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A Collection Of Poems In Six Volumes. By Several Hands

Dodsley, Robert

London, 1758

Jovi Eleutherio. Or, an Offering to Liberty.

urn:nbn:de:gbv:45:1-1978



JOVI ELEUTHERIO.

Or, an OFFERING to

L I B E R T Y.

*Quisnam igitur liber? Sapiens, sibi que imperiosus;
 Quem neque pauperies, neque mors, neque vincula terrent:
 Responfare cupidinibus, contemnere honores
 Fortis; et in seipso totus teres atque rotundus.*

HOR. Serm, Lib. 2. Sat. 7.

HAIL LIBERTY! whose presence glads th' abode
 Of heav'n itself, great attribute of God!
 By thee sustain'd, th' unbounded spirit runs,
 Moulds orbs on orbs, and lights up suns on suns;
 By thee sustain'd, in love unwearied lives,
 And uncontroul'd creates, supports, forgives:
 No pow'r, or time, or space his will withstood;
 Almighty! endless! infinite in good!
 "If so, why not communicate the bliss,
 "And let man know what this great blessing is?"
 Say what proportion, creature, wouldst thou claim;
 As thy Creator's, in extent, the same!

Unless

Unless his other attributes were join'd
 To poise the will, and regulate the mind,
 Goodness to aim, and wisdom to direct,
 What mighty mischiefs must we thence expect?
 The maker knows his work; nor judg'd it fit
 To trust the rash resolves of human wit:
 Which prone to hurt, too blind to help, is still
 Alike pernicious, mean it good or ill.

A whim, t' improvements making fond pretence,
 Would burst a system in experiments;
 Sparrows and cats indeed no more should fear,
 But Saturn tremble in his distant sphere:
 Give thee but footing in another world,
 Say, Archimedes, where should we be hurl'd?

A sprightly wit, with liquor in his head,
 Would burn a globe to light him drunk to bed:
 Th' Ephesian temple had escap'd the flame,
 And heav'n's high dome had built the madman's fame.

The fullen might, (when malice boil'd within,)
 Strike out the stars to intimate his spleen:
 Not poppy-heads had spoke a Tarquin crost;
 Nature's chief spring had broke, and all been lost.

Nor less destructive would this licence prove,
 Tho' thy breast flam'd with universal love.
 In vain were thy benevolence of soul;
 Soon would thy folly disconcert the whole.
 No rains, or snows, should discompose the air;
 But flow'rs and sun-shine drain the weary year:

No



No clouds should fully the clear face of day ;
 No tempests rife, — to blow a plague away.
 Mercy should reign untir'd, unstain'd with blood ;
 Spare the frail guilty, — to eat up the good :
 In their defence, rife, sacred Justice, rife !
 Awake the thunder sleeping in the skies,
 Sink a corrupted city in a minute :

—Wo ! to the righteous ten who may be in it.

Pick out the bad, and sweep them all away !

—So leave their babes, to cats and dogs a prey.

Such pow'r without God's wisdom and his will,
 Were only an omnipotence of ill.

Suited to man can we such pow'r esteem !

Fiends would be harmless, if compar'd with him.

Say then, shall all his attributes be given ?

His essence follows, and his throne of heav'n ;

His very unity. Proud wretch ! shall he

Un-god himself, to make a god of thee ?

How wide, such lust of liberty confounds !

Would less content thee, prudent mark the bounds !

“ Those which th' almighty Monarch first design'd,

“ When his great image seal'd the human mind ;

“ When to the beasts the fruitful earth was given ;

“ To fish the ocean, and to birds their heaven ;

“ And all to man : whom full creation, stor'd,

“ Receiv'd as its proprietor, and lord.

“ Ere earth, whose spacious tract unmeasur'd spreads,

“ Was slic'd by acres and by roods to shreds :

“ When

" When trees and streams were made a general good ;
 " And not as limits, meanly to exclude :
 " When all to all belong'd ; ere pow'r was told
 " By number'd troops, or wealth by counted gold :
 " Ere kings, or priests, their tyranny began ;
 " Or man was vassal'd to his fellow-man."

