

Ode, inscribed to John Howard, author of "The state of English and foreign prisons" ... / By William Hayley.

Contributors

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O D E,

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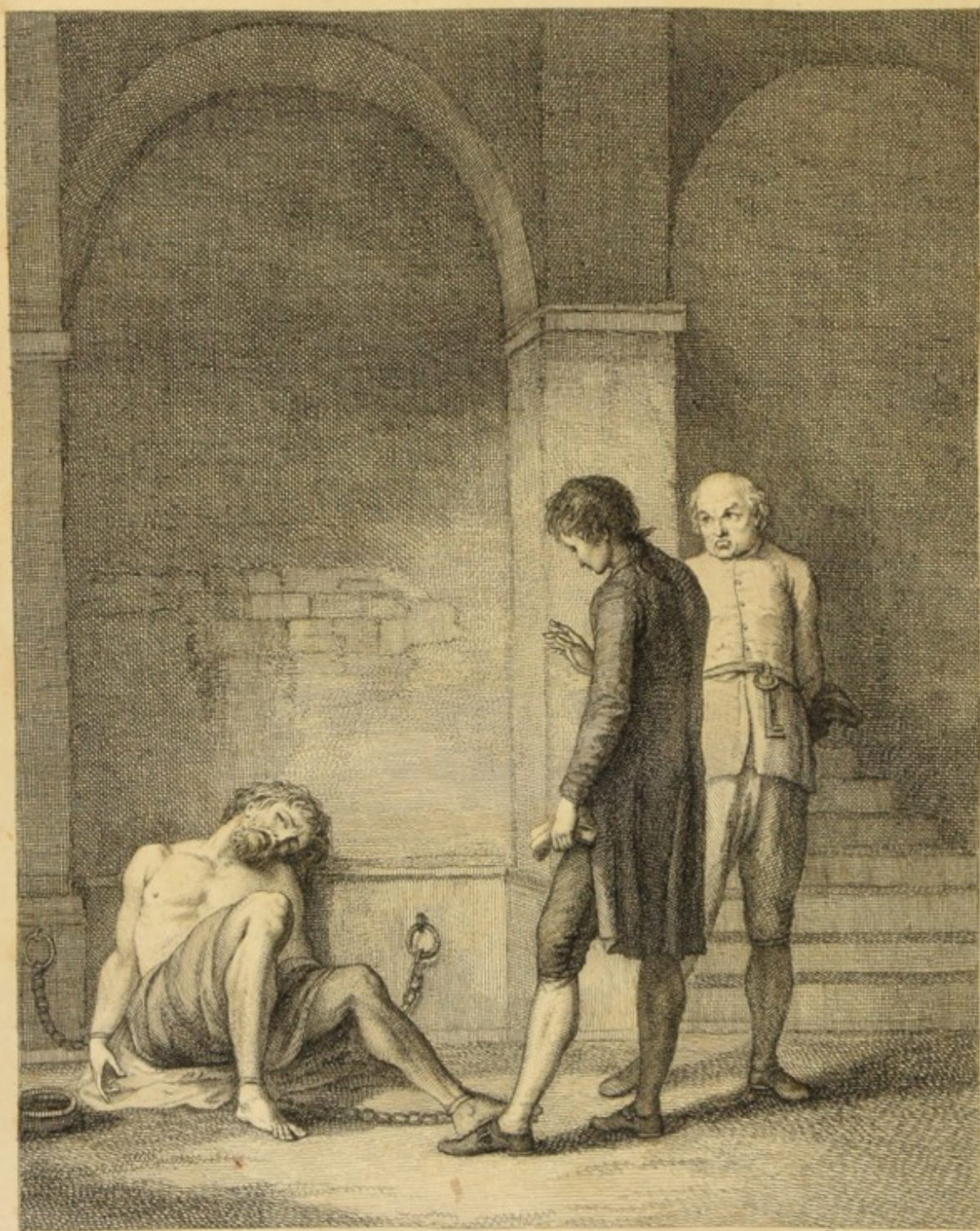
JOHN HOWARD, Esq. F. R. S.

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Bartolozzi sculp.

Vide Howard on Prisons, Page 82—Octavo Edition.

