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# **ANTI-SLAVERY POEMS**

**SONGS OF LABOR AND REFORM**

**BY**

**JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER**

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## TEXAS

### VOICE OF NEW ENGLAND.

The five poems immediately following indicate the intense feeling of the friends of freedom in view of the annexation of Texas, with its vast territory sufficient, as was boasted, for six new slave States.

Up the hillside, down the glen,  
Rouse the sleeping citizen;  
Summon out the might of men!

Like a lion growling low,  
Like a night-storm rising slow,  
Like the tread of unseen foe;

It is coming, it is nigh!  
Stand your homes and altars by;  
On your own free thresholds die.

Clang the bells in all your spires;  
On the gray hills of your sires  
Fling to heaven your signal-fires.

From Wachuset, lone and bleak,  
Unto Berkshire's tallest peak,  
Let the flame-tongued heralds speak.

Oh, for God and duty stand,  
Heart to heart and hand to hand,  
Round the old graves of the land.

Whoso shrinks or falters now,  
Whoso to the yoke would bow,  
Brand the craven on his brow!

Freedom's soil hath only place  
For a free and fearless race,  
None for traitors false and base.

Perish party, perish clan;  
Strike together while ye can,  
Like the arm of one strong man.

Like that angel's voice sublime,  
Heard above a world of crime,  
Crying of the end of time;

With one heart and with one mouth,  
Let the North unto the South  
Speak the word befitting both.

"What though Issachar be strong  
Ye may load his back with wrong

Overmuch and over long:

"Patience with her cup o'errun,  
With her weary thread outspun,  
Murmurs that her work is done.

"Make our Union-bond a chain,  
Weak as tow in Freedom's strain  
Link by link shall snap in twain.

"Vainly shall your sand-wrought rope  
Bind the starry cluster up,  
Shattered over heaven's blue cope!

"Give us bright though broken rays,  
Rather than eternal haze,  
Clouding o'er the full-orbed blaze.

"Take your land of sun and bloom;  
Only leave to Freedom room  
For her plough, and forge, and loom;

"Take your slavery-blackened vales;  
Leave us but our own free gales,  
Blowing on our thousand sails.

"Boldly, or with treacherous art,  
Strike the blood-wrought chain apart;  
Break the Union's mighty heart;

"Work the ruin, if ye will;  
Pluck upon your heads an ill  
Which shall grow and deepen still.

"With your bondman's right arm bare,  
With his heart of black despair,  
Stand alone, if stand ye dare!

"Onward with your fell design;  
Dig the gulf and draw the line  
Fire beneath your feet the mine!

"Deeply, when the wide abyss  
Yawns between your land and this,  
Shall ye feel your helplessness.

"By the hearth, and in the bed,  
Shaken by a look or tread,  
Ye shall own a guilty dread.

"And the curse of unpaid toil,  
Downward through your generous soil  
Like a fire shall burn and spoil.

"Our bleak hills shall bud and blow,  
Vines our rocks shall overgrow,  
Plenty in our valleys flow;—

"And when vengeance clouds your skies,  
Hither shall ye turn your eyes,  
As the lost on Paradise!

"We but ask our rocky strand,  
Freedom's true and brother band,  
Freedom's strong and honest hand;

"Valleys by the slave untrod,  
And the Pilgrim's mountain sod,  
Blessed of our fathers' God!"

## TO FANEUIL HALL.

Written in 1844, on reading a call by "a Massachusetts Freeman" for a meeting in Faneuil Hall of the citizens of Massachusetts, without distinction of party, opposed to the annexation of Texas, and the aggressions of South Carolina, and in favor of decisive action against slavery.

MEN! if manhood still ye claim,  
 If the Northern pulse can thrill,  
 Roused by wrong or stung by shame,  
 Freely, strongly still;  
 Let the sounds of traffic die  
 Shut the mill-gate, leave the stall,  
 Fling the axe and hammer by;  
 Throng to Faneuil Hall!

Wrongs which freemen never brooked,  
 Dangers grim and fierce as they,  
 Which, like couching lions, looked  
 On your fathers' way;  
 These your instant zeal demand,  
 Shaking with their earthquake-call  
 Every rood of Pilgrim land,  
 Ho, to Faneuil Hall!

From your capes and sandy bars,  
 From your mountain-ridges cold,  
 Through whose pines the westering stars  
 Stoop their crowns of gold;  
 Come, and with your footsteps wake  
 Echoes from that holy wall;  
 Once again, for Freedom's sake,  
 Rock your fathers' hall!

Up, and tread beneath your feet  
 Every cord by party spun:  
 Let your hearts together beat  
 As the heart of one.  
 Banks and tariffs, stocks and trade,  
 Let them rise or let them fall:  
 Freedom asks your common aid,—  
 Up, to Faneuil Hall!

Up, and let each voice that speaks  
 Ring from thence to Southern plains,  
 Sharply as the blow which breaks  
 Prison-bolts and chains!  
 Speak as well becomes the free  
 Dreaded more than steel or ball,  
 Shall your calmest utterance be,  
 Heard from Faneuil Hall!

Have they wronged us? Let us then  
 Render back nor threats nor prayers;  
 Have they chained our free-born men?  
 Let us unchain theirs!  
 Up, your banner leads the van,  
 Blazoned, "Liberty for all!"

Finish what your sires began!

Up, to Faneuil Hall!

## TO MASSACHUSETTS.

WHAT though around thee blazes  
No fiery rallying sign?  
From all thy own high places,  
Give heaven the light of thine!  
What though unthrilled, unmoving,  
The statesman stand apart,  
And comes no warm approving  
From Mammon's crowded mart?

Still, let the land be shaken  
By a summons of thine own!  
By all save truth forsaken,  
Stand fast with that alone!  
Shrink not from strife unequal!  
With the best is always hope;  
And ever in the sequel  
God holds the right side up!

But when, with thine uniting,  
Come voices long and loud,  
And far-off hills are writing  
Thy fire-words on the cloud;  
When from Penobscot's fountains  
A deep response is heard,  
And across the Western mountains  
Rolls back thy rallying word;

Shall thy line of battle falter,  
With its allies just in view?  
Oh, by hearth and holy altar,  
My fatherland, be true!  
Fling abroad thy scrolls of Freedom  
Speed them onward far and fast  
Over hill and valley speed them,  
Like the sibyl's on the blast!

Lo! the Empire State is shaking  
The shackles from her hand;  
With the rugged North is waking  
The level sunset land!  
On they come, the free battalions  
East and West and North they come,  
And the heart-beat of the millions  
Is the beat of Freedom's drum.

"To the tyrant's plot no favor  
No heed to place-fed knaves!  
Bar and bolt the door forever  
Against the land of slaves!"  
Hear it, mother Earth, and hear it,  
The heavens above us spread!  
The land is roused,—its spirit  
Was sleeping, but not dead!  
1844.

## **NEW HAMPSHIRE.**

GOD bless New Hampshire! from her granite peaks  
Once more the voice of Stark and Langdon speaks.  
The long-bound vassal of the exulting South  
For very shame her self-forged chain has broken;  
Torn the black seal of slavery from her mouth,  
And in the clear tones of her old time spoken!  
Oh, all undreamed-of, all un hoped-for changes  
The tyrant's ally proves his sternest foe;  
To all his biddings, from her mountain ranges,  
New Hampshire thunders an indignant No!  
Who is it now despairs? Oh, faint of heart,  
Look upward to those Northern mountains cold,  
Flouted by Freedom's victor-flag unrolled,  
And gather strength to bear a manlier part  
All is not lost. The angel of God's blessing  
Encamps with Freedom on the field of fight;  
Still to her banner, day by day, are pressing,  
Unlooked-for allies, striking for the right  
Courage, then, Northern hearts! Be firm, be true:  
What one brave State hath done, can ye not also do?  
1845.

