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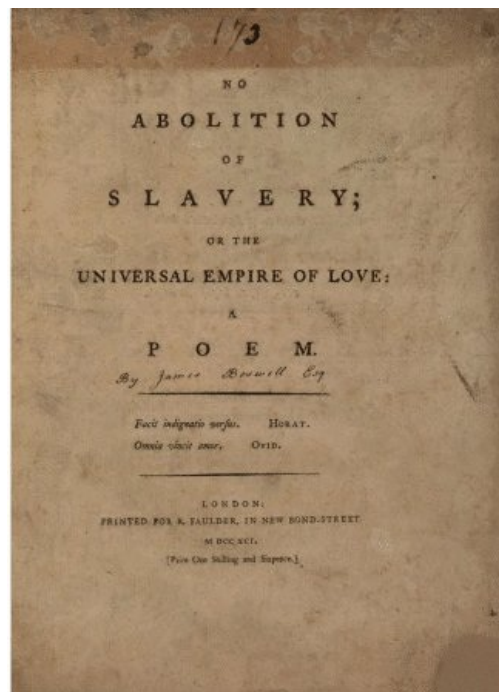
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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK NO ABOLITION OF SLAVERY ***

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OF
SLAVERY;
OR THE
UNIVERSAL EMPIRE OF LOVE:
A
P O E M.

By James Boswell, Esq.

Facit indignatio versus. HORAT.
Omnia vincit amor. OVID.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR R. FAULDER, IN NEW BOND STREET.
MDCXCXI.

[Price One Shilling and Sixpence.]

[Pg 2]

Entered at Stationer's Hall

ERRATUM.
P. 13, l. 7, for mighty *read* magick.

[Pg 3]

TO THE RESPECTABLE BODY
OF
WEST-INDIA PLANTERS AND MERCHANTS,
THE FOLLOWING POEM
IS INSCRIBED BY
THE AUTHOUR.

[Pg 4]

[Pg 5]

NO ABOLITION OF SLAVERY:
OR,
THE UNIVERSAL EMPIRE OF LOVE.

ADDRESSED TO MISS —.

—Most pleasing of thy sex,
Born to delight and never vex;
Whose kindness gently can controul
My wayward turbulence of soul.

Pry'thee, my dearest, dost thou read, 5
The Morning *Prints*, and ever heed
MINUTES, which tell how time's mispent,
In either House of Parliament?

[Pg 6]

See T—, with the front of Jove!
But not like Jove with thunder grac'd¹, 10
In Westminster's superb alcove
Like the unhappy Theseus plac'd².
Day after day indignant swells
His generous breast, while still he hears
Impeachment's fierce relentless yells, 15
Which stir his bile and grate his ears.

And what a dull vain barren shew
ST. STEPHEN'S luckless Chapel fills;
Our notions of respect how low,
While fools bring in their idle Bills. 20

[Pg 7]

Noodles³, who rave for abolition
Of *th' African's improv'd condition*⁴,
At your own cost fine projects try;
Dont *rob*—from *pure humanity*.

[Pg 8]

Go, W——, with narrow scull, 25
Go home, and preach away at Hull,
No longer to the *Senate*⁵ cackle,
In strains which suit the Tabernacle;
I hate your little wittling sneer,
Your pert and self-sufficient leer, 30
Mischief to Trade sits on thy lip,
Insects will gnaw the noblest ship;
Go, W——, be gone, for shame,
Thou dwarf, with a big-sounding name.

[Pg 9]

Poor inefficient B——, we see 35
No *capability* in thee,
Th' immortal spirit of thy Sire
Has borne away th' æthereal fire,
And left thee but the earthy dregs,—
Let's never have thee on thy legs; 40
'Tis too provoking, sure, to feel,
A kick from such a puny heel.

Pedantick pupil of old Sherry,
Whose shrugs and jerks would make us merry,
If not by tedious languor wrung— 45
Hold thy intolerable tongue.