O halcyon state ! when man begun to live !
 A blessing, worthy of a god to give !
 When on th' unspotted mind, his Maker drew
 The heav'nly characters, correct and true.
 All useful knowledge, from that source, supply'd ;
 No blindness sprung from ignorance, or pride :
 All proper blessings, from that hand, bestow'd ;
 No mischiefs, or for want, or fulness, flow'd :
 The quick'ning passions gave a pleasing zest ;
 While thankful man submitted to be blest.
 Simplicity, was wisdom ; temperance, health :
 Obedience, pow'r ; and full contentment, wealth.
 So happy once, was man ! till the vain elf
 Shook off his guide, and set up for himself.
 Smit with the charms of independency,
 He scorns protection, raging to be free.
 Now, self-expo'd, he feels his naked state :
 Shrinks with the blast, or melts before the heat :
 And blindly wanders, as his fancy leads,
 To starve on wastes, or feast on pois'nous weeds.
 Now to the savage beasts an obvious prey ;
 Or crafty men, more savage still than they :

No



No less imprudent to his breast to take
 The friend unfaithful, or th' envenom'd snake;
 Equally fatal, whether on the Nile,
 Or in the city, weeps the crocodile.

Nor yet less blindly deviates learned pride;
 In Ætna burn'd, or drown'd amid the tide:
 Boasts of superior sense; then raves to see,
 (When contradicted,) fools less wise than he.
 Mates with his great Creator; vainly bold
 To make new systems, or to mend the old.
 Shapes out a deity; doubts, then denies:
 And drunk with science, curses God and dies.

Not heav'nly wisdom, only, is with-held,
 But the free bounty of the self-sown field:
 No more, as erst, from nature's ready feast,
 Rises the satisfy'd, but temp'rate guest:
 Cast wild abroad, no happy mean preserves;
 By choice he surfeits, by constraint he starves:
 Toils life away upon the stubborn plain,
 T' extort from thence the slow reluctant grain;
 The slow reluctant grain, procur'd to-day,
 His less industrious neighbour steals away:
 Hence sits and clubs the village-peace confound,
 Till sword and cannon spread the ruin round;
 For time and art but bring from bad to worse:
 Unequal lots succeed unequal force,
 Each lot a several curse. Hence rich, and poor:
 This pines, and dies neglected at the door;

While

While gout and fevers wait the loaded mafs,
And take full vengeance for the poor's diftreff.

No more the paffions are the fprings of life ;
But feeds of vice, and elements of strife :
Love, focial love, t' extend to all defign'd,
Back to its fountain flows ; to felf, confin'd.
Source of misfortunes ! the fond husband's wrong ;
The maid difhonour'd, and deserted young !
The mischief freads ; when vengeance for the luft
Unpeoples realms, and calls the ruin juft.

Hence, Troy, thy fate ! the blood of thoufands fpilt,
And orphans mourning for unconfcious guilt.
Thus love deftroys, for kinder purpofe giv'n ;
And man corrupts the bleffings meant by heav'n ;
Self-injur'd, let us censure HIM no more :
Ambition makes us flaves, and av'rice poor.

What arts the wild diforder fhall controul,
And render peace with virtue to the foul ?
Out-reason intereft, ballance prejudice ;
Give paffion ears, and blinded error eyes ?
Arm the weak hand with conqueft, and protect
From guile, the heart too honeft to fufpect ?
For this, mankind, by fad experience taught,
Again their fafety in dependance fought :
Prefs'd to the ftandard, fued before the throne ;
And durft rely on wifdom not their own.
Hence Saturn rul'd in peace th' Aufonian plains,
While Salian fongs to virtue won the fwains.



But pois'nous streams must flow from poison'd springs :
The priests were mortal, and mere men the kings.

What aid from monarchs, mighty to enslave ?
What good from teachers, cunning to deceive ?
Allegiance gives defensive arms away ;
And faith usurps imperial reason's sway.

Let civil Rome, from faithful records, tell
What royal blessings from her Nero fell.
When those, prefer'd all grievance to redress,
Bought of their prince a licence to oppress ;
When uncorrupted merit found no place,
But left the trade of honour to the base.
See industry, by draining imposts curst,
Starve in the harvest, in the vintage thirst !
In vain for help th' insulted matron cries,
'Twas death in husbands to have ears and eyes :
Fatal were beauty, virtue, wealth, or fame :
No man in aught a property could claim ;
No, not his sex : strange arts the monster try'd ;
And Sporus, spite of nature, was his bride.
Unhurt by foes proud Rome for ages stands,
Secure from all, but her protector's hands.
Recall your pow'rs, ye Romans, back again ;
Unmake the monarch, and ne'er fear the man.
Naked, and scorn'd, see where the abject flies !
And once un-cæsar'd, soon the sidler dies.

Next, holy Rome, thy happiness declare ;
While peace and truth watch round the sacred chair.

Peace !