## **THE PINE-TREE.**

Written on hearing that the Anti-Slavery Resolves of Stephen C. Phillips had been rejected by the Whig Convention in Faneuil Hall, in 1846.

LIFT again the stately emblem on the Bay State's  
rusted shield,  
Give to Northern winds the Pine-Tree on our banner's  
tattered field.  
Sons of men who sat in council with their Bibles  
round the board,  
Answering England's royal missive with a firm,  
"Thus saith the Lord!"  
Rise again for home and freedom! set the battle  
in array!  
What the fathers did of old time we their sons  
must do to-day.

Tell us not of banks and tariffs, cease your paltry pedler cries; Shall the good State sink her honor that your gambling stocks may rise? Would ye barter man for cotton? That your gains may sum up higher, Must we kiss the feet of Moloch, pass our children through the fire? Is the dollar only real? God and truth and right a dream? Weighed against your lying ledgers must our manhood kick the beam?

O my God! for that free spirit, which of old in  
Boston town  
Smote the Province House with terror, struck the  
crest of Andros down!  
For another strong-voiced Adams in the city's  
streets to cry,  
"Up for God and Massachusetts! Set your feet  
on Mammon's lie!  
Perish banks and perish traffic, spin your cotton's  
latest pound,  
But in Heaven's name keep your honor, keep the  
heart o' the Bay State sound!"

Where's the man for Massachusetts! Where's  
the voice to speak her free?  
Where's the hand to light up bonfires from her  
mountains to the sea?  
Beats her Pilgrim pulse no longer? Sits she dumb  
in her despair?  
Has she none to break the silence? Has she none  
to do and dare?  
O my God! for one right worthy to lift up her  
rusted shield,  
And to plant again the Pine-Tree in her banner's  
tattered field  
1840.

## **TO A SOUTHERN STATESMAN.**

John C. Calhoun, who had strongly urged the extension of slave territory by the annexation of Texas, even if it should involve a war with England, was unwilling to promote the acquisition of Oregon, which would enlarge the Northern domain of freedom, and pleaded as an excuse the peril of foreign complications which he had defied when the interests of slavery were involved.

Is this thy voice whose treble notes of fear  
Wail in the wind? And dost thou shake to hear,  
Action-like, the bay of thine own hounds,  
Spurning the leash, and leaping o'er their bounds?  
Sore-baffled statesman! when thy eager hand,  
With game afoot, unslipped the hungry pack,  
To hunt down Freedom in her chosen land,  
Hadst thou no fear, that, erelong, doubling back,  
These dogs of thine might snuff on Slavery's track?  
Where's now the boast, which even thy guarded tongue,  
Cold, calm, and proud, in the teeth o' the Senate flung,

O'er the fulfilment of thy baleful plan,  
Like Satan's triumph at the fall of man?  
How stood'st thou then, thy feet on Freedom planting,  
And pointing to the lurid heaven afar,  
Whence all could see, through the south windows slanting,  
Crimson as blood, the beams of that Lone Star!  
The Fates are just; they give us but our own;  
Nemesis ripens what our hands have sown.  
There is an Eastern story, not unknown,  
Doubtless, to thee, of one whose magic skill  
Called demons up his water-jars to fill;  
Deftly and silently, they did his will,  
But, when the task was done, kept pouring still.  
In vain with spell and charm the wizard wrought,  
Faster and faster were the buckets brought,  
Higher and higher rose the flood around,  
Till the fiends clapped their hands above their master drowned  
So, Carolinian, it may prove with thee,  
For God still overrules man's schemes, and takes  
Craftiness in its self-set snare, and makes  
The wrath of man to praise Him. It may be,  
That the roused spirits of Democracy  
May leave to freer States the same wide door  
Through which thy slave-cursed Texas entered in,  
From out the blood and fire, the wrong and sin,  
Of the stormed-city and the ghastly plain,  
Beat by hot hail, and wet with bloody rain,

The myriad-handed pioneer may pour,  
And the wild West with the roused North combine  
And heave the engineer of evil with his mine.  
1846.

AT WASHINGTON. Suggested by a visit to the city of Washington, in the 12th month of 1845.

WITH a cold and wintry noon-light  
On its roofs and steeples shed,  
Shadows weaving with the sunlight  
From the gray sky overhead,  
Broadly, vaguely, all around me, lies the half-built  
town outspread.

Through this broad street, restless ever,  
Ebbs and flows a human tide,  
Wave on wave a living river;  
Wealth and fashion side by side;  
Toiler, idler, slave and master, in the same quick  
current glide.

Underneath yon dome, whose coping  
Springs above them, vast and tall,  
Grave men in the dust are groping  
For the largess, base and small,  
Which the hand of Power is scattering, crumbs  
which from its table fall.

Base of heart! They vilely barter  
Honor's wealth for party's place;  
Step by step on Freedom's charter  
Leaving footprints of disgrace;  
For to-day's poor pittance turning from the great  
hope of their race.

Yet, where festal lamps are throwing  
Glory round the dancer's hair,  
Gold-tressed, like an angel's, flowing  
Backward on the sunset air;  
And the low quick pulse of music beats its measure  
sweet and rare.

There to-night shall woman's glances,  
Star-like, welcome give to them;  
Fawning fools with shy advances  
Seek to touch their garments' hem,  
With the tongue of flattery glozing deeds which  
God and Truth condemn.

From this glittering lie my vision  
Takes a broader, sadder range,  
Full before me have arisen  
Other pictures dark and strange;  
From the parlor to the prison must the scene and  
witness change.

Hark! the heavy gate is swinging  
On its hinges, harsh and slow;  
One pale prison lamp is flinging  
On a fearful group below  
Such a light as leaves to terror whatsoever it does  
not show.

Pitying God! Is that a woman  
On whose wrist the shackles clash?



Is that shriek she utters human,  
Underneath the stinging lash?  
Are they men whose eyes of madness from that sad  
procession flash?

Still the dance goes gayly onward  
What is it to Wealth and Pride  
That without the stars are looking  
On a scene which earth should hide?  
That the slave-ship lies in waiting, rocking  
on Potomac's tide!

Vainly to that mean Ambition  
Which, upon a rival's fall,  
Winds above its old condition,  
With a reptile's slimy crawl,  
Shall the pleading voice of sorrow, shall the slave  
in anguish call.

Vainly to the child of Fashion,  
Giving to ideal woe  
Graceful luxury of compassion,  
Shall the stricken mourner go;  
Hateful seems the earnest sorrow, beautiful the  
hollow show!

Nay, my words are all too sweeping:  
In this crowded human mart,  
Feeling is not dead, but sleeping;  
Man's strong will and woman's heart,  
In the coming strife for Freedom, yet shall bear  
their generous part.

And from yonder sunny valleys,  
Southward in the distance lost,  
Freedom yet shall summon allies  
Worthier than the North can boast,  
With the Evil by their hearth-stones grappling at  
severer cost.

Now, the soul alone is willing  
Faint the heart and weak the knee;  
And as yet no lip is thrilling  
With the mighty words, "Be Free!"  
Tarryeth long the land's Good Angel, but his  
advent is to be!

Meanwhile, turning from the revel  
To the prison-cell my sight,  
For intenser hate of evil,  
For a keener sense of right,  
Shaking off thy dust, I thank thee, City of the  
Slaves, to-night!

"To thy duty now and ever!  
Dream no more of rest or stay  
Give to Freedom's great endeavor  
All thou art and hast to-day:"  
Thus, above the city's murmur, saith a Voice, or  
seems to say.

Ye with heart and vision gifted  
To discern and love the right,

Whose worn faces have been lifted  
To the slowly-growing light,  
Where from Freedom's sunrise drifted slowly

back the murk of night

Ye who through long years of trial Still have held your purpose fast, While a lengthening shade the dial from the westering sunshine cast, And of hope each hour's denial seemed an echo of the last!