Published as the Act directs, by J. Dodsley, in Pall Mall, June 26th 1780.

O D E,

INSCRIBED TO

JOHN HOWARD, Esq. F.R.S.

AUTHOR OF

“The State of English and Foreign Prisons.”

ΠΟΛΕΣΙΝ ΕΥΣΕΒΕΙΣ ΠΟΝΟΣ.

EURIPIDES.

By WILLIAM HAYLEY, Esq.

L O N D O N :

PRINTED FOR J. DODSLEY, PALL-MALL.

M.DCC.LXXX.

O. D. E.

INSCRIBED TO

JOHN HOWARD, Esq. F.R.S.

AUTHOR OF

"The State of England and Foreign Prisons."



WILLIAM HAYES, Esq.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR J. DODD, PATERNOSTER-ROW.

MDCCCXXXII.

O D E, &c.

FAV'RITE of Heaven, and friend of Earth!

Philanthropy, benignant Power!

Whose sons display no doubtful worth,

The pageant of the passing hour!

Teach me to paint, in deathless song,

Some darling from thy filial throng,

Whose deeds no party-rage inspire,

But fill th' agreeing world with one desire,

To echo his renown, responsive to my lyre!

B

Ah!

Ah! whither lead'st thou?—whence that sigh?
 What fount of woe my bosom jars?
 Why pass, where Misery's hollow eye
 Glares wildly thro' those gloomy bars?
 Is Virtue sunk in these abodes,
 Where keen Remorse the heart corrodes;
 Where Guilt's base blood with frenzy boils,
 And Blasphemy the mournful scene embroils?—
 From this infernal gloom my shudd'ring soul recoils.

But whence those sudden sacred beams?
 Oppression drops his iron rod!
 And all the bright'ning dungeon seems
 To speak the presence of a God.
 Philanthropy's descending ray
 Diffuses unexpected day!
 Loveliest of angels!—at her side
 Her favourite votary stands;—her English pride,
 Thro' Horror's mansions led by this celestial guide.

Hail!

Hail ! generous HOWARD ! tho' thou bear
 A name which Glory's hand sublime
 Has blazon'd oft, with guardian care,
 In characters that fear not Time ;
 For thee she fondly spreads her wings ;
 For thee from Paradise she brings,
 More verdant than her laurel bough,
 Such wreaths of sacred Palm, as ne'er till now
 The smiling Seraph twin'd around a mortal brow.

That Hero's * praise shall ever bloom,
 Who shielded our insulted coast ;
 And launch'd his light'ning to consume
 The proud Invader's routed host.
 Brave perils rais'd his noble name :
 But thou deriv'st thy matchless fame
 From scenes, where deadlier danger dwells ;
 Where fierce Contagion, with affright, repels
 Valor's advent'rous step from her malignant cells.

* CHARLES HOWARD, Earl of Nottingham.

Where in the dungeon's loathsome shade,
 The speechless Captive clanks his chain,
 With heartless hope to raise that aid
 His feeble cries have call'd in vain :
 Thine eye his dumb complaint explores ;
 Thy voice his parting breath restores ;
 Thy cares his ghastly visage clear
 From Death's chill dew, with many a clotted tear,
 And to his thankful soul returning life endear.

What precious Drug, or stronger Charm,
 Thy constant fortitude inspires
 In scenes, whence, muttering her alarm,
 Med'cine *, with selfish dread, retires ?
 Nor Charm, nor Drug, dispel thy fears :
 Temperance, thy better guard, appears :
 For thee I see her fondly fill
 Her crystal cup from Nature's purest rill ;
 Chief nourisher of life ! best antidote of ill !

* Muffabat tacito Medecina timore. LUCRETIVS.

I see the hallow'd shade of HALES *,
 Who felt, like thee, for human woe,
 And taught the health-diffusing gales
 Thro' Horror's murky cells to blow,
 As thy protecting angel wait ;
 To save thee from the snares of Fate,
 Commiſſion'd from the Eternal Throne :
 I hear him praise, in wonder's warmest tone,
 The virtues of thy heart, more active than his own.

