

David Humphreys's A Valedictory Discourse, Delivered before the Cincinnati of  
Connecticut, in Hartford, July 4th, 1804, at the Dissolution of the Society

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[*Excerpt*]

...

Was it for this, incomparably bold,  
Led by your godlike chief, through climates far,  
We brav'd the summer's heat, the winter's cold,  
Breasting the dreadful enginery of war

Through eight long years, in many a gory field,  
High in the van, the starry flag unfurl'd,  
Till peace (with heroes' blood the treaty seal'd)  
Confirm'd man's equal rights in this new world?

What! while we hear the clank of slavery's chains,  
Mix'd with discordant sounds of patriot zeal;  
While love of freedom throbs through veteran veins,  
For Afric's sons shall we no pity feel?

How long in vain shall Afric's race be mourn'd?  
In hopeless bondage, unredeem'd, how long?  
No hand to help—with cries for justice spurn'd—  
Cringe at the cutting of the penal thong?

Ye planters! bashaws! cast one kind regard  
On blacks from Guinea brought for barter'd gold;  
Or, blind to interest as of feeling hard,  
Can ye with cruel scorn their woes behold?

Will no good angel on the Lybean shore,  
Dash the curst vessel destin'd to our climes;  
Ere yet augmented slaves with flames and gore  
Retort thsir wrongs, and measure crimes for crimes

Behold!—oh, horror!—HAYTI's bloody strand!  
Mark! how the lesson erst by white-men giv'n,  
Not vainly taught the barb'rous sable band,  
To claim the *birth-right* held alone from Heav'n.

Dark rose the negroes—'twas the dread resolve,  
That *right* to rescue, or with *it* expire,  
Bade the strong bolts that bound their flesh dissolve,  
Like flaxen cords before devouring fire.

Once whitemen triumph'd—blackmen now are free;

While fearful noises fluctuate on the wind,  
Late victors fly for safety to the sea,  
And not a haughty master lags behind.

Thou blot on nature, Slavery! disappear!  
Yet, monster! yet, a moment, from thy mouth,  
Shall gall and venom tinge the verdant year,  
And blast the glories of the boasted South.

Then, bright through bursting clouds, the aurora trace!  
Though long the night, and murky low'r'd the sky,  
Lift up your heads! ye much enduring race!  
Lift up your heads! for your redemption's nigh.

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