Peace!—which from racks and persecution flows!
 Mysterious truths!—which every sense oppose!
 That God made man, was all th' unlearn'd could reach;
 That man makes God th' enlighten'd fathers teach.
 Men, blind and partial, need a light divine:
 Which popes new trim, and teach it how to shine.
 Rude nature dreads accusing guilt, unknown
 The balmy doctrine, that dead saints atone:
 The careful pontiff, merciful to save,
 Hoards up a fund of merit from the grave;
 And righteous hands the equal ballance hold,
 Nor weigh it out but to just sums of gold.
 Sole judge, he deals his pardon, or his curse;
 Not heav'n itself the sentence can reverse:
 Grac'd with his scepter, awful with his rod,
 This man of sin usurps the seat of God;
 Difarm'd and unador'd th' Almighty lies,
 And quits to saints his incense, and his skies:
 No more the object of our fears, or hope;
 The creature, and the vassal of the pope.
 "From fanes and cities scar'd, fly swift away!"
 —To the rude Lybian in his wilds a prey.
 "The blood-stain'd sword from the fell tyrant wrest!"
 —Thousands unsheath'd shall threat thy naked breast.
 "The dogmatists imperious aid disdain!"
 —So sink in brutish ignorance again.
 "Is there no medium? must we victims fall
 "To one man's LUST, or to the RAGE of all?"

" Is reason doom'd a certain slave to be,
 " To our blind PASSIONS, or a priest's DECREE ?"
 Hail happy Albion! whose distinguish'd plains
 This temp'rate mean, so dearly earn'd, maintains!
 Senates, (the will of individuals check'd)
 The strength and prudence of the realm collect,
 Each yields to all; that each may thence receive
 The full assistance, which the whole can give.
 For this, thy patriots lawless pow'r withstood,
 And bought their children's charter with their blood;
 While reverend years, and various-letter'd age,
 Dispassion'd open the mysterious page;
 Not one alone the various judgment sways,
 But prejudice the general voice obeys:
 For this, thy martyrs wak'd the bloody strife,
 Asserting truth with brave contempt of life.
 Oh OXFORD! let deliver'd Britain know
 From thy fam'd seats her several blessings flow.
 Th' accouter'd barons, and assisting knights,
 In thee prepar'd for council, or for fights,
 Plan'd and obtain'd her ^a civil liberty:
 Truth found her fearless ^b witnesses in thee;

^a By the Oxford provisions A. D. 1258; at which time the commons are supposed first to have obtain'd the privilege of representatives in parliament.

^b In the imprisonment, disputes and sufferings of our first reformers, Crammer, Ridley and Latimer, at Oxford, A. D. 1554—6.

When,

When, try'd as gold, saints, from thy tott'ring pyres,
 Rose up to heav'n, Elijah-like, in fires!
 Peace to thy walls! and honour to thy name!
 May age to age record thy gathering fame!
 While thy still favour'd feats pour forth their youth,
 Brave advocates of liberty and truth!
 In fair succession rise to bless the realm!
 Fathers in church, and statesmen at the helm!

“ But factious synods thro' resentment err;
 “ And venal senates private good prefer:
 “ How wild the faith which wrangling sops dispose!
 “ The laws how harsh of pension'd aye's and no's!”

Wilt thou by no authority be aw'd,
 Self-excommunicated, self-outlaw'd?
 Expunge the creed, the decalogue reject?
 If they oblige not, nor will they protect,
 You fear no God;—convinc'd by what you say,
 Knaves praise your wit, and swear your lands away,
 Corrupt not wives, erase it if you will;
 The injur'd husband blots out,—do not kill.
 From God his sabbaths steal, for sport, not need;
 Why hangs the wretch, who steals thy purse for bread?

Or shall each schismatick your faith new mould,
 Or senates stand by patriot mobs controul'd?
 Drive back, ye floods! roll, Xanthus, to your spring!
 Go, crown the people, and subject the king;
 Break rule to pieces, analyse its pow'r,
 And every atom to its lord restore:



As mixt with knaves, or fools, the weak, or brave,
A dupe, a plague, a tyrant, or a slave.

“ What shall I do; how hit the happy mean

“ ’Twi’xt blind submission, and unruly spleen ?”

Consult your watch; you guide your actions by’t;
And great its use, tho’ not for ever right.

What tho’ some think implicit faith be due,
And dine at twelve if their town-clock strike two ?

Or others bravely squir their watch away,
Disdain a guide, and guess the time of day ?

