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CHRISTMAS,
AND
POEMS ON SLAVERY
FOR
CHRISTMAS, 1843

[unnumbered page]
[title page]

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AND
POEMS ON SLAVERY
FOR
CHRISTMAS, 1843**

DEDICATED TO ELIZA LEE FOLLEN

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[unnumbered page 2]

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CHRISTMAS.

Hark! What glad voices are joyfully ringing
Through the stillness of morn o'er the yet sleep-
ing earth!

'T is a chorus of angels in harmony singing,
"The Saviours of sinners to-day has his birth.

[5]

"Glory to God in the highest be given,
Peace and good be proclaimed upon earth,
Jesus, Messiah anointed of Heaven,
To-day of a virgin in Bethlehem has birth."

[page 4]

Jesus! we hail thee, bright star of the morning, [10]
 We join with the angels in singing thy birth,
Soon may thy beams, the mid-heaven adorning,
 Enlighten all people and gild the whole earth.

Then shall the built of our wars and oppression, [15]
 That sully and darken the face of the earth,
No longer demand our repentant confession,
 When we sing on the day of Emmanuel's birth.

[page 5]

THE MOTHER'S PRAYER

Thou knowest, O God, my griefs,
 Thou see'st my bitter tears,
Thou knowest all my sufferings past,
 And my foreboding fears.

My husband they have sold;
 Alas! the bitter day!
Too true to leave me willingly,
 They forced him far away.

[5]

[page 6]

Our prattling infants, too,
 Most piercing thought of all, [10]
Sold into strangers' cruel hands,
 What evils may befall!

I pray, O God, that thou
 Wouldst take them from the earth,
I ask their death, who once from thee, [15]
 More madly, asked their birth.

O'er me, weighed down by care,
 Pierced through by sorrow's stings,
O'er me, from day to day the same,
 The slave-whip ceaseless swings. [20]

I pray, O God, for him
 Who causes all this woe;
Though he no mercy has for us,
 To him thy mercy show.

[page 7]

No vengeance would I ask, [25]
 Let not thy wrath be felt,
But let thy goodness touch his heart,
 Its stubborn hardness melt.

One thing at least I trust, [30]
 My only hope it is,
There'll be no slavery in the world
 That follows after this.

[page 8]

THE RUNAWAY.

A TRUE TALE.

Covered with ashes the little girl lay
 In a cellar's darkest part,
Wild in her fears she dared not breathe,
 And she stilled her throbbing heart.

In the night she steadily crept forth,
 By her hunger's pangs impelled,
But the strong-locked doors from her eager hands
 Their treasures all withheld.

[5]

[page 9]

Covered with ashes the girl is found
 When the morning light appears, [10]
And is to the master's presence brought
 To tell her tale of tears.

“I am owned, Sir, they say, by Colonel Y.,
 Who lives a mile from here,
And I live with him a wretched life [15]
 Of anguish and of fear.

“Tight to my leg above my knee
 A log of wood he chains,
And this I drag till it galls the flesh,
 And my life is filled with pains. [20]

“And if, thus clogged with a heavy load,
 My motions are too slow,
He flogs me with a whip that brings
 The blood at every blow.

[page 10]

“Three days ago my chain got loose, [25]
So I slipped it off and ran,
And hid myself in your cellar, Sir;
O, help me if you can!

“A withered pear in your ashes I found,
‘T is all I’ve had to eat [30]
For three days; but I’d sooner starve,
Than I’d my master meet.”

When the man heard the little girl,
At the “lazy wench” he swore,
And sent her back to Colonel Y., [35]
To suffer as before.

But the shrieks of the beaten child
Reached a kinder neighbour’s ear,
And he bought the child to save its life
From anguish and from fear. [40]

[page 11]

That child has now to a woman grown,
From bondage she is free,
And in her own neat cottage rears
A happy family.

[page 12]

THE DEATH OF THE SLAVE.

In a low and ill-thatched hut,
 Stretched on a floor of clay,
With scanty clothing round her wrapped,
 The dying woman lay.

No husband's kindly hand,
 No loving child was near,
To offer her their aid, or shed
 A sympathizing tear.

[5]

[page 13]

For now the ripened cane
 Was read for the knife, [10]
And not a slave could be spared to aid
 His mother or his wife.

She is struggling now with Death,—
 Deep was that dying groan,
For a corpse now lies on the cold clay floor, [15]
 The soul, set free, has flown.

The planter, walking by,
 Chanced at the door to stop,
And he cursed his luck, “there was one hand less
 To gather in the crop.” [20]

O, Jesus! hast thou said:
 “The poor your care shall be,
Who visit not the poor and sick,
 They do it not to me”?

[page 14]

THE SECOND ADVENT.

Not in a humble manger now,
 Not of a lowly virgin born,
Announced to simple shepherd swains,
 That watch their flocks in the early morn;

Not in the pomp of glory, come,
 While throngs of angels hover round,
Arrayed in glittering robes of light,
 And moving to the trumpet's sound;

[5]

[page 15]

But in the heart of every man,
 O, Jesus, come, and reign therein, [10]
And banish from the human breast
 The darkening clouds of guilt and sin.

Come, spread thy glory over earth,
 Fill every heart with truth and love,
Till thy whole kingdom here below [15]
 Be filled with peace like that above.

For such a glory, when on earth,
 Thou prayedst to thy Father, God;
He heareth thee, and soon will spread
 Thy glory and thy truth abroad. [20]

Then shall no more by brothers' hands
 The blood of brother men be spilled,
Nor earth's fair scenes with captives' tears
 And groans of dying slaves be filled.

[page 16]

But every where shall songs of joy

And hymns of praise to God arise:

The true millennial glory then

Shall bless thy waiting followers' eyes.

[25]

THE END.