

“ God of our fathers, what is man !
 Nor do I name of men the common route,
 That, wandering loose abroad,
 Grow up and perish as the summer fly, —
 Heads without name, no more remembered, —
 But such as thou hast solemnly elected,
 With gifts and graces eminently adorned,
 For some great work — thy glory.”

And then, too, consider the moral character of modern dramatic poetry, so decidedly worse than the noble tragic poetry of antiquity. From the days of Dryden to the present, — for even Shakspeare, with all his splendid moral sentiments, was undoubtedly a libertine in principle and practice, — scarcely a dramatic poet has appeared whose “entire unweeded volumes,” as Hannah More calls them, can be conscientiously recommended, save the *Comus* and *Samson Agonistes* of Milton, and a few other plays of kindred character. We have seen, too, that lyric poetry — more influential than any other upon public morals — has been prostituted to the cause of intemperance and revelry, from the time when Anacreon indited his *Ἡ γῆ μελαινα πινει*, and Horace his *Nunc est bibendum*, down to the period when Burns exclaimed,

“ We’ll tak’ a cup o’ kindness yet,
 For auld lang syne ; ”

or, still later, when the echo came from Moore, —

“ Friend of my life, this wine cup sip.”

But thanks be to God, that in these latter days he has created some greater and some lesser Christian lights, and placed them in the poetic firmament, where they already begin to rule the day and the night. First came Milton ; a permanent