

Freedom to the Slave

--- Henry Vivian Louis Derozio

As the slave departs, the Man returns- Campbell

How felt he when he first was told

A slave he ceased to be

How proudly beat his heart, when first

He knew that he was free!

To noblest feelings of the soul

To glow at once began,

He knelt no more, his thoughts were raised

He felt himself a man.

He looked above - The breath of heaven

Around him freshly blew;

He smiled exultingly to see

As the wild birds as they flew,

He looked upon the running stream

That 'neath him rolled away;

Then thought on winds and birds, and floods,

And cried, I'm free as they !

Oh freedom ! there is something dear
E'en in thy very name,
That lights the altar of the soul
With everlasting flame.
Success attend the patriot sword,
That is unsheathed for thee !
And glory to the breast that bleeds,
Bleeds nobody to be free !
Blest be the generous hand that breaks
The chain a tyrrant gave,
And, feeling for degraded man,
Gives freedom to the slave.

About the author



Henry Louis Vivian Derozio (18 April 1809 – 26 December 1831), was an Anglo-Indian poet and assistant headmaster of Hindu College, Kolkata. He was a radical thinker of his time and one of the first Indian educators to disseminate Western learning and science among the young men of Bengal.

Long after his death (by cholera), his legacy lived on among his former students, who came to be known as Young Bengals and many of whom became prominent in social reform, law, and journalism.