Drawcansir DOLBEN would destroy
Both slavery and licentious joy;
Foe to all sorts of *planters*⁶, he
Will suffer neither *bond* nor *free*. 50

[Pg 10]

Go we to the Committee room,
There gleams of light conflict with gloom,
While unread rheams in chaos lye,
Our water closets to supply.

What frenzies will a rabble seize 55
In lax luxurious days, like these;
THE PEOPLE'S MAJESTY, forsooth,

Must fix our rights, define our truth;
Weavers⁷ become our Lords of Trade,
And every clown throw by his spade, 60
T' *instruct* our ministers of state,
And *foreign commerce* regulate:
Ev'n *bony* Scotland with her dirk,
Nay, her starv'd presbyterian *kirk*⁸,
With ignorant effrontery prays 65
Britain to dim the western rays,
Which while they on our island fall
Give warmth and splendour to us all.

[Pg 11]

See in a stall three feet by four,
Where door is window, window door, 70
Saloop a hump-back'd cobbler drink;
"With *him* the muse shall sit and think;"
He shall in *sentimental* strain,
That *negroes* are *oppress'd*, complain.
What mutters the decrepit creature? 75
THE DIGNITY OF HUMAN NATURE⁹!

WINDHAM, I won't suppress a gibe.
Whilst THOU art with the whining tribe;
Thou who hast sail'd in a balloon,
And touch'd, intrepid, at the moon, 80
(Hence, as the Ladies say you wander,
By much too fickle a Philander:)
Shalt THOU, a Roman free and rough,
Descend to weak *blue stocking* stuff,
And cherish feelings soft and kind, 85
Till you emasculate your mind.

[Pg 12]

Let COURTENAY sneer, and gibe, and hack,
We know Ham's sons are always black;
On sceptick themes he wildly raves,
Yet Africk's sons were always slaves; 90
I'd have the rogue beware of libel,
And spare a jest—when on the Bible.

BURKE, art THOU here too? thou, whose pen,
Can blast the fancied *rights of men*:
Pray, by what logick are those rights 95
Allow'd to *Blacks*—deny'd to *Whites*?

But Thou! bold Faction's chief *Antistes*,
Thou, more than Samson Agonistes!
Who, Rumour tells us, would pull down
Our charter'd rights, our church, our crown;
Of talents vast, but with a mind 100
Unaw'd, ungovern'd, unconfin'd;
Best humour'd man, worst politician,
Most dangerous, desp'rate state physician;
Thy manly character why stain 105
By canting, when 'tis all in vain?
For thy tumultuous reign is o'er;
THE PEOPLE'S MAN thou art no more.

[Pg 13]

And Thou, in whom the magick name
Of WILLIAM PITT still gathers fame, 110
Who could at once exalted stand,
Spurning subordinate command;
Ev'n when a stripling sit with ease,
The mighty helm of state to seise;
Whom now (a thousand storms endur'd) 115
Years of experience have matur'd;
For whom, in glory's race untir'd,
Th' events of nations have conspir'd;
For whom, eer many suns revolv'd,
Holland has crouch'd, and France dissolv'd; 120

[Pg 14]

And Spain, in a Don Quixote fit,
Has bullied only to submit;
Why stoop to nonsense? why cajole
Blockheads who vent their *rigmarole*?
And yet, where *influence* must rule, 125
'Tis sometimes wise to play the fool;

Thus, like a witch, you raise a storm,
Whether the *Parliament's Reform*,
A set of *Irish Propositions*,
Impeachment—on your own conditions, 130
Or RICHMOND'S wild fortifications,
Enough to ruin twenty nations,
Or any thing you know can't fail,
To be a tub to Party's whale.
Then whilst they nibble, growl, and worry, 135
All keen and busy, hurry-scurry;
Britannia's ship you onward guide,
Wrapt in security and pride.