* STEPHEN HALES, minister of Teddington : he died at the age of 84, 1761 ; and has been justly called " An ornament to his profession, as a clergyman, " and to his country, as a philosopher." I had the happiness of knowing this excellent man, when I was very young ; and well remember the warm glow of benevolence which used to animate his countenance, in relating the success of his various projects for the benefit of mankind. I have frequently heard him dwell with great pleasure on the fortunate incident which led him to the discovery of his Ventilator, to which I have alluded.—He had ordered a new floor for one of his rooms ; his carpenter not having prepared the work so soon as he expected, he thought the season improper for laying down new boards, when they were brought to his house, and gave orders for their being deposited in his barn ;—from their accidental position in that place, he caught his first idea of this useful invention.

Thy

Thy soul supplies new funds of health,
 That fail not, in the trying hour,
 Above Arabia's spicy wealth
 And Pharmacy's reviving power.
 The transports of the generous mind,
 Feeling its bounty to mankind,
 Inspirit every mortal part ;
 And, far more potent than precarious art,
 Give radiance to the eye, and vigor to the heart.

Blest HOWARD ! who like thee can feel
 This vital spring in all its force ?
 New star of philanthropic zeal ;
 Enlight'ning nations in thy course !
 And shedding Comfort's heavenly dew
 On meagre Want's deserted crew !
 Friend to the wretch, whom friends disclaim,
 Who feels stern Justice, in his famish'd frame,
 A persecuting fiend beneath an angel's name.

Authority ! unfeeling power,
 Whose iron heart can coldly doom
 The Debtor, drag'd from Pleasure's bower,
 To sicken in the dungeon's gloom !
 O might thy terror-striking call,
 Profusion's fons alone enthrall !
 But thou canst Want with Guilt confound :
 Thy bonds the man of virtuous toil surround,
 Driven by malicious Fate within thy dreary bound.

How savage are thy stern decrees ?
 Thy cruel minister I see
 A weak, laborious victim seize,
 By worth entitled to be free !
 Behold, in the afflicting strife,
 The faithful partner of his life,
 In vain thy ruthless servant court,
 To spare her little children's sole support,
 Whom this terrific form has frighten'd from their sport.

Nor

Nor weeps she only from the thought,
 Those infants must no longer share
 His aid, whose daily labour bought
 The pittance of their scanty fare.
 The horrors of the loathsome jail
 Her inly-bleeding heart assail :
 E'en now her fears, from fondness bred,
 See the lost partner of her faithful bed
 Drop, in that murd'rous scene, his pale, expiring head.

Take comfort yet in these keen pains,
 Fond mourner ! check thy gushing tears !
 The dungeon now no more contains
 Those perils which thy fancy fears :
 No more Contagion's baleful breath
 Speaks it the hideous cave of Death :
 HOWARD has planted safety there ;
 Pure minister of light ! his heavenly care
 Has purg'd the damp of Death from that polluted air.

His

His Care, exulting BRITAIN found
 Here first display'd, not here confin'd !
 No single tract of earth could bound
 The active virtues of his mind.
 To all the lands, where'er the tear,
 That mourn'd the Prisoner's wrongs severe,
 Sad Pity's glist'ning cheek impearl'd,
 Eager he steer'd, with every sail unfurl'd,
 A friend to every clime ! a Patriot of the World !

Ye nations thro' whose fair domain
 Our flying sons of joy have past,
 By Pleasure driven with loosen'd rein,
 Astonish'd that they flew so fast !
 How did the heart-improving fight
 Awake your wonder and delight,
 When, in her unexampled chace,
 Philanthropy outstript keen Pleasure's pace,
 When with a warmer soul she ran a nobler race !

Where-e'er her generous Briton went,
 Princes his supplicants became :
 He seem'd the enquiring angel, sent
 To scrutinize their secret shame *.
 Captivity, where he appear'd,
 Her languid head with transport rear'd ;
 And gazing on her godlike guest,
 Like those of old, whom Heaven's pure servant blest,
 E'en by his shadow seem'd of demons dispossess'd.

Amaz'd her foreign children cry,
 Seeing their patron pass along ;
 “ O ! who is he, whose daring eye
 Can search into our hidden wrong ?
 What monarch's Heaven-directed mind,
 With royal bounty unconfined,
 Has tempted Freedom's son to share
 These perils ; searching with an angel's care
 Each cell of dire Disease, each cavern of Despair ? ”

* I am credibly informed that several Princes, or at least persons in authority, requested Mr. Howard not to publish a minute account of some prisons, which reflected disgrace on their government.

