuous reformers that are struggling and blundering in their efforts to this end.—*Dr. Holland.*

### WHO ARE THE BIGOTS!

BY REV. J. CHAPLIN, D. D.

We certainly have no quarrel with science, and we have no wish to deny that bigotry has often cloaked itself under the garb of religion. True science is an expression of God's thoughts, and God's thoughts are dear to his children, from whatever source they are derived. It is not for man to say in what particular way God shall reveal himself; out of what particular volume he shall instruct his creatures. It is enough that God speaks for them to listen. David and Solomon and Paul were certainly no enemies to nature and science. They appealed to them as declaring the existence and attributes of God. But sometimes the deductions of science have come into real or seeming collision with the deductions of theology, and a prejudice has been awakened against science as opposed to the Bible. This has generally resulted from the opposition of science to certain human interpretations of the Scriptures, which were mistaken for the Scriptures themselves. And just here it must be confessed that a degree of narrowness amounting sometimes even to bigotry, has characterized not a few advocates of the written revelation. There have been very weak and foolish words written against professed discoveries of science, almost as if there was no such thing as science; which is really as atheistic as would be a denial of the Bible. It becomes the Christian to defend science against all cavils and assaults, even as he would the word of God. And such is the genuine spirit of Christianity. Christ never uttered a word of warning against science, and Paul wrote only against science falsely so called. Some of the most distinguished scientific minds have been at the same time the most sincere and humble Christians, as Newton, Pascal, Leibnitz and Faraday.

But while making our confession of the bigotry of the church, we cannot forget that there has been a great deal of the same spirit on the other side. Dogmatism and superstition, narrowness and bitterness are not together in the Church. This fact, which somehow has been strangely overlooked, has been placed in a clear and striking light by Dr. Zoekler, a German theologian, and familiar also with modern science, in his lecture on the Biblical Account of the Creation and Natural Science, in the *Bremen Lectures*. The learned author shows by numerous examples that "nearly every valuable discovery, as certainly as it revealed anything unusual, or restored any item of knowledge once accepted but in a subsequent age disparaged as a superstition, has had to contend with a more or less obstinate skepticism, before attaining general recognition." And this, not from theologians, but from scholars, from men specially devoted to the study of science. Every department of science has in turn had to struggle forward against this scholastic bigotry and superstition, which steadily resisted the enlargement of human knowledge. The great geographical explorers of the modern age were for a time denounced as impostors by men who had studied geography in their closets. The Newtonian system of gravitation was vigorously opposed by astronomers of the highest repute. Harvey, who discovered the circulation of the blood, and Jenner, who introduced vaccination, were positively persecuted by professors of medical science. And it is well known that progress in this department of knowledge has ever been thought bitter opposition. The *odium medicum* is full as strong as the *odium theologicum*.

The laughable blunders as to steam navigation perpetrated by so learned a scientist as Dr. Lardner are familiar to all.

The history of modern science is full of such mistakes and sins, revealing a spirit of dogmatism and bigotry fully equal to any which has been so lavishly attributed to theologians.

Of course the bigotry of religious men is none the less an evil to be repented of because there is a bigotry of the schools. But scientists may well learn a lesson of modesty from the review of the past, and moderate their anathemas against the dogmatism and superstition of the Church. Very often the charge of superstition has been made against Christian theologians, because they would not accept as facts merely unproved theories. Within the space of a quarter of a century, geology for one science, has passed through several stages, and in some important points yet remains unsettled. And yet each theory, during its temporary triumph, has claimed the homage of the world, and hurled its denunciations against whatever Christian man dared to stand in doubt. But the world has seen some self-crowned despots of science come down from their thrones, and confess their fallibility.

For true science it becomes all to cherish the profoundest regard; and true science is naturally candid and modest.

### THE PHILOSOPHER AND THE SCHOOL-GIRL.

Not long ago a young man from the Provinces was sent to Paris to finish his education; but like many others, he had the misfortune of getting into bad company. His own passions, inflamed by the godless conversation of his companions, caused him to forget the instructions of his pious mother, and despise her religion. He went so far as to wish and finally to say, there is no God; God was only a word. After staying several years in the Capital the young man returned to his family. One day he was invited to a respectable house where there was a numerous company.