[Pg 15]

Accept fair praise; but while I live
Your *Regency* I can't forgive; 140
My Tory soul with anger swell'd,
When I a parcel'd Crown beheld;
Prerogative put under hatches,
A Monarchy of shreds and patches;
And lo! a *Phantom!* to create, 145
A huge HERMAPHRODITE OF STATE!
A monster, more alarming still
Than FOX'S raw-head India Bill!

THURLOW, forbear thy awful frown;
I beg you may not *look* me down 150
My honest fervour do not scout,
I too like thee can be devout,
And in a solemn invocation¹⁰,
Of loyalty make protestation.

[Pg 16]

Courtiers, who chanc'd to guess aright, 155
And bask now in the Royal sight,
Gold sticks and silver, and white wands,
Ensigns of favour in your hands,
Glitt'ring with stars, and envied seen
Adorn'd with ribbands blue, red, green! 160
I charge you of deceit keep clear,
And poison not the Sovereign's ear:
O ne'er let Majesty suppose
The *Prince's* friends must be HIS foes.
There is not one amongst you all 165
Whose sword is readier at his call;
An ancient Baron of the land,
I by my King shall ever stand;
But when it pleases Heav'n to shroud
The Royal image in a cloud, 170
That image in the Heir I see,
The Prince is then as King to me.
Let's have, altho' the skies should lour,
No interval of Regal pow'r¹¹.

[Pg 17]

Where have I wander'd? do I dream? 175
Sure slaves of power are not my theme;
But honest slaves, the sons of toil,
Who cultivate the Planter's soil.

He who to thwart GOD'S system¹² tries,
Bids mountains sink, and vallies rise; 180
Slavery, subjection, what you will,
Has ever been, and will be still:
Trust me, that in this world of woe
Mankind must different burthens know;
Each bear his own, th' Apostle spoke; 185
And chiefly they who bear the yoke.

[Pg 18]

From wise subordination's plan
Springs the chief happiness of man;
Yet from that source to numbers flow
Varieties of pain and woe; 190
Look round this land of freedom, pray,
And all its lower ranks survey;
Bid the hard-working labourer speak,
What are his scanty gains a week?
All huddled in a smoaky shed, 195
How are his wife and children fed?

Are not the poor in constant fear
Of the relentless Overseer?

LONDON! Metropolis of bliss!
Ev'n there sad sights we cannot miss; 200
Beggars at every corner stand,
With doleful look and trembling hand;
Hear the shrill piteous cry of *sweep*,
See wretches riddling an ash heap;
The streets some for old iron scrape, 205
And scarce the crush of wheels escape;
Some share with dogs the half-eat bones,
From dunghills pick'd with weary groans.

[Pg 19]

Dear CUMBERLAND, whose various powers 210
Preserve thy life from languid hours,
Thou scholar, statesman, traveller, wit,
Who prose and verse alike canst hit;
Whose gay *West-Indian* on our stage,
Alone might check this stupid rage; 215
Fastidious yet—O! condescend
To range with an advent'rous friend:
Together let us beat the rounds,
St. Giles's ample blackguard bounds:
Try what th' accurs'd *Short's Garden* yields, 220
His bludgeon where the *Flash-man* wields;
Where female votaries of sin,
With fetid rags and breath of gin,
Like antique statues stand in rows,
Fine fragments sure, but ne'er a nose. 225
Let us with calmness ascertain
The liberty of *Lewkner's Lane*,
And *Cockpit-Alley—Stewart's Rents*,
Where the fleec'd drunkard oft repents.
With BENTLEY'S¹³ critical *acumen* 230
Explore the haunts of evil's *Numen*;
And in the *hundreds* of *Old Drury*,
Descant *de legibus Naturæ*¹⁴.
Let's prowl the courts of *Newton-Street*,
Where infamy and murder meet; 235
Where CARPMEAL¹⁵ must with caution tread,
MACMANUS tremble for his head,
JEALOUS look sharp with all his eyes,
And TOWNSHEND apprehend surprise;
And having view'd the horrid maze, 240
Let's justify the Planter's ways.