O my brothers! O my sisters  
Would to God that ye were near,  
Gazing with me down the vistas  
Of a sorrow strange and drear;  
Would to God that ye were listeners to the Voice  
I seem to hear!

With the storm above us driving,  
With the false earth mined below,  
Who shall marvel if thus striving  
We have counted friend as foe;  
Unto one another giving in the darkness blow for  
blow.

Well it may be that our natures  
Have grown sterner and more hard,  
And the freshness of their features  
Somewhat harsh and battle-scarred,  
And their harmonies of feeling overtaken and  
rudely jarred.

Be it so. It should not swerve us  
From a purpose true and brave;  
Dearer Freedom's rugged service  
Than the pastime of the slave;  
Better is the storm above it than the quiet of  
the grave.

Let us then, uniting, bury  
All our idle feuds in dust,  
And to future conflicts carry  
Mutual faith and common trust;  
Always he who most forgiveth in his brother is  
most just.

From the eternal shadow rounding  
All our sun and starlight here,  
Voices of our lost ones sounding  
Bid us be of heart and cheer,  
Through the silence, down the spaces, falling on  
the inward ear.

Know we not our dead are looking  
Downward with a sad surprise,  
All our strife of words rebuking  
With their mild and loving eyes?  
Shall we grieve the holy angels? Shall we cloud  
their blessed skies?

Let us draw their mantles o'er us  
Which have fallen in our way;  
Let us do the work before us,  
Cheerly, bravely, while we may,  
Ere the long night-silence cometh, and with us it is  
not day!

**THE BRANDED HAND.**

Captain Jonathan Walker, of Harwich, Mass., was solicited by several fugitive slaves at Pensacola, Florida, to carry them in his vessel to the British West Indies. Although well aware of the great hazard of the enterprise he attempted to comply with the request, but was seized at sea by an American vessel, consigned to the authorities at Key West, and thence sent back to Pensacola, where, after a long and rigorous confinement in prison, he was tried and sentenced to be branded on his right hand with the letters "S.S." (slave-stealer) and amerced in a heavy fine.

WELCOME home again, brave seaman! with thy thoughtful brow and gray, And the old heroic spirit of our earlier, better day; With that front of calm endurance, on whose steady nerve in vain Pressed the iron of the prison, smote the fiery shafts of pain.

Is the tyrant's brand upon thee? Did the brutal  
cravens aim  
To make God's truth thy falsehood, His holiest  
work thy shame?  
When, all blood-quenched, from the torture the  
iron was withdrawn,  
How laughed their evil angel the baffled fools to  
scorn!

They change to wrong the duty which God hath  
written out  
On the great heart of humanity, too legible for  
doubt!  
They, the loathsome moral lepers, blotched from  
footsole up to crown,  
Give to shame what God hath given unto honor  
and renown!

Why, that brand is highest honor! than its traces  
never yet  
Upon old armorial hatchments was a prouder blazon  
set;  
And thy unborn generations, as they tread our  
rocky strand,  
Shall tell with pride the story of their father's  
branded hand!

As the Templar home was welcome, bearing back-  
from Syrian wars  
The scars of Arab lances and of Paynim scimitars,  
The pallor of the prison, and the shackle's crimson span,  
So we meet thee, so we greet thee, truest friend of  
God and man.

He suffered for the ransom of the dear Redeemer's grave,  
Thou for His living presence in the bound and  
bleeding slave;  
He for a soil no longer by the feet of angels trod,  
Thou for the true Shechinah, the present home of God.

For, while the jurist, sitting with the slave-whip  
o'er him swung,  
From the tortured truths of freedom the lie of  
slavery wrung,  
And the solemn priest to Moloch, on each God-  
deserted shrine,  
Broke the bondman's heart for bread, poured the  
bondman's blood for wine;

While the multitude in blindness to a far-off Saviour  
knelt,  
And spurned, the while, the temple where a present  
Saviour dwelt;  
Thou beheld'st Him in the task-field, in the prison  
shadows dim,  
And thy mercy to the bondman, it was mercy unto Him!

In thy lone and long night-watches, sky above and  
wave below,  
Thou didst learn a higher wisdom than the babbling  
schoolmen know;  
God's stars and silence taught thee, as His angels  
only can,  
That the one sole sacred thing beneath the cope of  
heaven is Man!

That he who treads profanely on the scrolls of law  
and creed,  
In the depth of God's great goodness may find  
mercy in his need;  
But woe to him who crushes the soul with chain  
and rod,  
And herds with lower natures the awful form of God!

Then lift that manly right-hand, bold ploughman  
of the wave!  
Its branded palm shall prophesy, "Salvation to  
the Slave!"  
Hold up its fire-wrought language, that whoso  
reads may feel  
His heart swell strong within him, his sinews  
change to steel.

Hold it up before our sunshine, up against our  
Northern air;  
Ho! men of Massachusetts, for the love of God,  
look there!  
Take it henceforth for your standard, like the  
Bruce's heart of yore,  
In the dark strife closing round ye, let that hand  
be seen before!

And the masters of the slave-land shall tremble at  
that sign,  
When it points its finger Southward along the  
Puritan line  
Can the craft of State avail them? Can a Christless  
church withstand,  
In the van of Freedom's onset, the coming of that  
band?  
1846.

THE FREED ISLANDS. Written for the anniversary celebration of the first of August, at Milton, 7846.

A FEW brief years have passed away  
Since Britain drove her million slaves  
Beneath the tropic's fiery ray  
God willed their freedom; and to-day  
Life blooms above those island graves!

He spoke! across the Carib Sea,  
We heard the clash of breaking chains,  
And felt the heart-throb of the free,  
The first, strong pulse of liberty  
Which thrilled along the bondman's veins.

Though long delayed, and far, and slow,  
The Briton's triumph shall be ours  
Wears slavery here a prouder brow  
Than that which twelve short years ago  
Scowled darkly from her island bowers?

Mighty alike for good or ill  
With mother-land, we fully share  
The Saxon strength, the nerve of steel,  
The tireless energy of will,  
The power to do, the pride to dare.

What she has done can we not do?  
Our hour and men are both at hand;  
The blast which Freedom's angel blew  
O'er her green islands, echoes through  
Each valley of our forest land.

Hear it, old Europe! we have sworn  
The death of slavery. When it falls,  
Look to your vassals in their turn,  
Your poor dumb millions, crushed and worn,  
Your prisons and your palace walls!

O kingly mockers! scoffing show  
What deeds in Freedom's name we do;  
Yet know that every taunt ye throw  
Across the waters, goads our slow  
Progression towards the right and true.

Not always shall your outraged poor,  
Appalled by democratic crime,  
Grind as their fathers ground before;  
The hour which sees our prison door  
Swing wide shall be their triumph time.

On then, my brothers! every blow  
Ye deal is felt the wide earth through;  
Whatever here uplifts the low  
Or humbles Freedom's hateful foe,  
Blesses the Old World through the New.

Take heart! The promised hour draws near;  
I hear the downward beat of wings,  
And Freedom's trumpet sounding clear  
"Joy to the people! woe and fear  
To new-world tyrants, old-world kings!"

## **A LETTER.**

Supposed to be written by the chairman of the "Central Clique" at Concord, N. H., to the Hon. M. N., Jr., at Washington, giving the result of the election. The following verses were published in the Boston Chronotype in 1846. They refer to the contest in New Hampshire, which resulted in the defeat of the pro-slavery Democracy, and in the election of John P. Hale to the United States Senate. Although their authorship was not acknowledged, it was strongly suspected. They furnish a specimen of the way, on the whole rather good-natured, in which the liberty-lovers of half a century ago answered the social and political outlawry and mob violence to which they were subjected.

'T is over, Moses! All is lost  
I hear the bells a-ringing;  
Of Pharaoh and his Red Sea host  
I hear the Free-Wills singing [4]  
We're routed, Moses, horse and foot,  
If there be truth in figures,  
With Federal Whigs in hot pursuit,  
And Hale, and all the "niggers."