Whilst all were entertaining themselves with news, pleasure and business, two girls aged respectively twelve and thirteen were seated in a bay-window reading together. The young man approached them and asked: "What beautiful romance are you reading so attentively, young ladies?"

"We are reading no romance, sir."

"Not a romance? What book are you reading then?"

"We are reading the history of God's chosen people."

"You believe then that there is a God?"

Astonished at such a question the girls looked at each other, the blood mounting to their cheeks.

"And you, sir, do you not believe it?" quickly replied the older one.

"Once I believed it, but after living in Paris and studying philosophy, mathematics, politics, I am convinced that God is an empty word."

"I, sir, was never in Paris, I have never studied philosophy or mathematics, or all those beautiful things which you know, I only know my Catechism; but since you are so learned and say there is no God, you can also easily tell me whence the egg comes?"

The young girl spoke these words sufficiently loud for a part of the company to hear them. At first a few persons approached to hear what they were speaking about; others followed. Finally the whole company collected around the bay-window to listen to the conversation.

"Yes, sir," said the young girl, "since you say there is no God will you be kind enough to explain to me whence the egg comes?"

"A funny question truly; the egg comes from the hen."

"And now, sir, whence comes the hen?"

"You know that as well as I do, Miss; the hen comes from the egg."

"Which of them existed first, the egg or the hen?"

"I really do not know what you intend with this question and with your hen; but yet that which existed first was the hen."

"There is then a hen which did not come from an egg?"

"Beg you pardon, Miss, did I not take notice that the egg existed first?"

"There is then an egg which did not come from a hen?"

"Oh, if you—beg pardon—that is—you see—"

"I see, that you do not know whether the egg existed before the hen or the hen before the egg?"

"Well, then, I say the hen."

"Very well, there is then a hen which did not come from an egg. Tell me now who made this first hen from which all other hens and eggs come?"

"With your hens and your eggs it seems to me you take me for a poultry dealer."

"By no means, sir, I only ask you to tell me whence the mother of all hens and eggs comes?"

"But for what object?"

"Well, since you do not know you will permit me to tell you. He who created the first hen or as you would rather have it, the first egg, is the same who created the world; and this being we call God. You cannot explain the existence of a hen or an egg without God. You cannot explain the existence of this world without God?"

The young philosopher was silent; he quietly took his hat, and full of shame departed.—*From the French.*

### SUNDAY IN SWITZERLAND.

During the recent debate on the reform of the constitution in the Swiss National Assembly, a proposition by M. Peyer, of Lucerne, making Sunday a day of rest, was introduced. Hitherto, in Switzerland, Sunday has been looked upon pretty much like any other day; but a strong feeling has grown up among the working classes that a clause should be inserted in the new Constitution, so as to recognise the fact that on one day of the week, they should not be compelled to work; and, though the Assembly was taken by surprise by the motion, the members felt the justice of the demand, and the clause was carried by a large majority. The whole question of the hours of labour will, before long, says a correspondent, have to undergo a thorough revision; for at present working men in Switzerland frequently make twelve, and sometimes even fourteen hours a day, in addition to which, they have, in many cases, to walk long distances to their homes.

### HOW TO GET THE PEOPLE TO MEETING.

There are many churches, throughout New England and the United States, and we cannot say where else, that experience great afflictions because their houses of worship are not filled. Young Men's Christian Associations have taken this subject up, and sought most earnestly to find out where the evil lies, and to suggest a remedy. It has been said, that churches do not build their houses upon the right principle; that instead of the pews being owned by different individuals, they should be free to any persons who will occupy them. Then, it is alleged that church-goers expend so much for Sunday dress that poor people cannot feel happy in their presence. Besides all else, it is affirmed that the spirit of caste as developed in church members, influencing them to associate with each other only, to the exclusion of all other persons from their social arrangements, is most prejudicial to the enlargement of worshipping congregations. But we opine that if we could have a universal free-seat system; if the most wealthy churchgoers would dress in the commonest homespun; and if church members would mingle with outsiders upon terms of the most perfect social equality, there would still be small congregations, weekly growing smaller. The difficulty is deeper and more