

**OUR THIRST FOR DRINK; ITS CAUSE AND
CURE, A POEM IN WHICH THE DRINK
QUESTION IS
DISCUSSED UNDER ITS VARIOUS
ASPECTS - HISTORICAL, SOCIAL,
POLITICAL, AND RELIGIOUS, PP. 4-115**

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A POEM

IN WHICH THE DRINK QUESTION IS DISCUSSED UNDER ITS VARIOUS
ASPECTS—HISTORICAL, SOCIAL, POLITICAL,
AND RELIGIOUS.

BY

J. K. C.,



AUTHOR OF ETHICAL POEM ON INTEMPERANCE.

DUBLIN:

JAMES DUFFY AND SONS,

15, WELLINGTON QUAY,

AND 1A PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON.

1879.

280. ; . 619.

over two years ago, his Ethical Poem on Intemperance, he never intended to publish another long poem on the same subject. As the old proverb has it, one thing leads to another, and so it has happened in his case. Having given, for the past two years, more attention to the Temperance Question, and having read more upon it than he had previously done, and feeling more strongly than ever the pressing need of temperance reform, he has written the following Poem as the complement and completion of his shorter didactic Poem on the subject of Drink. It may not be out of place here to mention how he came to publish his first Poem on the drink question. The Author will no longer conceal the fact—which some of his Reviewers, and notably one in America, have made public—namely, that he is a Roman Catholic Clergyman, and he will now add, having charge of a small flock among the ancient tribes of Hy-Many, in the Province of Connaught. While on the mission in one of the large towns of his native diocese, and while spiritual guardian of a Catholic Young Men's Society, he delivered, some fourteen years ago, a lecture on the "Physical and Social Evils of Intemperance." That lecture, which has never been published, suggested to him, after his removal to a retired and less laborious mission, the Ethical Poem

on Intemperance, and furnished him with much of the materials. He resolved to turn those materials to account, and to give what help he could to the temperance cause, to which every patriot who loves his country, and every Christian who loves his kind, should lend a helping hand. When it is borne in mind that he had been thirty-six years a disciple of Father Mathew, to whose feet he had been brought when very young, and over nineteen years a priest ere he published a line on the temperance question, the reader will easily believe that it was no love of ephemeral fame, but an humble and sincere desire to help the temperance cause that led him to run the risk (and, unfortunately, it is a risk in Ireland) of publishing a Poem, and sending it forth under the humble auspices of unknown initials. He is the more grateful to all those, Catholic and Protestant, and particularly so to the exalted prelates of his Church, who, not knowing who or what he was, received his humble essay with a degree of favour and approval which he had neither the hardihood nor the presumption to expect.

Some, doubtless, who have read that poem, and may be of the number of those

“Who, for language, all their care express,
And value books, as women men, for dress,”

may have been somewhat disappointed that the writer had not clothed his ideas in richer poetic diction. They probably would have been less disappointed had they known that he belongs to a hard-working body of men who, after the daily discharge of their onerous and important duties, have little time left for the reading of English Bards or Scotch Reviewers ; and if they sometimes read pages of poetry it is more with a view to recreate and refresh their minds, and to beguile a weary hour, than to tune their ears to poetic numbers. If time and a taste for such studies permitted, it ought not to be difficult for those who spent some of the best years of their youth over the glowing pages of Homer and Virgil in the grand and musical originals, to tune their ears to the melody of verse. Hence it is if the verses of the following Poem lack what are called the higher graces of poetic diction, it must not be attributed to the writer's calling, but rather to the fact that he served no apprenticeship to the "idle trade;" and that without a long and devoted apprenticeship high excellence is scarcely attainable in any art or science. Nor should it be forgotten that were he master of the most highly ornate and elaborate style of poetry, which is now the fashion, and to which he lays no claim, it would be ill adapted to

didactic poetry, just as stained-glass windows are not the best for admitting light. In mentioning his calling and his duties he merely wishes to intimate to his readers, that they need not expect to find, under his initials, some young and ardent disciple of the *Lake* School or the *German* School, or any other modern school of English poetry. He belongs, as becomes a disciple of Father Mathew, to the Holy Well School of Temperance ; and if he ambitions to belong to any *Lake* School, it is to the Lough Derg School of Prayer and Penance—a school not much frequented by the writers of poetry in the nineteenth century. The reader need not therefore expect in the following Poem any pyrotechnic display of a poetic imagination intended to dazzle, but only the bright and cheerful fire of profitable instruction on a great social and moral question. If his verses, as may be expected from the theme and the genius of a water drinker, lack more sparkling qualities, they will be found, he trusts, pure, clear, and healthful as the limpid stream that flows

From out the rock, a liquor fit for kings,
Which from her cellar frugal nature brings.

Without detracting from the beauties of those poets who, according to the Author of *Essentials in*

History and Literature, "have lived in the world of imagination, and who are sometimes absolutely unintelligible to ordinary mortals," the present writer holds with the same Rev. Author, that, "poetry which cannot be understood by the mass of intelligent readers is out of joint with nature, and cannot be enduring." Obscurity of style is not, however, the greatest fault of some of our admired poets. Their teaching is oftentimes worse than obscure.

It is to be hoped that the reader will have no difficulty in understanding the language of the following Poem, and that he will not think the style ill-adapted to didactic poetry, the object of which is, not to dazzle the mind and intoxicate the imagination, but to convey useful instruction, and to reach the understanding and the heart by short and simple methods.

Pope says of Horace,

"Horace still charms with graceful negligence,
And without method talks us into sense ;
Will, like a friend, familiarly convey
The truest notions in the easiest way."

And the writer will deem himself well remunerated if he can only talk some of his readers into sobriety, and familiarly convey to them true notions on the great moral and social virtue of temperance.

He begs, in conclusion, to express his indebtedness to the recently published *History of Drink*, the *Temperance Cyclopædia*, the *Discipline of Drink*, and to *Potter's Antiquities of Greece* for many of the historical facts regarding drink which he has woven into the following Poem. With regard to the devout and ascetical writers whose opinions he follows in the spiritual motives which he proposes as a cure for Intemperance, he has no acknowledgment to make beyond quoting the well-known lines of Horace,

"Publica materies privati juris erit, si
Nec circa vilem patulumque moraberis orbem."

Some, perhaps, may think some at least of the subjects touched upon in the following Poem too solemn to be treated in verse; but the same objection would hold against the *Dies Iræ* and the *Stabat Mater*, those sublime and immortal productions of the Christian muse. The learned Father Bridgett, in his *Discipline of Drink*, says "a thousand agencies are required, a thousand reforms must be made, before the nation can become sober;" and certainly meditation upon the great eternal truths is one of the most powerful agencies.

If, therefore, the latter portions of the following