

**THE
BOOR, A POEM**

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The Boor, a Poem by John Hill

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JOHN HILL

**THE
BOOR, A POEM**

J. H. 1890

THE BOOR.

A Poem,

ADDRESSED TO THE

CHURCH OF CHRIST:

AND

DEDICATED

TO HIS GRACE

THE LORD ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY.

BY THE

REV. JOHN HILL, M.A.

Ἐπιθεωροῦντες γὰρ αὐτὸν ἐν μυστηρίοις τῆς βασιλείας τοῦ Θεοῦ.
ΜΑΡΚ. Κεφ. V. α'.
Ὁ Ἰησοῦς αὐτὸν ἀπεκάλει ἐν τῷ πνεύματι λίγῳ κατὰ ἰακκωβίαι.
ἈΠΟΚ. Κεφ. γ'. ββ'.

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MDCCLXXIX.

825.

TO THE
MOST REVEREND FATHER IN GOD,
THE LORD ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY,
PRIMATE OF ALL ENGLAND, AND METROPOLITAN.

Mr Lord,

As the distinguishing and inestimable privilege achieved by Christ for his church, over part of which your Grace has very recently been elevated to the exalted and responsible office of chief guardian, not only invests the meanest of his followers with the badge of sonship to the Eternal Father, unquestionably the highest honour to which humanity can aspire, but raises the greatest sinner from the mire and clay of despondency and degradation to the rock of immortal hope and everlasting bliss, certainly the most cheering and ennobling transition which the eye of faith can behold; and as the same glorious privilege further inculcates on the most illustrious and exalted in the household of God the duty of brotherly love and charity, the fields and avenues of whose active and universal benevolence, infidels, as well as the faithful in Jesus, must acknowledge to furnish the most consoling and invigorating prospects that can meet

the eye of reason within the shifting horizon of life's pilgrimage, I am induced to expect praise rather than blame, when I seek to place this song for the deliverance of the Church and of mankind from bondage, under the auspices and protection of your Grace.

Who can be supposed either more able, or more willing to determine the merits of such a production: who more ready to sympathize for its imperfections?

The precepts, doctrines, and example of the Son of God incontrovertibly establish the divine character of that spirit of paternal benevolence, of Christian love, which, while it inspires a noble sympathy and condescension in the minds of the most illustrious and powerful towards the most feeble and obscure of their fellow-men, gives to these a virtuous confidence and boldness of approach towards rank and dignity.

Such a spirit, a manly and an enlightened eminence will not hesitate to cherish, as well as to recognise. Its deep and lasting importance is, indeed, acknowledged by those of our philosophers who have not yet been tainted by a grovelling and confined materialism: it is followed by those among our statesmen, whose profound and expansive views, respecting that course of policy and government best calculated to preserve Great Britain from becoming a mere satellite to foreign

power, have, in a great measure, burst through the cobwebs of a perblind and pernicious sophistry: it is maintained by those divines in our Protestant Church who have dug to her foundations, and who have fearlessly resolved to act up to their sound and scriptural convictions.

Over the last of these three divisions your Grace holds a pre-eminent and commanding station. The Almighty appears to have so ordered the concerns and events of this world, as to reconcile the efficacy and responsibility of human agency with his own universal and special decrees. Yet it is to be supposed that, before the galaxy of wisdom and piety over which your Lordship presides, nothing but the comfort and encouragement afforded by the commendation which Jesus, in presence of his disciples and the multitude, conferred on the widow's two mites, would have persuaded me to appear with this little work—my widowed contribution to the Christian treasury.

To the ordinary reader, it is descriptive of the education, life, and occupations of a sensible, humane, and pious Christian: to the philanthropist, to the theologian, and to the divine, it will betray, it is, indeed, intended to discover, a more recondite purpose. This circumstance has no doubt created difficulties that would not have otherwise occurred; but the didactic and allegorical texture of the work has been conducted

without violating either the truth, or the integrity of the narrative. And if either in these, or in other respects, faults do exist, where can I hope for more considerate lenity, than under the shelter of your Lordship's name and office?

It were premature to object that my present attempt should be regarded as a signal from without the camp. I am willing, nevertheless, that it in any way be considered as a faithful and an unflinching voice against the presence, or the approach of man's spiritual enemies, under whatever colours they may disguise themselves.

The master-key of the mysterious providence, involving the horrors of the French revolution, lies hid in that profound ignorance in which the slumbering energies of the people's mind had for centuries been intombed. To that wisdom and love of God which both cheer and ennoble the soul of man, the rulers and priests in France had long preferred the paradoxical and unnatural barbarism of a refined ignorance, and an ungodly prostration of the human intellect.

But, in the exercise and evidence of a just and overwhelming retribution, an all-wise and benevolent Creator consigned those iniquitous guides to the jurisdiction and condemnation of the barbarous tribunal which they themselves had erected. That visitation, however tremendous, is chiefly to be de-

explored for the disasters and complicated woes which it brought upon the innocent victims of a base and an unholy conspiracy against the laws irreversibly established by God, for the exaltation and happiness of reasonable man.

In these realms, and in these our times, my Lord, the unrestrained clamour and growing strength of the unreformed and incorrigible successors of those to whose foul machinations, under the sacrilegious garb of religion, France was principally indebted for all the calamities of her revolution, but too evidently betray a fearful approximation, which we have effected, to the moral and religious causes of that memorable but apparently unheeded event.

Your Lordship wisely judges, and in a printed * charge fearlessly declares, in reference to such adversaries, that the clergy ought, "with calmness and steadiness, to resist an usurpation which would despoil them at once of their faith, their liberties, and their sacred character;" and, on the present occasion, I cannot refrain from attaching to so strong, and so comprehensive a declaration, whose weight and expediency a lapse of time and a change of policy have since only increased and confirmed, the following reasonable,

* A Charge delivered to the Clergy of the Diocese of London, in 1826, p. 12.

and, as it appears to me, Christian and constitutional meaning.

First, That the admission of Roman Catholics into the Parliament of these realms must be regarded as a dire alternative even by the most strenuous and enlightened advocates of such a measure; that neither those among the adherents of the Pope, who are principally actuated by the desire of placing the stability, or rather the weight, of a national church upon the lever of a foreign power, nor, what is infinitely more dangerous, the priests themselves, and all the abettors of the system of darkness maintained by the Romish hierarchy, can, on the soundest Christian principles of faith, hope, and charity, taken either severally or combined, regard their late political alliance and equality with their fellow subjects in this Protestant kingdom, as any sanctuary, Italian city of refuge, or lasting security against a recurrence of those spiritual, intellectual, and, may I add, prophetic thunders, which burst upon them from the bulwarks of the Reformation: that whatever shelter the British Legislature may, in its collective wisdom and prudence, have afforded in Ireland to the Roman Catholics, they must not, therefore, imagine themselves placed beyond the reach of the Protestant church in Great Britain; that all the reasons of justice and expediency, so often, so strenuously, and so powerfully advanced by the Irish Catholics and their