Alack! alas! this month or more

We've felt a sad foreboding;  
Our very dreams the burden bore  
Of central cliques exploding;  
Before our eyes a furnace shone,  
Where heads of dough were roasting,  
And one we took to be your own  
The traitor Hale was toasting!

Our Belknap brother [5] heard with awe  
The Congo minstrels playing;  
At Pittsfield Reuben Leavitt [6] saw  
The ghost of Storrs a-praying;  
And Calroll's woods were sad to see,  
With black-winged crows a-darting;  
And Black Snout looked on Ossipee,  
New-glossed with Day and Martin.

We thought the "Old Man of the Notch"  
His face seemed changing wholly—  
His lips seemed thick; his nose seemed flat;  
His misty hair looked woolly;  
And Coos teamsters, shrieking, fled  
From the metamorphosed figure.  
"Look there!" they said, "the Old Stone Head  
Himself is turning nigger!"

The schoolhouse, out of Canaan hauled  
Seemed turning on its track again,  
And like a great swamp-turtle crawled  
To Canaan village back again,  
Shook off the mud and settled flat  
Upon its underpinning;  
A nigger on its ridge-pole sat,  
From ear to ear a-grinning.

Gray H——d heard o' nights the sound  
Of rail-cars onward faring;  
Right over Democratic ground  
The iron horse came tearing.  
A flag waved o'er that spectral train,  
As high as Pittsfield steeple;  
Its emblem was a broken chain;  
Its motto: "To the people!"

I dreamed that Charley took his bed,  
With Hale for his physician;  
His daily dose an old "unread  
And unREFERRED" petition. [8]  
There Hayes and Tuck as nurses sat,  
As near as near could be, man;  
They leeches him with the "Democrat;"  
They blistered with the "Freeman."

Ah! grisly portents! What avail  
Your terrors of forewarning?  
We wake to find the nightmare Hale  
Astride our breasts at morning!  
From Portsmouth lights to Indian stream  
Our foes their throats are trying;  
The very factory-spindles seem  
To mock us while they're flying.

The hills have bonfires; in our streets  
Flags flout us in our faces;  
The newsboys, peddling off their sheets,  
Are hoarse with our disgraces.

In vain we turn, for gibing wit  
And shoutings follow after,  
As if old Kearsarge had split  
His granite sides with laughter.

What boots it that we pelted out  
The anti-slavery women, [9]  
And bravely strewed their hall about  
With tattered lace and trimming?  
Was it for such a sad reverse  
Our mobs became peacemakers,  
And kept their tar and wooden horse  
For Englishmen and Quakers?

For this did shifty Atherton  
Make gag rules for the Great House?  
Wiped we for this our feet upon  
Petitions in our State House?  
Plied we for this our axe of doom,  
No stubborn traitor sparing,  
Who scoffed at our opinion loom,  
And took to homespun wearing?

Ah, Moses! hard it is to scan  
These crooked providences,  
Deducing from the wisest plan  
The saddest consequences!  
Strange that, in trampling as was meet  
The nigger-men's petition,  
We sprang a mine beneath our feet  
Which opened up perdition.

How goodly, Moses, was the game  
In which we've long been actors,  
Supplying freedom with the name  
And slavery with the practice  
Our smooth words fed the people's mouth,  
Their ears our party rattle;  
We kept them headed to the South,  
As drovers do their cattle.

But now our game of politics  
The world at large is learning;  
And men grown gray in all our tricks  
State's evidence are turning.  
Votes and preambles subtly spun  
They cram with meanings louder,  
And load the Democratic gun  
With abolition powder.

The ides of June! Woe worth the day  
When, turning all things over,  
The traitor Hale shall make his hay  
From Democratic clover!  
Who then shall take him in the law,  
Who punish crime so flagrant?  
Whose hand shall serve, whose pen shall draw,  
A writ against that "vagrant"?

Alas! no hope is left us here,  
And one can only pine for  
The envied place of overseer  
Of slaves in Carolina!  
Pray, Moses, give Calhoun the wink,  
And see what pay he's giving!  
We've practised long enough, we think,

To know the art of driving.

And for the faithful rank and file,  
Who know their proper stations,  
Perhaps it may be worth their while  
To try the rice plantations.  
Let Hale exult, let Wilson scoff,  
To see us southward scamper;  
The slaves, we know, are "better off  
Than laborers in New Hampshire!"

## **LINES FROM A LETTER TO A YOUNG CLERICAL FRIEND.**

A STRENGTH Thy service cannot tire,  
A faith which doubt can never dim,  
A heart of love, a lip of fire,  
O Freedom's God! be Thou to him!

Speak through him words of power and fear,  
As through Thy prophet bards of old,  
And let a scornful people hear  
Once more Thy Sinai-thunders rolled.

For lying lips Thy blessing seek,  
And hands of blood are raised to Thee,  
And On Thy children, crushed and weak,  
The oppressor plants his kneeling knee.

Let then, O God! Thy servant dare  
Thy truth in all its power to tell,  
Unmask the priestly thieves, and tear  
The Bible from the grasp of hell!

From hollow rite and narrow span  
Of law and sect by Thee released,  
Oh, teach him that the Christian man  
Is holier than the Jewish priest.

Chase back the shadows, gray and old,  
Of the dead ages, from his way,  
And let his hopeful eyes behold  
The dawn of Thy millennial day;

That day when fettered limb and mind  
Shall know the truth which maketh free,  
And he alone who loves his kind  
Shall, childlike, claim the love of Thee!

DANIEL NEALL. Dr. Neall, a worthy disciple of that venerated philanthropist, Warner Mifflin, whom the Girondist statesman, Jean Pierre Brissot, pronounced "an angel of mercy, the best man he ever knew," was one of the noble band of Pennsylvania abolitionists, whose bravery was equalled only by their gentleness and tenderness. He presided at the great anti-slavery meeting in Pennsylvania Hall, May 17, 1838, when the Hall was surrounded by a furious mob. I was standing near him while the glass of the windows broken by missiles showered over him, and a deputation from the rioters forced its way to the platform, and demanded that the meeting should be closed at once. Dr. Neall drew up his tall form to its utmost height. "I am here," he said, "the president of this meeting, and I will be torn in pieces before I leave my place at your dictation. Go back to those who sent you. I shall do my duty." Some years after, while visiting his relatives in his native State of Delaware, he was dragged from the house of his friends by a mob of slave-holders and brutally maltreated. He bore it like a martyr of the old times; and when released, told his persecutors that he forgave them, for it was not they but Slavery which had done the wrong. If they should ever be in Philadelphia and needed hospitality or aid, let



them call on him.

I.

FRIEND of the Slave, and yet the friend of all;  
Lover of peace, yet ever foremost when  
The need of battling Freedom called for men  
To plant the banner on the outer wall;  
Gentle and kindly, ever at distress  
Melted to more than woman's tenderness,  
Yet firm and steadfast, at his duty's post  
Fronting the violence of a maddened host,  
Like some gray rock from which the waves are  
tossed!  
Knowing his deeds of love, men questioned not  
The faith of one whose walk and word were  
right;  
Who tranquilly in Life's great task-field wrought,  
And, side by side with evil, scarcely caught  
A stain upon his pilgrim garb of white  
Prompt to redress another's wrong, his own  
Leaving to Time and Truth and Penitence alone.

II.

Such was our friend. Formed on the good old plan,  
A true and brave and downright honest man  
He blew no trumpet in the market-place,  
Nor in the church with hypocritic face  
Supplied with cant the lack of Christian grace;  
Loathing pretence, he did with cheerful will  
What others talked of while their hands were still;  
And, while "Lord, Lord!" the pious tyrants cried,  
Who, in the poor, their Master crucified,  
His daily prayer, far better understood  
In acts than words, was simply doing good.  
So calm, so constant was his rectitude,  
That by his loss alone we know its worth,  
And feel how true a man has walked with us on earth.  
6th, 6th month, 1846.