They guess so lucky, or their parts so great,
They come on all affairs, but just too late;

You neither choose. Nor trav’ling thro’ the street,
Correct its hand by ev’ry one you meet;

Yet scruple not, if you should find at one
It points to fix, to set it by the Sun.

Aim at the bliss that’s suited to thy state,
Nor vainly hope for happiness compleat;

Some bounds imperfect natures must include,
And vice and weakness feel defects of good,

Nor is it blind necessity alone;
Contriving wisdom, in the whole, we own;

And in that wisdom satisfy’d may trust,
In its restraints, as merciful, as just.

By these thy selfish passions it corrects;
By these from wrong thy weakness it protects;

In sovereign power thy safety’s heaven’s design;
Some faults permitted, as the scourge of thine.

Absurd the wish of all men, if express;
 Each grieves that he's not lord of all the rest.
 Why then should we complain, or thankless live,
 Because not blest with more than God can give?
 Would you be safe from others? 'tis but due,
 That others also should be safe from you.
 It is not virtue wakes the clam'rous throng;
 Each claims th' exclusive privilege, to wrong.
 Whence ceaseless faction must embroil the mad;
 Alike impatient, under A, or Zad.

How patriot Cromwell fights for liberty!
 He shifts the yoke, then calls the nation free.
 He cannot bear a monarch on the throne;
 But vindicates his right—to rule alone.

Macheath roars out for freedom in his cell;
 And Tindal wisely would extinguish hell.
 Macheath's approv'd by all whom Tyburn awes,
 And trembling guilt gives Tindal's page applause.
 O sage device, to set the conscience free
 From dread! he winks; then says that heav'n can't see.
 Both blindly plan the paradise of fools;
 Peace without laws, and virtue without rules.

Full of the Roman let the school-boy quote,
 And rant all Lucan's rhapsodies by rote.
 Gods! shall he tremble at a mortal's nod!
 His generous soul disdains the tyrant's rod.
 Forc'd to submit, at last he tastes the fruit;
 Finds wealth and honours blossom from its roots.

Would thy young soul be like the Roman free?
 From Romans paint thy form of LIBERTY:
 The goddess offers gifts from either hand;
 "Th' auspicious bonnet, with the PRÆTOR's wand;
 The privilege of that would'st thou not miss,
 Bend, and submit beneath the stroke of this.

See Furious on his keeper frown,
 Depriv'd the precious privilege to drown;
 Greatly he claims a right to his undoing;
 The chains that hold him, hold him from his ruin,
 Kindly proceed; strict discipline dispense;
 Till water-gruel low'rs him down to sense.

"Why this to me? am I the froward boy,
 "Or knave to wrong, or madman to destroy?"

Will thy denial prove that thou art none!
 'Tis Newgate's logick: thou art all in one.
 Blind to their good, to be instructed loth,
 b Men are but children of a larger growth;
 If no superior force the will controul,
 Self-love's a villain, and corrupts the soul;
 Wild and destructive projects fire our brains;
 We all are madmen, and demand our chains.
 Know your own sphere, content to be a man:
 Well pleas'd, to be as happy as you can:
 Lose not all good, by shunning ills in vain;
 'Tis wiser to enjoy than to complain.

^a In this manner they represent LIBERTY on their medals.

^b Dryden in *All for Love*,

Some evils must attend imperfect states ;
But discontent new worlds of ills creates.

Hush thy complaints, nor quarrel with thy God ;
If just the stroke, approve and kiss the rod,
By man if injur'd, turn thy eyes within ;
Thou'lt find recorded some unpunish'd sin ;
Then heav'n acquit : and with regard to man,
Coolly th' amount of good and evil scan ;
If greater evils wait the wish'd redress,
Grieve not that thou art free to chuse the less.

Unknown to courts, ambition's thirst subdu'd,
My lesson is to be obscurely good ;
In life's still shade, which no man's envy draws,
To reap the fruit of government and laws,
In fortune's round, as on the globe, I know
No top, no bottom, no where high or low ;
Where-ever station'd, heav'n in prospect still,
That points to me, the zenith of her wheel.

“ What ! double tax'd, unpension'd, unprefer'd,
“ In such bad times be easy ? most absurd !”

Yet heav'n vouchsafes the daily bread intreated ;
And these bad times have left me free to eat it :
My taxes, gladly paid, their nature shift ;
If just, cheap purchase ; if unjust, a gift :
Nor knows ambition any rank so great ;
My servants, kings, and ministers of state !

c Legum idcirco servi sumus, ut liberi esse possimus.

Crc.

They

