

August 2019

The Slave Auction

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Recommended Citation

Unknown, Author, "The Slave Auction" (2019). *Broadside Ballads: England*. 566.
https://egrove.olemiss.edu/kgbsides_uk/566

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THE SLAVE AUCTION.



HARK ! 'midst the roar of an eager crowd,
For one dark purpose blending,
The cry of an helpless multitude,
Is thence in prayer ascending ;
And negro forms are gathered round,
Their cheeks with hot tears streaming,
Their limbs in iron shackles bound,
Their minds as fettered seeming.

CHORUS.

O ! give us back our rights, they pray,
That man from man has riven,
That freedom which is your's to-day,
Our birthright, held from Heaven.
O ! give us back our rights, they pray,
That man from man has riven,
Man — born unfettered as the day, —
Free as the air from Heaven.

The sale is on and men begin,
To sell their fellow creatures ;
Yet, He who made the whiter skin,
Made those with darker features.
A premium on the stout and strong,
A tax on bone and sinew,
O ! men with human hearts, how long
Shall this foul trade continue ?

A child is from its mother torn.
Hark ? hear that shriek distressing,
A helpless girl is left to mourn,
A parent's nightly blessing :
Another — and the tenderest ties
Of life are rent asunder —
Hath Heaven, in echo to those cries,
No crime avenging thunder ?

The sale proceeds — a loving wife,
They from her husband sever,
But, ere the bargain's seal'd, a knife
Annuls the bond for ever.
The man, self slaughtered, yields his breath,
The wife dies broken-hearted,
Far happier to be joined in death,
Then both in slavery parted.

Who bids ? none care — the shrieks are drown'd
Beneath the auction's clamour,
They reach not those who hear no sound,
Beyond the salesman's hammer ;
Still louder grows the din around,
The biddings follow faster,
Till every slave at last has found,
A tyrant, called a master.

O let us hope the day is near,
The dawn of brighter ages,
When slaves and slavery shall appear,
But names in history's pages.
That man 'gainst man may ne'er combine,
In this inhuman manner,
And every star shall brighter shine,
Upon the spangled banner.