## SONG OF SLAVES IN THE DESERT.

"Sebah, Oasis of Fezzan, 10th March, 1846.—This evening the female slaves were unusually excited in singing, and I had the curiosity to ask my negro servant, Said, what they were singing about. As many of them were natives of his own country, he had no difficulty in translating the Mandara or Bornou language. I had often asked the Moors to translate their songs for me, but got no satisfactory account from them. Said at first said, 'Oh, they sing of Rubee' (God). 'What do you mean?' I replied, impatiently. 'Oh, don't you know?' he continued, 'they asked God to give them their Atka?' (certificate of freedom). I inquired, 'Is that all?' Said: 'No; they say, "Where are we going? The world is large. O God! Where are we going? O God!"' I inquired, 'What else?' Said: 'They remember their country, Bornou, and say, "Bornou was a pleasant country, full of all good things; but this is a bad country, and we are miserable!"' 'Do they say anything else?' Said: 'No; they repeat these words over and over again, and add, "O God! give us our Atka, and let us return again to our dear home."'

"I am not surprised I got little satisfaction when I asked the Moors about the songs of their slaves. Who will say that the above words are not a very appropriate song? What could have been more congenially adapted to their then woful condition? It is not to be wondered at that these poor bondwomen cheer up their hearts, in their long, lonely, and painful wanderings over the desert, with words and sentiments like these; but I have often observed that their fatigue and sufferings were too great for them to strike up this melancholy dirge, and many days their plaintive strains never broke over the silence of the desert."— Richardson's Journal in Africa.

WHERE are we going? where are we going,  
Where are we going, Rubee?  
Lord of peoples, lord of lands,  
Look across these shining sands,  
Through the furnace of the noon,  
Through the white light of the moon.  
Strong the Ghiblee wind is blowing,  
Strange and large the world is growing!  
Speak and tell us where we are going,  
Where are we going, Rubee?

Bornou land was rich and good,  
Wells of water, fields of food,  
Dourra fields, and bloom of bean,  
And the palm-tree cool and green  
Bornou land we see no longer,  
Here we thirst and here we hunger,  
Here the Moor-man smites in anger  
Where are we going, Rubee?

When we went from Bornou land,  
We were like the leaves and sand,  
We were many, we are few;  
Life has one, and death has two  
Whitened bones our path are showing,  
Thou All-seeing, thou All-knowing  
Hear us, tell us, where are we going,  
Where are we going, Rubee?

Moons of marches from our eyes  
Bornou land behind us lies;  
Stranger round us day by day  
Bends the desert circle gray;  
Wild the waves of sand are flowing,  
Hot the winds above them blowing,—  
Lord of all things! where are we going?  
Where are we going, Rubee?

We are weak, but Thou art strong;  
Short our lives, but Thine is long;  
We are blind, but Thou hast eyes;  
We are fools, but Thou art wise!  
Thou, our morrow's pathway knowing  
Through the strange world round us growing,  
Hear us, tell us where are we going,  
Where are we going, Rubee?  
1847.

## **TO DELAWARE.**

Written during the discussion in the Legislature of that State, in the winter of 1846-47, of a bill for the abolition of slavery.

THRICE welcome to thy sisters of the East,  
To the strong tillers of a rugged home,  
With spray-wet locks to Northern winds released,  
And hardy feet o'erswept by ocean's foam;  
And to the young nymphs of the golden West,  
Whose harvest mantles, fringed with prairie bloom,  
Trail in the sunset,—O redeemed and blest,  
To the warm welcome of thy sisters come!

Broad Pennsylvania, down her sail-white bay  
Shall give thee joy, and Jersey from her plains,  
And the great lakes, where echo, free alway,  
Moaned never shoreward with the clank of chains,  
Shall weave new sun-bows in their tossing spray,  
And all their waves keep grateful holiday.  
And, smiling on thee through her mountain rains,  
Vermont shall bless thee; and the granite peaks,  
And vast Katahdin o'er his woods, shall wear  
Their snow-crowns brighter in the cold, keen air;  
And Massachusetts, with her rugged cheeks  
O'errun with grateful tears, shall turn to thee,  
When, at thy bidding, the electric wire  
Shall tremble northward with its words of fire;  
Glory and praise to God! another State is free!  
1847.

## YORKTOWN.

Dr. Thacher, surgeon in Scammel's regiment, in his description of the siege of Yorktown, says: "The labor on the Virginia plantations is performed altogether by a species of the human race cruelly wrested from their native country, and doomed to perpetual bondage, while their masters are manfully contending for freedom and the natural rights of man. Such is the inconsistency of human nature." Eighteen hundred slaves were found at Yorktown, after its surrender, and restored to their masters. Well was it said by Dr. Barnes, in his late work on Slavery: "No slave was any nearer his freedom after the surrender of Yorktown than when Patrick Henry first taught the notes of liberty to echo among the hills and vales of Virginia."

FROM Yorktown's ruins, ranked and still,  
Two lines stretch far o'er vale and hill  
Who curbs his steed at head of one?  
Hark! the low murmur: Washington!  
Who bends his keen, approving glance,  
Where down the gorgeous line of France  
Shine knightly star and plume of snow?  
Thou too art victor, Rochambeau!  
The earth which bears this calm array  
Shook with the war-charge yesterday,

Ploughed deep with hurrying hoof and wheel,  
Shot-sown and bladed thick with steel;  
October's clear and noonday sun  
Paled in the breath-smoke of the gun,  
And down night's double blackness fell,  
Like a dropped star, the blazing shell.

Now all is hushed: the gleaming lines  
Stand moveless as the neighboring pines;  
While through them, sullen, grim, and slow,  
The conquered hosts of England go  
O'Hara's brow belies his dress,  
Gay Tarleton's troop rides bannerless:  
Shout, from thy fired and wasted homes,  
Thy scourge, Virginia, captive comes!

Nor thou alone; with one glad voice  
Let all thy sister States rejoice;  
Let Freedom, in whatever clime  
She waits with sleepless eye her time,  
Shouting from cave and mountain wood  
Make glad her desert solitude,

While they who hunt her quail with fear;  
The New World's chain lies broken here!

But who are they, who, cowering, wait  
Within the shattered fortress gate?  
Dark tillers of Virginia's soil,  
Classed with the battle's common spoil,  
With household stuffs, and fowl, and swine,  
With Indian weed and planters' wine,  
With stolen beeves, and foraged corn,—  
Are they not men, Virginian born?

Oh, veil your faces, young and brave!  
Sleep, Scammel, in thy soldier grave  
Sons of the Northland, ye who set  
Stout hearts against the bayonet,  
And pressed with steady footfall near  
The moated battery's blazing tier,  
Turn your scarred faces from the sight,  
Let shame do homage to the right!

Lo! fourscore years have passed; and where  
The Gallic bugles stirred the air,  
And, through breached batteries, side by side,  
To victory stormed the hosts allied,  
And brave foes grounded, pale with pain,  
The arms they might not lift again,  
As abject as in that old day  
The slave still toils his life away.

Oh, fields still green and fresh in story,  
Old days of pride, old names of glory,  
Old marvels of the tongue and pen,  
Old thoughts which stirred the hearts of men,  
Ye spared the wrong; and over all  
Behold the avenging shadow fall!  
Your world-wide honor stained with shame,—  
Your freedom's self a hollow name!

Where's now the flag of that old war?  
Where flows its stripe? Where burns its star?  
Bear witness, Palo Alto's day,  
Dark Vale of Palms, red Monterey,  
Where Mexic Freedom, young and weak,  
Fleashes the Northern eagle's beak;  
Symbol of terror and despair,  
Of chains and slaves, go seek it there!