No monarch's word, nor lucre's lust,
 Nor vain ambition's restless fire,
 Nor ample power, that sacred trust !
 His life-diffusing toils inspire :
 Rous'd by no voice, save that whose cries
 Internal bid the soul arise
 From joys, that only seem to bless,
 From low pursuits, which little minds possess,
 To Nature's noblest aim, the Succour of Distress !

Taught by that God, in Mercy's robe,
 Who his cœlestial throne resign'd,
 To free the prison of the globe
 From vice, th' oppressor of the mind !
 For thee, of misery's rights bereft,
 For thee, Captivity ! he left
 Fair Fortune's lap, who, far from coy,
 Bade him with smiles his golden hours employ
 In her delicious bower, the festive scene of joy !

While to thy virtue's utmost scope
 I boldly strive my aim to raise
 As high as mortal hand may hope
 To shoot the glittering * shaft of Praise ;
 Say ! HOWARD, say ! what may the Muse,
 Whose melting eye thy merit views,
 What guerdon may her love design ?
 What may she ask for thee, from Power Divine,
 Above the rich rewards which are already thine ?

Sweet is the joy when Science flings
 Her light on philosophic thought ;
 When Genius, with keen ardor, springs
 To clasp the lovely truth he sought :
 Sweet is the joy, when Rapture's fire
 Flows from the spirit of the lyre ;
 When Liberty and Virtue roll
 Spring-tides of fancy o'er the poet's soul,
 That waft his flying bark thro' seas above the pole.

* ἀνδρα δ' ἐγὼ κείνον
 Αἰνῆσαι μένουσιν, ἐλπομαι
 Μὴ χαλκῆ-τ' αἶαντος ἀκούθ' ὥσει τ' ἀγῶ-
 νος βαλεῖε ἔξω παλάμα δονέων. PINDAR.

Sweet the delight, when the gall'd heart
 Feels Consolation's lenient hand
 Bind up the wound from Fortune's dart
 With Friendship's life-supporting band !
 And sweeter still, and far above
 These fainter joys, when purest Love
 The soul his willing captive keeps !
 When he in bliss the melting spirit sleeps,
 Who drops delicious tears, and wonders that he weeps !

But not the brightest joy, which Arts,
 In floods of mental light, bestow ;
 Nor what firm Friendship's zeal imparts,
 Blest antidote of bitterest woe !
 Nor those that Love's sweet hours dispense,
 Can equal the ecstatic sense,
 When, swelling to a fond excess,
 The grateful praises of reliev'd distress,
 Re-echoed thro' the heart, the soul of Bounty bless.

These transports, in no common state,
 Supremely pure, sublimely strong,
 Above the reach of envious fate,
 Blest HOWARD ! these to thee belong :
 While years encreasing o'er thee roll,
 Long may this sunshine of the soul
 New vigor to thy frame convey !
 Its radiance thro' thy noon of life display,
 And with sereneest light adorn thy closing day !

And when the Power, who joys to save,
 Proclaims the guilt of earth forgiven ;
 And calls the prisoners of the grave
 To all the liberty of Heaven :
 In that bright day, whose wonders blind
 The eye of the astonish'd mind ;
 When life's glad angel shall resume
 His ancient sway, announce to Death his doom,
 And from existence drive that tyrant of the tomb :

In that blest hour, when Seraphs sing
 The triumphs gain'd in human strife ;
 And to their new associates bring
 The wreaths of everlasting life :
 May'st thou, in Glory's hallow'd blaze,
 Approach the Eternal Fount of Praise,
 With those who lead the angelic van,
 Those pure adherents to their Saviour's plan,
 Who liv'd but to relieve the Miseries of Man !

F I N I S.

In that bliss hour, when Seraphs sing
 The triumphs gained in human strife;
 And to their new abodes bring
 The winners of everlasting life:
 Mayst thou, in Glory's hallow'd blaze,
 Approach the Eternal Fount of Life,
 With those who lead the angelic van,
 Those pure adorners to their Saviour's plan,
 Who live but to relieve the Millions of Man!