

THE
ANTI-SLAVERY POEMS

OF

JOHN PIERPONT.

'Was it right,
While my unnumbered brethren toiled and bled,
That I should dream away the entrusted hours
On rose-leaf beds, pampering the coward heart,
With feelings all too delicate for use?'— COLERIDGE.

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SLAVEHOLDER'S ADDRESS TO THE NORTH STAR.



STAR of the North, thou art not bigger
Than is the diamond in my ring;
Yet every black, star-gazing nigger
Stares at thee, as at some great thing!
Yes, gazes at thee, till the lazy
And thankless rascal is half crazy.

Some Quaker scoundrel must have told 'em
That, if they take their flight tow'rd thee,
They 'd get where 'massa' cannot hold 'em;
And, therefore, to the North they flee.
Fools! to be led off, where they can't earn
Their living, by thy lying lantern.

Thou 'rt a cold water star, I reckon,
Although I've never seen thee, yet,
When to the bath thy sisters beckon,
Get even thy golden sandals wet;
Nor in the wave have known thee dip,
In our hot nights, thy finger's tip.

If thou *wouldst*, nightly, leave the pole,
To enjoy a regular ablution
In the North Sea, or Symmes's hole,
Our 'Patriarchal Institution,'
From which thou findest many a ransom,
Would, doubtless, give thee something handsome.

Although thou 'rt a cold water star,
As I have said, I think, already,
Thou 'rt hailed, by many a tipsy tar,
Who likes thee just because thou 'rt steady,
And hold'st the candle for the rover,
When he is more than 'half seas over.'

But, while Ham's seed, our land to bless,
'Increase and multiply' like rabbits,
We like thee, Yankee Star, the less,

For thy bright eye, and steady habits.
Pray waltz with Venus, star of love,
Or take a bout with reeling Jove.

Thou art an abolition star,
And to my wench wilt be of use, if her
Dark eye should find thee, ere the car
Of our true old slave-catcher, 'Lucifer,
Star of the morning,' upward rolls,
And, with its light, puts out the pole's.

On our field hands thou lookest, too —
A sort of nightly overseer —
Canst find no other work to do?
I tell thee, thou 'rt not wanted here;
So, pray, shine only on the oceans,
Thou number one of 'Northern notions.'

Yes, northern notions, — northern lights!
As hates the devil holy water,
So hate I all that Rogers writes,
Or Weld, that married Grimkè's daughter: —
So hate I all these northern curses,
From Birney's prose to Whittier's verses.

‘Put out the light!’ exclaimed the Moor —
I think they call his name Othello —
When opening his wife’s chamber door
To cut her throat — the princely fellow!
Noblest of all the nigger nation!
File leader in amalgamation!

‘Put out the light!’ and so say I.
Could ‘I quench *thee*, thou flaming minister,’
No longer, in the northern sky,
Should blaze thy beacon-fire so sinister.
North Star, thy light’s unwelcome — *very* —
We’ll vote thee ‘an incendiary.’

And, to our ‘natural allies’ —
Our veteran Kinderhook Invincibles,
Who do our bidding, in the guise
Of ‘northern men, with southern principles,’ —
Men who have faces firm as dough,
And, as we *set* their noses, go —

To these, we’ll get some scribe to write,
And tell them not to let thee shine —
Excepting of a cloudy night —

Any where, south of Dixon's line.
If, boyoud that, thou shin'st, an inch,
We 'll have thee up before Judge Lynch: —

And when, thou abolition star,
Who prechest freedom, in all weathers,
'Thou hast got on a coat of tar,
And, over that, a cloak of feathers,
'That thou art 'fixed' shall none deny,
If there 's a fixed star in the sky.