Laugh, Prussia, midst thy iron ranks  
Laugh, Russia, from thy Neva's banks!  
Brave sport to see the fledgling born  
Of Freedom by its parent torn!  
Safe now is Speilberg's dungeon cell,  
Safe drear Siberia's frozen hell  
With Slavery's flag o'er both unrolled,  
What of the New World fears the Old?  
1847.

## **RANDOLPH OF ROANOKE.**

O MOTHER EARTH! upon thy lap

Thy weary ones receiving,  
And o'er them, silent as a dream,  
Thy grassy mantle weaving,  
Fold softly in thy long embrace  
That heart so worn and broken,  
And cool its pulse of fire beneath  
Thy shadows old and oaken.

Shut out from him the bitter word  
And serpent hiss of scorning;  
Nor let the storms of yesterday  
Disturb his quiet morning.  
Breathe over him forgetfulness  
Of all save deeds of kindness,  
And, save to smiles of grateful eyes,  
Press down his lids in blindness.

There, where with living ear and eye  
He heard Potomac's flowing,  
And, through his tall ancestral trees,  
Saw autumn's sunset glowing,  
He sleeps, still looking to the west,  
Beneath the dark wood shadow,  
As if he still would see the sun  
Sink down on wave and meadow.

Bard, Sage, and Tribune! in himself  
All moods of mind contrasting,—  
The tenderest wail of human woe,  
The scorn like lightning blasting;  
The pathos which from rival eyes  
Unwilling tears could summon,  
The stinging taunt, the fiery burst  
Of hatred scarcely human!

Mirth, sparkling like a diamond shower,  
From lips of life-long sadness;  
Clear picturings of majestic thought  
Upon a ground of madness;  
And over all Romance and Song  
A classic beauty throwing,  
And laurelled Clio at his side  
Her storied pages showing.

All parties feared him: each in turn  
Beheld its schemes disjointed,  
As right or left his fatal glance  
And spectral finger pointed.  
Sworn foe of Cant, he smote it down  
With trenchant wit unsparing,  
And, mocking, rent with ruthless hand  
The robe Pretence was wearing.

Too honest or too proud to feign  
A love he never cherished,  
Beyond Virginia's border line  
His patriotism perished.  
While others hailed in distant skies  
Our eagle's dusky pinion,  
He only saw the mountain bird  
Stoop o'er his Old Dominion!

Still through each change of fortune strange,  
Racked nerve, and brain all burning,  
His loving faith in Mother-land  
Knew never shade of turning;

By Britain's lakes, by Neva's tide,  
Whatever sky was o'er him,  
He heard her rivers' rushing sound,  
Her blue peaks rose before him.

He held his slaves, yet made withal  
No false and vain pretences,  
Nor paid a lying priest to seek  
For Scriptural defences.  
His harshest words of proud rebuke,  
His bitterest taunt and scorning,  
Fell fire-like on the Northern brow  
That bent to him in fawning.

He held his slaves; yet kept the while  
His reverence for the Human;  
In the dark vassals of his will  
He saw but Man and Woman!  
No hunter of God's outraged poor  
His Roanoke valley entered;  
No trader in the souls of men  
Across his threshold ventured.

And when the old and wearied man  
Lay down for his last sleeping,  
And at his side, a slave no more,  
His brother-man stood weeping,  
His latest thought, his latest breath,  
To Freedom's duty giving,  
With failing tongue and trembling hand  
The dying blest the living.

Oh, never bore his ancient State  
A truer son or braver  
None trampling with a calmer scorn  
On foreign hate or favor.  
He knew her faults, yet never stooped  
His proud and manly feeling  
To poor excuses of the wrong  
Or meanness of concealing.

But none beheld with clearer eye  
The plague-spot o'er her spreading,  
None heard more sure the steps of Doom  
Along her future treading.  
For her as for himself he spake,  
When, his gaunt frame upbracing,  
He traced with dying hand "Remorse!"  
And perished in the tracing.

As from the grave where Henry sleeps,  
From Vernon's weeping willow,  
And from the grassy pall which hides  
The Sage of Monticello,  
So from the leaf-strewn burial-stone  
Of Randolph's lowly dwelling,  
Virginia! o'er thy land of slaves  
A warning voice is swelling!

And hark! from thy deserted fields  
Are sadder warnings spoken,  
From quenched hearths, where thy exiled sons  
Their household gods have broken.  
The curse is on thee,—wolves for men,  
And briers for corn-sheaves giving  
Oh, more than all thy dead renown

Were now one hero living  
1847.

## **THE LOST STATESMAN.**

Written on hearing of the death of Silas Wright of New York.

As they who, tossing midst the storm at night,  
While turning shoreward, where a beacon shone,  
Meet the walled blackness of the heaven alone,  
So, on the turbulent waves of party tossed,  
In gloom and tempest, men have seen thy light  
Quenched in the darkness. At thy hour of noon,  
While life was pleasant to thy undimmed sight,  
And, day by day, within thy spirit grew  
A holier hope than young Ambition knew,  
As through thy rural quiet, not in vain,  
Pierced the sharp thrill of Freedom's cry of pain,  
Man of the millions, thou art lost too soon  
Portents at which the bravest stand aghast,—  
The birth-throes of a Future, strange and vast,  
Alarm the land; yet thou, so wise and strong,  
Suddenly summoned to the burial bed,  
Lapped in its slumbers deep and ever long,  
Hear'st not the tumult surging overhead.  
Who now shall rally Freedom's scattering host?  
Who wear the mantle of the leader lost?  
Who stay the march of slavery? He whose voice  
Hath called thee from thy task-field shall not lack  
Yet bolder champions, to beat bravely back  
The wrong which, through his poor ones, reaches Him:  
Yet firmer hands shall Freedom's torchlights trim,  
And wave them high across the abysmal black,  
Till bound, dumb millions there shall see them and rejoice.  
10th mo., 1847.

## **THE SLAVES OF MARTINIQUE.**

Suggested by a daguerreotype taken from a small French engraving of two negro figures, sent to the writer by Oliver Johnson.

BEAMS of noon, like burning lances, through the tree-tops flash and glisten, As she stands before her lover, with raised face to look and listen.

Dark, but comely, like the maiden in the ancient  
Jewish song  
Scarcely has the toil of task-fields done her graceful  
beauty wrong.

He, the strong one and the manly, with the vassal's  
garb and hue,  
Holding still his spirit's birthright, to his higher  
nature true;

Hiding deep the strengthening purpose of a freeman  
in his heart,

As the gregree holds his Fetich from the white  
man's gaze apart.

Ever foremost of his comrades, when the driver's  
morning horn  
Calls away to stifling mill-house, to the fields of  
cane and corn.

Fall the keen and burning lashes never on his back  
or limb;  
Scarce with look or word of censure, turns the  
driver unto him.

Yet, his brow is always thoughtful, and his eye is  
hard and stern;  
Slavery's last and humblest lesson he has never  
deigned to learn.

And, at evening, when his comrades dance before their master's door, Folding arms and knitting  
forehead, stands he silent evermore.

God be praised for every instinct which rebels  
against a lot  
Where the brute survives the human, and man's  
upright form is not!

As the serpent-like bejuco winds his spiral fold  
on fold  
Round the tall and stately ceiba, till it withers in  
his hold;

Slow decays the forest monarch, closer girds the  
fell embrace,  
Till the tree is seen no longer, and the vine is in  
its place;

So a base and bestial nature round the vassal's  
manhood twines,  
And the spirit wastes beneath it, like the ceiba  
choked with vines.

God is Love, saith the Evangel; and our world of  
woe and sin  
Is made light and happy only when a Love is  
shining in.

Ye whose lives are free as sunshine, finding, where-  
soe'er ye roam,  
Smiles of welcome, looks of kindness, making all  
the world like home;

In the veins of whose affections kindred blood is  
but a part.,  
Of one kindly current throbbing from the universal  
heart;

Can ye know the deeper meaning of a love in Slavery  
nursed,  
Last flower of a lost Eden, blooming in that Soil  
accursed?