[Pg 20]

[Pg 21]

Lo then, in yonder fragrant isle
Where Nature ever seems to smile,
The cheerful *gang*¹⁶!—the negroes see
Perform the task of industry:
Ev'n at their labour hear them sing, 245
While time flies quick on downy wing;
Finish'd the bus'ness of the day,
No human beings are more gay:
Of food, clothes, cleanly lodging sure,
Each has his property secure; 250
Their wives and children are protected,
In sickness they are not neglected;
And when old age brings a release,
Their grateful days they end in peace.

But should our Wrongheads have their will, 255
Should Parliament approve their bill,
Pernicious as th' effect would be,
T' abolish negro slavery,
Such partial freedom would be vain,
Since Love's strong empire must remain. 260

[Pg 22]

VENUS, Czarina of the skies,
Despotick by her killing eyes,
Millions of slaves who don't complain,
Confess her universal reign:
And *Cupid* too well-us'd to try 265
His bow-string lash, and darts to ply,

Her little *Driver* still we find,
A wicked rogue, although he's blind.

Bring me not maxims from the schools;
Experience now my conduct rules; 270
O ———! trust thy lover true,
I must and will be slave to you.

[Pg 23]

Yet I must say—but pr'ythee smile,—
'Twas a hard trip to Paphos isle;
By your keen roving glances caught, 275
And to a beauteous tyrant brought;
My head with giddiness turn'd round,
With strongest fetters I was bound;
I fancy from my frame and face,
You thought me of th' Angola race¹⁷: 280
You kept me long indeed, my dear,
Between the decks of hope and fear;
But this and all the *seasoning* o'er,
My blessings I enjoy the more.

Contented with my situation, 285
I want but little REGULATION;
At intervals *Chanson à boire*
And good old port in my *Code noire*;
Nor care I when I've once begun,
How long I labour, in the sun 290
Of your bright eyes!—which beam with joy,
Warm, cheer, enchant, but don't destroy.

[Pg 24]

My charming friend! it is full time
To close this argument in rhyme;
The rhapsody must now be ended, 295
My proposition I've defended;
For, Slavery there must ever be,
While we have Mistresses like thee!

THE END.

¹ Had he the command of thunder, there can be no doubt that he would long before now have cleared a troublesome quarter.

² *Sedet eternumque sedebit*
Infelix Theseus.

VIRG.

³ If the abettors of the Slave trade Bill should think they are too harshly treated in this Poem, let them consider how they should feel if *their* estates were threatened by an agrarian law; (no unpalatable measure) and let them make allowances for the irritation which themselves have occasioned.

⁴ That the Africans are in a state of savage wretchedness, appears from the most authentic accounts. Such being the fact, an abolition of the slave trade would in truth be precluding them from the first step towards progressive civilization, and consequently of happiness, which it is proved by the most respectable evidence they enjoy in a great degree in our West-India islands, though under well-regulated restraint. The clamour which is raised against this change of their situation, reminds us of the following passage in one of the late Mr. Hall's 'Fables for Grown Gentlemen.'

"'Tis thus the Highlander complains,
'Tis thus the Union they abuse,
For binding their backsides in chains,
And shackling their feet in shoes;
For giving them both food and fuel,
And comfortable cloaths,
Instead of cruel oatmeal gruel,
Instead of rags and heritable blows."

⁵ The question now agitated in the British Parliament concerning slavery, is illustrated with

great information, able argument, and perspicuous expression, in a work entitled, "*Doubts on the Abolition of the Slave Trade, by an Old Member of Parliament*;" printed for Stockdale, in Picadilly, 1790. It is ascribed to John Ranby, Esq.

