

48 KING COTTON

King Cotton looks from his window
Towards the westering sun,
And he marks, with an anguished horro,
That his race is almost run.

His form is thin and shrunken;
His cheek is pale and wan;
And the lines of care on his furrowed brow
Are dread to look upon.

But yesterday a monarch,
In the flush of his pomp and pride,
And, not content with his own broad lands,
He would rule the world beside.

He built him a stately palace,
With gold from beyond the sea;
And he laid with care the corner-stone,
And he called it Slavery.

He summoned an army with banners,
To keep his foes at bay;
And, gazing with pride on his palace walls,
He said, "They will stand for aye!"

But the palace walls are shrunken,
And partly overthrown,
And the storms of war, in their violence,
Have loosened the corner-stone.

Now Famine stalks through the palace halls,
With her gaunt and pallid train;
You can hear the cries of famished men,
As they cry for bread in vain.

The king can see, from his palace walls,
A land by his pride betrayed;
Thousands of mothers and wives bereft,
Thousands of graves new-made.

And he seems to see, in the lowering sky,
The shape of a flaming sword;
Thereon he reads, with a sinking heart,
The anger of the Lord.

God speed the time when the guilty king,
Shall be hurled from his blood-stained throne;
And the palace of Wrong shall crumble to dust,
With its boasted corner-stone.

A temple of Freedom shall rise instead,
On the desecrated site;
And within its shelter alike shall stand
The black man and the white.

Sources:

Harper's Weekly, February 13, 1864.

Liberator, February 26, 1864.

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Grand'ther Baldwin's Thanksgiving, 1875.

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