

THE
SLAVEHOLDERS' REBELLION.

BY DAVID PLUMB.

FIAT JUSTITIA.

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I

Now the lords of Southern Slavery,—
 Worsted in the *Moral* fight,
Where the Truth combats with Error,
 And the Wrong contends with Right,—
Saw their hellish institution [5]
 Going down beneath the blows
Of the sturdy Image Breakers,
 And Oppression's earnest foes;—
While the Nation, to its centre,
 Was convulsed with moral throes: [10]

II.

Saw their power to wield the Union,
 For corruption and command,
Like the morning cloud departing
 From the Councils of the land:
In the Forum, on the Hustings,— [15]
 They were beaten every where;
Till these vanquished lords of Slavery
 Quit the struggle in despair;—
Left the field of *Moral* combat
 To the friends of Freedom there. [20]

VI.

Thus, for years, the rebel forces,
 Often winners in the fight,
Hurled defiance at the Union;
 Vaunted still the traitor right
Of their vile Constitution; [55]
 Till the Nation, by its woes,
Learned that *freedom* for the *Bondmen*,
 Sealed the doom of Freedom's foes;—
And that thus, by God's appointment,
 Could the fearful struggle close. [60]

VII.

So, we smote the Demon, SLAVERY,—
 The Rebellion's end and cause;—
And, anon, approving Heaven
 Smiles, and good men give applause;—
Heaven smiles and grants its blessing [65]
 On our arms by land and sea;
Till, through all the warring Border,
 Panic-stricken rebels flee;—
While the land, with exultation,
 Hails approaching victory. [70]

VIII.

Still the Union force advances,
 Wins each bloody battle-field;
While the victory flashes brightly
 On each conquerer's glittering shield;
And, the broken rebel legions [75]
 'Neath the victors prostrate lie;
While above, in triumph waving,
 All the Starry Banners fly;
And resounding hallelujas
 Shake the arches of the sky. [80]

IX.

Now Rebellion, in its madness,
 With a mean and coward spite,
Of all honor quite regardless,
 Plays the savage in the fight; [85]
In its triumph gives no quarter,
 But its helpless captive slays,
Or, with slow-consuming famine,
 Through the weary nights and days,
Wears away its suffering victim,
 Till for pitying death he prays. [90]

X.

But, to crown their deeds infernal,
 There remained one bloody crime,
Of such dark and damning nature,
 That the villains of all time
Seldom ventured to enact it; [95]
 But these rebels, in despair
Of success by manly fighting,
 For this highest crime prepare;—
And with soul and conscience hardened,
 Heaven's swiftest vengeance dare. [100]

XI.

So foul Treason turns Assassin,
 Steals with silent, stealthy tread,
Into where, in fancied safety,
 Sits the Nation's honored Head;
And with cool and dread precision, [105]
 Swiftly sends the deadly ball;—
And the Nation's CHIEF falls lifeless,—
 Falls, but triumphs in the fall;—
While, through all the outraged Nation,
 Trumpet-tongues for *justice* call: [110]

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XII.

For the blow of the assassin,
 Lifts the vail from every eye;
Rends the last remaining cover,
 From the traitors' GIANT LIE;
Shows to all the heart of Slavery, [115]
 With the fires of Hell aglare,
With its passions, all infernal,
 Which like demons revel there,—
Raging as do mad-men haunted
 By the Specter of Despair. [120]

XIII.

Oh! if justice dwells in Heaven,
 Can its hand of vengeance spare
Men so cruel, so inhuman,
 As these murderous rebels are!
And shall man, more kind than Heaven, [125]
 Bid these villains go in peace?
Yield the law of retribution,
 And its penalties release?
And, by granting *crime a licence*,
 Bid the law its function cease? [130]

XIV.

Yet were found among us pleaders
 That these criminals might live;
That, instead of rigid justice,
 It were better to forgive:
Thus the plead till the assassin— [135]
 Quite surpassing blackest hell,—
With the dagger and the bullet,
 Broke the Sorceror's magic spell;—
Made the *doom of traitors certain*,
 When the Nation's CHIEFTAIN fell. [140]

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XV.

Now let Banishment and Gibbet
Execute a Nation's will;
And, in awful retribution,
Their appointed work fulfill;
Let these cruel slave tormentors,— [145]
These who maimed our hapless slain,—
These who starved our captured heroes,—
These who, both on land and main,
Waged a dastard, pirate warfare,—
Let them meet the doom of Cain. [150]

XVI.

Let these *traitors, thieves, assassins,*
Answer at the Bar of State;
Pay to outraged LAW the forfeit,
Life for life,—the murderer's fate:
And let none mis-judge the action, [155]
When the awful blow descends;
Charging it to cruel vengeance,
Prompted for mere selfish ends;
For the righteous God *approves* it,
He the penalty *commends*. [160]

XVII.

Then let JUSTICE, vindicated,
Be enthroned in every place;
Lift its sacred SHIELD above us,
Guard the *rights of every race*:
So shall PEACE through all our Borders [165]
Spread, and Fear no more appall;
FREEDOM reign in kingly splendor,
While the BOND MEN'S *fetters fall*;—
While the Land, from Sea to Ocean,
Spreads its wings to *shelter* ALL. [170]

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