Love of Home, and Love of Woman!—dear to all,  
but doubly dear  
To the heart whose pulses elsewhere measure only  
hate and fear.

All around the desert circles, underneath a brazen  
sky,



Only one green spot remaining where the dew is  
never dry!

From the horror of that desert, from its atmosphere  
of hell,  
Turns the fainting spirit thither, as the diver seeks  
his bell.

'T is the fervid tropic noontime; faint and low the  
sea-waves beat;  
Hazy rise the inland mountains through the glimmer  
of the heat,—

Where, through mingled leaves and blossoms, arrowy sunbeams flash and glisten, Speaks her lover to  
the slave-girl, and she lifts her head to listen:—

"We shall live as slaves no longer! Freedom's hour is close at hand! Rocks her bark upon the waters,  
rests the boat upon the strand!

"I have seen the Haytien Captain; I have seen  
his swarthy crew,  
Haters of the pallid faces, to their race and color  
true.

"They have sworn to wait our coming till the night has passed its noon, And the gray and darkening  
waters roll above the sunken moon!"

Oh, the blessed hope of freedom! how with joy  
and glad surprise,  
For an instant throbs her bosom, for an instant  
beam her eyes!

But she looks across the valley, where her mother's  
hut is seen,  
Through the snowy bloom of coffee, and the lemon-  
leaves so green.

And she answers, sad and earnest: "It were wrong  
for thee to stay;  
God hath heard thy prayer for freedom, and his  
finger points the way.

"Well I know with what endurance, for the sake  
of me and mine,  
Thou hast borne too long a burden never meant  
for souls like thine.

"Go; and at the hour of midnight, when our last  
farewell is o'er,  
Kneeling on our place of parting, I will bless thee  
from the shore.

"But for me, my mother, lying on her sick-bed  
all the day,  
Lifts her weary head to watch me, coming through  
the twilight gray.

"Should I leave her sick and helpless, even freedom,  
shared with thee,  
Would be sadder far than bondage, lonely toil, and  
stripes to me.

"For my heart would die within me, and my brain  
would soon be wild;  
I should hear my mother calling through the twilight  
for her child!"

Blazing upward from the ocean, shines the sun of

morning-time,  
Through the coffee-trees in blossom, and green  
hedges of the lime.

Side by side, amidst the slave-gang, toil the lover  
and the maid;  
Wherefore looks he o'er the waters, leaning forward  
on his spade?

Sadly looks he, deeply sighs he: 't is the Haytien's  
sail he sees,  
Like a white cloud of the mountains, driven seaward  
by the breeze.

But his arm a light hand presses, and he hears a  
low voice call  
Hate of Slavery, hope of Freedom, Love is mightier  
than all.  
1848.

## **THE CURSE OF THE CHARTER-BREAKERS.**

The rights and liberties affirmed by Magna Charta were deemed of such importance, in the thirteenth century, that the Bishops, twice a year, with tapers burning, and in their pontifical robes, pronounced, in the presence of the king and the representatives of the estates of England, the greater excommunication against the infringer of that instrument. The imposing ceremony took place in the great Hall of Westminster. A copy of the curse, as pronounced in 1253, declares that, "by the authority of Almighty God, and the blessed Apostles and Martyrs, and all the saints in heaven, all those who violate the English liberties, and secretly or openly, by deed, word, or counsel, do make statutes, or observe then being made, against said liberties, are accursed and sequestered from the company of heaven and the sacraments of the Holy Church."

William Penn, in his admirable political pamphlet, *England's Present Interest Considered*, alluding to the curse of the Charter-breakers, says: "I am no Roman Catholic, and little value their other curses; yet I declare I would not for the world incur this curse, as every man deservedly doth, who offers violence to the fundamental freedom thereby repeated and confirmed."

IN Westminster's royal halls,  
Robed in their pontificals,  
England's ancient prelates stood  
For the people's right and good.  
Closed around the waiting crowd,  
Dark and still, like winter's cloud;  
King and council, lord and knight,  
Squire and yeoman, stood in sight;  
Stood to hear the priest rehearse,  
In God's name, the Church's curse,  
By the tapers round them lit,  
Slowly, sternly uttering it.

"Right of voice in framing laws,  
Right of peers to try each cause;  
Peasant homestead, mean and small,  
Sacred as the monarch's hall,—

"Whoso lays his hand on these,  
England's ancient liberties;  
Whoso breaks, by word or deed,  
England's vow at Runnymede;

"Be he Prince or belted knight,  
Whatsoever his rank or might,

If the highest, then the worst,  
Let him live and die accursed.

"Thou, who to Thy Church hast given  
Keys alike, of hell and heaven,  
Make our word and witness sure,  
Let the curse we speak endure!"

Silent, while that curse was said,  
Every bare and listening head  
Bowed in reverent awe, and then  
All the people said, Amen!

Seven times the bells have tolled,  
For the centuries gray and old,  
Since that stoled and mitred band  
Cursed the tyrants of their land.

Since the priesthood, like a tower,  
Stood between the poor and power;  
And the wronged and trodden down  
Blessed the abbot's shaven crown.

Gone, thank God, their wizard spell,  
Lost, their keys of heaven and hell;  
Yet I sigh for men as bold  
As those bearded priests of old.

Now, too oft the priesthood wait  
At the threshold of the state;  
Waiting for the beck and nod  
Of its power as law and God.

Fraud exults, while solemn words  
Sanctify his stolen hoards;  
Slavery laughs, while ghostly lips  
Bless his manacles and whips.

Not on them the poor rely,  
Not to them looks liberty,  
Who with fawning falsehood cower  
To the wrong, when clothed with power.

Oh, to see them meanly cling,  
Round the master, round the king,  
Sported with, and sold and bought,—  
Pitifuller sight is not!

Tell me not that this must be  
God's true priest is always free;  
Free, the needed truth to speak,  
Right the wronged, and raise the weak.

Not to fawn on wealth and state,  
Leaving Lazarus at the gate;  
Not to peddle creeds like wares;  
Not to mutter hireling prayers;

Nor to paint the new life's bliss  
On the sable ground of this;  
Golden streets for idle knave,  
Sabbath rest for weary slave!

Not for words and works like these,  
Priest of God, thy mission is;  
But to make earth's desert glad,  
In its Eden greenness clad;

And to level manhood bring  
Lord and peasant, serf and king;  
And the Christ of God to find  
In the humblest of thy kind!

Thine to work as well as pray,  
Clearing thorny wrongs away;  
Plucking up the weeds of sin,  
Letting heaven's warm sunshine in;

Watching on the hills of Faith;  
Listening what the spirit saith,  
Of the dim-seen light afar,  
Growing like a nearing star.

God's interpreter art thou,  
To the waiting ones below;  
'Twixt them and its light midway  
Heralding the better day;

Catching gleams of temple spires,  
Hearing notes of angel choirs,  
Where, as yet unseen of them,  
Comes the New Jerusalem!

Like the seer of Patmos gazing,  
On the glory downward blazing;  
Till upon Earth's grateful sod  
Rests the City of our God!  
1848.

## **PAEAN.**

This poem indicates the exultation of the anti-slavery party in view of the revolt of the friends of Martin Van Buren in New York, from the Democratic Presidential nomination in 1848.

Now, joy and thanks forevermore!  
The dreary night has wellnigh passed,  
The slumbers of the North are o'er,  
The Giant stands erect at last!

More than we hoped in that dark time  
When, faint with watching, few and worn,  
We saw no welcome day-star climb  
The cold gray pathway of the morn!

O weary hours! O night of years!  
What storms our darkling pathway swept,  
Where, beating back our thronging fears,  
By Faith alone our march we kept.

How jeered the scoffing crowd behind,  
How mocked before the tyrant train,  
As, one by one, the true and kind  
Fell fainting in our path of pain!