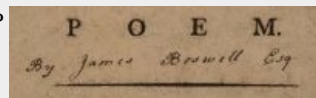
That the evils of the Slave Trade should, like the evils incident to other departments of civil subordination, be humanely remedied as much as may be, every good man is convinced; and accordingly we find that great advances have been gradually made in that respect, as may be seen in various publications, particularly the evidence taken before the Privy-Council. It must be admitted, that in the course of the present imprudent and dangerous attempt to bring about a total abolition, one essential advantage has been obtained, namely, a better mode of carrying the slaves from Africa to the West-Indies; but surely this might have been had in a less violent manner.

- 6 Diogenes being discovered in the street in fond intercourse with one of those pretty misses whom Sir William Dolben dislikes, steadily said, "Φυτεύω Ανδρας—I plant men."
- 7 Manchester Petition.
- 8 Some of the Scottish Presbyteries petitioned.
- 9 *Risum teneatis amici*. HORAT.
- 10 When I forget HIM, may GOD forget me!
- 11 *Mira cano, Sol occubuit, nox nulla sequuta*. See CAMDEN'S REMAINS.
- 12 The state of slavery is acknowledged both in the Old Testament and the New.
- 13 The great Dr. Bentley was Mr. Cumberland's grandfather.
- 14 Mr. Cumberland is a descendant of Bishop Cumberland, who wrote *De legibus Naturæ*.
- 15 Messieurs Carpmeal, Macmanus, Jealous, and Townshend, gentlemen of the Publick Office, in Bow-Street.
- 16 Sir William Young has a series of pictures, in which the negroes in our plantations are justly and pleasingly exhibited in various scenes.
- 17 The Angola blacks are the most ferocious. The author does not boast, like Abyssinian *Yakoob*, "of no ungracious figure": nor does he, like another *beau garçon*, Mr. Gibbon, prefix his pleasing countenance to captivate the ladies.

TRANSCRIBER'S NOTES

All original spellings and punctuation have been retained, except as noted.

Title page: "By James Boswell, Esq." is handwritten below "P O E M."



Erratum: the change of "mighty" to "magick" has been made.

Line 9: "Thurlow" is handwritten above "T—".

See T^{Thurlow}—, with

Line 12, **footnote 2:** "Sedet eternumqre sedebit" corrected to "Sedet eternumque sedebit".

Line 27: There is no footnote marker in the original text for **footnote 5**.

Line 35: "Brown" is handwritten above "B—".

B^{Brown}—, we see

Line 100: The line numbering is inconsistent.

Line 109: "magick" substituted for "mighty" as specified in the **erratum notice**.

A press cutting from *The Athenæum* of 4th May 1896 was included with the original. It reads as follows:

A POEM ON THE SLAVE TRADE BY JAMES BOSWELL

A hitherto unrecognized work by James Boswell was sold a few days ago by Mr. Salkeld, of Clapham Road. It is in quarto, and the title is, 'No Abolition of Slavery: or, the Universal Empire of Love: a Poem, 1791.' The authorship appears to have been attributed to Boswell on the strength of an inscription, "By James Boswell, Esq.," in a contemporary handwriting on the title-page, and there is little doubt that the inscription is correct.

In the volume of Boswelliana edited by the Rev. Charles Rogers for the Grampian Club there is a letter, written in April, 1791, to Mr. Dempster by Boswell, who mentions a recently published poem on the slave trade, written by himself. The editor, in his comments on the letter, remarks that the work referred to by Boswell is unknown to bibliographers. Mr. Salkeld's discovery, though interesting, will not confer additional lustre on Boswell's reputation as a bard; but the poem is characteristic and amusing. It is "Addressed to Miss —," perhaps intended for Miss Bagnal, who was occupying his attention at that time, and is described in

one of his letters as "about seven-and-twenty ... a Ranelagh girl—but of excellent principles, in so much that she reads prayers to the servants in her father's family every Sunday evening." The merits of the work are pretty nearly on a level with 'The Cub at Newmarket' and other poetical effusions of the writer. Nothing could be more Boswellian than the manner in which the subject is treated, and the piece is full of personal allusions. Now that the authorship of the work is known, it is probable that other copies will turn up.



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