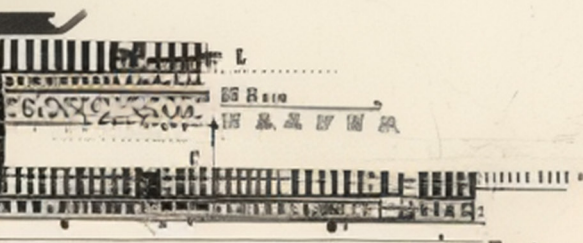


Isaac Kinley

Selected Poems



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Isaac Kinley

November 7, 1820 [Randolph County, Indiana] –

January 15, 1909 [Los Angeles, California]

Major Isaac Kinley served in an Indiana regiment during the Civil War and was the youngest member of the Indiana constitutional convention in 1951. He served in the Indiana State Senate, representing Randolph County, for four years and was very influential on the state's educational system. He moved west in 1874, first to San Jose and then to Los Angeles, where he revived the Los Angeles Star, a paper representing, in the words of one obituary, "the interests of the Workingmen." Having never fully recovered from the wounds he suffered during the war, he died in 1909 after a long illness.

Labor Rhymes. Los Angeles, 1886.

Lecher Baldwin

It may be asked why this poem is found among "Labor Rhymes." The subject of it, in addition to his beastliness, is the employer of three hundred coolies. It is well that other monopolists know in whose company they muster.

Besides, I think it better in morals as well as in manliness, to publish while its author may be made responsible, than to leave it to be some time hence given out posthumously.

My curse upon thee, "Lucky" man—
Thy crime too foul for tongue to name;
For ever be thou under ban,
The deep damnation of thy shame.

Right glad we seek in vain to find,
In human story, thing so base—
Thou miscreate that mocks our kind
With biped semblance of the race!

I've named thee man; thou art not such;
'Twould libel beasts to call thee beast;
The reptiles vile in filth that slutch,
Would nauseate turn from thy foul feast.

Of all the things that creep or crawl
Upon their bellies on the earth—
Of vipers, scorpions, adders all—
Thou art than they of lower worth.

Our mother tongue has never heard
For thing so foul as thee a name;
Let Lecher Baldwin be that word
To synonym thy crime and shame.

'Tis Lecher Baldwin, while there lives
On earth, as thou, so foul a blot;
When none of thee or thine survives,

Be it and thou alike forgot.

I pity thee, poor miscreate
With soul so shriveled, dwarfed and vile,
So low that no thing animate
Can touch thy hand without defile.

As man, henceforth, we know thee not,
Go wallow in thy slimy den;
As lecher vile, thou art boycott
In all the walks and ways of men.

For all thy foul, unnamed crimes,
For all thy words and ways obscene,
As lepers were in olden times,
We bid, begone! Unclean! Unclean!

Thou worst abort of woman born,
Henceforth a by-word and a hiss;
The cat-o'-nine-tails of our scorn
Shall be thy venging Nemesis.

Work On, Hope Ever

A bright day is coming
 In sunshine and beauty—
The day for the toiling
To bless them forever.
When honor shall come as
 The guerdon of duty—
 Work on, hope ever.

But let not your thoughts be
 An idle bewailing—
A fruitless imploring
Your fetters to sever;
But stand ye for freedom
 With spirit unquailing—
 Work on, hope ever.

For never can conquer
 The Right, but by trying—
Unyielding must be our
Unchanging endeavor:
The truth be proclaiming
 And error defying—
 Work on, hope ever.

For not can conviction
 Be carried by pleading—
Nor stony hearts melted
When wooed as a lover—
Come on in your numbers
 Where Honor is leading—
 Work on, hope ever.

The day that is coming
 Is glory to labor,
With justice unswerving
A ruler for ever,

When kindness and love shall
Own each as a neighbor—
Work on, hope ever.

The flag of the fathers
Shall wave in its glory,
And freedom be real—
A blessing for ever—
And all shall rejoice as
They're learning the story—
Work on, hope ever.