They died, their brave hearts breaking slow,  
But, self-forgetful to the last,  
In words of cheer and bugle blow  
Their breath upon the darkness passed.

A mighty host, on either hand,

Stood waiting for the dawn of day  
To crush like reeds our feeble band;  
The morn has come, and where are they?

Troop after troop their line forsakes;  
With peace-white banners waving free,  
And from our own the glad shout breaks,  
Of Freedom and Fraternity!

Like mist before the growing light,  
The hostile cohorts melt away;  
Our frowning foemen of the night  
Are brothers at the dawn of day.

As unto these repentant ones  
We open wide our toil-worn ranks,  
Along our line a murmur runs  
Of song, and praise, and grateful thanks.

Sound for the onset! Blast on blast!  
Till Slavery's minions cower and quail;  
One charge of fire shall drive them fast  
Like chaff before our Northern gale!

O prisoners in your house of pain,  
Dumb, toiling millions, bound and sold,  
Look! stretched o'er Southern vale and plain,  
The Lord's delivering hand behold!

Above the tyrant's pride of power,  
His iron gates and guarded wall,  
The bolts which shattered Shinar's tower  
Hang, smoking, for a fiercer fall.

Awake! awake! my Fatherland!  
It is thy Northern light that shines;  
This stirring march of Freedom's band  
The storm-song of thy mountain pines.

Wake, dwellers where the day expires!  
And hear, in winds that sweep your lakes  
And fan your prairies' roaring fires,  
The signal-call that Freedom makes!  
1848.

## **THE CRISIS.**

Written on learning the terms of the treaty with Mexico.

ACROSS the Stony Mountains, o'er the desert's  
drouth and sand,  
The circles of our empire touch the western ocean's  
strand;  
From slumberous Timpanogos, to Gila, wild and  
free,  
Flowing down from Nuevo-Leon to California's sea;  
And from the mountains of the east, to Santa  
Rosa's shore,  
The eagles of Mexitli shall beat the air no more.

O Vale of Rio Bravo! Let thy simple children  
weep;

Close watch about their holy fire let maids of  
Pecos keep;  
Let Taos send her cry across Sierra Madre's pines,  
And Santa Barbara toll her bells amidst her corn  
and vines;  
For lo! the pale land-seekers come, with eager eyes  
of gain,  
Wide scattering, like the bison herds on broad  
Salada's plain.

Let Sacramento's herdsmen heed what sound the  
winds bring down  
Of footsteps on the crisping snow, from cold  
Nevada's crown!  
Full hot and fast the Saxon rides, with rein of  
travel slack,  
And, bending o'er his saddle, leaves the sunrise at  
his back;  
By many a lonely river, and gorge of fir and  
pine,  
On many a wintry hill-top, his nightly camp-fires  
shine.

O countrymen and brothers! that land of lake and  
plain,  
Of salt wastes alternating with valleys fat with  
grain;  
Of mountains white with winter, looking downward,  
cold, serene,  
On their feet with spring-vines tangled and lapped  
in softest green;  
Swift through whose black volcanic gates, o'er  
many a sunny vale,  
Wind-like the Arapahoe sweeps the bison's dusty  
trail!

Great spaces yet untravelled, great lakes whose  
mystic shores  
The Saxon rifle never heard, nor dip of Saxon oars;  
Great herds that wander all unwatched, wild steeds  
that none have tamed,  
Strange fish in unknown streams, and birds the  
Saxon never named;  
Deep mines, dark mountain crucibles, where Nature's  
chemic powers  
Work out the Great Designer's will; all these ye  
say are ours!

Forever ours! for good or ill, on us the burden  
lies;  
God's balance, watched by angels, is hung across  
the skies.  
Shall Justice, Truth, and Freedom turn the poised  
and trembling scale?  
Or shall the Evil triumph, and robber Wrong prevail?  
Shall the broad land o'er which our flag in starry  
splendor waves,  
Forego through us its freedom, and bear the tread  
of slaves?

The day is breaking in the East of which the  
prophets told,  
And brightens up the sky of Time the Christian  
Age of Gold;  
Old Might to Right is yielding, battle blade to  
clerkly pen,

Earth's monarchs are her peoples, and her serfs  
stand up as men;

The isles rejoice together, in a day are nations  
born,  
And the slave walks free in Tunis, and by Stamboul's  
Golden Horn!

Is this, O countrymen of mine! a day for us to sow  
The soil of new-gained empire with slavery's seeds  
of woe?  
To feed with our fresh life-blood the Old World's  
cast-off crime,  
Dropped, like some monstrous early birth, from  
the tired lap of Time?  
To run anew the evil race the old lost nations ran,  
And die like them of unbelief of God, and wrong  
of man?

Great Heaven! Is this our mission? End in this  
the prayers and tears,  
The toil, the strife, the watchings of our younger,  
better years?  
Still as the Old World rolls in light, shall ours in  
shadow turn,  
A beamless Chaos, cursed of God, through outer  
darkness borne?  
Where the far nations looked for light, a black-  
ness in the air?  
Where for words of hope they listened, the long  
wail of despair?

The Crisis presses on us; face to face with us it  
stands,  
With solemn lips of question, like the Sphinx in  
Egypt's sands!  
This day we fashion Destiny, our web of Fate we  
spin;  
This day for all hereafter choose we holiness or  
sin;  
Even now from starry Gerizim, or Ebal's cloudy  
crown,  
We call the dews of blessing or the bolts of cursing  
down!

By all for which the martyrs bore their agony and  
shame;  
By all the warning words of truth with which the  
prophets came;  
By the Future which awaits us; by all the hopes  
which cast  
Their faint and trembling beams across the black-  
ness of the Past;  
And by the blessed thought of Him who for Earth's  
freedom died,  
O my people! O my brothers! let us choose the  
righteous side.

So shall the Northern pioneer go joyful on his  
way;  
To wed Penobseot's waters to San Francisco's bay;  
To make the rugged places smooth, and sow the  
vales with grain;  
And bear, with Liberty and Law, the Bible in his  
train  
The mighty West shall bless the East, and sea shall

answer sea,  
And mountain unto mountain call, Praise God, for  
we are free  
1845.

## LINES ON THE PORTRAIT OF A CELEBRATED PUBLISHER.

A pleasant print to peddle out  
In lands of rice and cotton;  
The model of that face in dough  
Would make the artist's fortune.  
For Fame to thee has come unsought,  
While others vainly woo her,  
In proof how mean a thing can make  
A great man of its doer.

To whom shall men thyself compare,  
Since common models fail 'em,  
Save classic goose of ancient Rome,  
Or sacred ass of Balaam?  
The gabble of that wakeful goose  
Saved Rome from sack of Brennus;  
The braying of the prophet's ass  
Betrayed the angel's menace!

So when Guy Fawkes, in petticoats,  
And azure-tinted hose oil,  
Was twisting from thy love-lorn sheets  
The slow-match of explosion—  
An earthquake blast that would have tossed  
The Union as a feather,  
Thy instinct saved a perilled land  
And perilled purse together.

Just think of Carolina's sage  
Sent whirling like a Dervis,  
Of Quattlebum in middle air  
Performing strange drill-service!  
Doomed like Assyria's lord of old,  
Who fell before the Jewess,  
Or sad Abimelech, to sigh,  
"Alas! a woman slew us!"

Thou saw'st beneath a fair disguise  
The danger darkly lurking,  
And maiden bodice dreaded more  
Than warrior's steel-wrought jerkin.  
How keen to scent the hidden plot!  
How prompt wert thou to balk it,  
With patriot zeal and pedler thrift,  
For country and for pocket!

Thy likeness here is doubtless well,  
But higher honor's due it;  
On auction-block and negro-jail  
Admiring eyes should view it.  
Or, hung aloft, it well might grace  
The nation's senate-chamber—  
A greedy Northern bottle-fly  
Preserved in Slavery's amber!



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