

Inland Navigation

INLAND NAVIGATION,
AN
ODE.
HUMBLY INSCRIBED TO
The INHABITANTS of Birmingham,
AND
PROPRIETORS of the CANAL.

The SECOND EDITION.
By J. FREETH.

BIRMINGHAM:

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[Price SIX-PENCE.]

TO THE PUBLIC.

The Candour and Encouragement I have heretofore met with from the Town (for which I cannot but express my grateful thanks) are the principal motives that induce me to this Publication, though not without acknowledging my inability for the task. The intention being nothing more than a Compliment of Joy to the Inhabitants, on the speedy success of so laudable an undertaking, I hope my station in life, and small knowledge of Literature, will apologize for every defect.

BIRMINGHAM

November 6, 1769

J. F.

FOR ancient deeds let History unfold
The page where wonders are enroll'd,
And tell how JASON, from fam'd Colchis' shore
The golden fleece in triumph bore.
A nobler theme the Muse inspires,
And every skilful Artist fires
With heartfelt joy a work to see
Cut out for grand utility;
A project form'd, by which, 'tis plain,
That thousands must advantage gain:
And sure that plan must be of noble use,
That tends in price provision to reduce.
Blest Navigation! source of that increase
Which Commerce finds, and brightens all its ways.

AIR.

*Sons of HERMES, haste to pleasure,
For the joy belongs to you;
May you live to reap the treasure
That must happily ensue.
Treasure, from Staffordian plains,
Richer than Peruvian mines,
And by what the artist gains
All his principal designs.*

CHORUS.

*Not a Son of limping VULCAN
But must truly joyous be;
ENVY from the banquet skulking
'Tis the festive Jubilee.*

To whom shall Gratitude her off'ring pay,
Devote her tribute and inscribe the lay?
The institution merits warm applause,
And claims our strong protection for the cause.

AIR.

*So quick performing this weighty affair,
So great was the industry, prudence, and care,
Eighteen months have scarce run,
Since the work was begun:
How pleasing the fight!
What a scene of delight!
As the Barges come floating along:
Then cease from your toil,
Nor hammer nor file
Be handled to-day,
All care shall away,
Whilst bonfires are blazing,
(What can be more pleasing?)
All free-cost, to gladden the throng.*

RECITATIVE.

Could our Forefathers from the shades but trace
The noble plan
Their Sons began,
To what amazement would the work appear!
A train of Vessels floating by the place
Where sprightly steeds, at trumpet found,
In contest wing'd along the ground,
And thousands to the pleasures would repair.

AIR.

*But, what were those days,
Compared to these?
Each day at the Heath is a fair;
To see Bridges and Locks,
And Boats on the Stocks,
Are numbers continually there.
Every breast, elate with joy,
Gladly views the happy day;
Cease dissention,
Lamp contention,
From these regions haste away,
We alone on Trade depend;
Be in that our emulation,
'Twill support our Navigation,
And the liquid tract extend.
But for this good care and trouble,
That has nobly been display'd,
For our Coals, this instant, double
What we give, we must have paid.
Gripping souls, that live by fleecing,
And upon their teams depend,
To all ranks of life how pleasing,
That their day is at an end.
Long their tricks were overbearing,
Now the vile oppressors may
Sell their nags and burn their geering,
For the roads 'twill better be.*

CHORUS

*Not a Son of limping VULCAN
But shall joyous be to-day;
ENVY from the banquet skulking,
'Tis the festive Jubilee.*

Blest Genius of this fruitful land,
Whose deep sagacious mind,
To benefit mankind,
The glorious undertaking plann'd;
Whose living fame the wonders tell,
Of thy far more than common skill,
Whose matchless art all doubts dispel,
And kingdoms with amazement fill.
When that fam'd Peer*, to patronize his art,
Had set the laudable design on foot,
Which brought his measures into grand repute,
Astonish'd mortals, from each distant part,
The model view'd,
And wond'ring stood;
But how much more when brought to bear,

And Vessels under Vessels steer!
 The neighbouring Counties saw the good effect,
 And now behold the vast increase
 Of Cuts, fair Commerce to protect,
 Which fills the bright Mechanic with delight;
 Nor will the undertaking cease,
 'Till *Trent* and *Severn* with the *Thames* unite.
What mortals so happy as Birmingham Boys?
What people so flush'd with the sweetest of joys?
All hearts fraught with mirth at the Wharf shall appear,
Their aspects proclaim it the Jubilee year,
And be full as gay in their frolicksome pranks,
As they who were dancing on Avon's green banks.
There never in war was for victory won,
A cause that deserved such respect from the Town,
Then revel in gladness, let harmony flow,
From the district of Bordsley to Paradise Row;
For true-feeling joy on each breast must be wrought,
When Coals under Five-pence per hundred are bought.
Rejoice then, ye Artists, drive sorrow away,
And over your cups social gladness display;
The Wealthy will cheerfully cherish the cause,
The Poor give their honest and hearty applause;
Nor dread from the winter's approach any harm,
When blest with good fires, their bodies to warm.
But let not the joys be confin'd to the Town,
All over the County shall gladness be shewn;
The Tradesman, Mechanic, and Cottager too,
Shall all share the bounty that soon must ensue,
And when o'er the houses SOL scarcely can peep,
Be better prepar'd a good Christmas to keep.
The Heavens are kind, and have plenty bestow'd
Rich crops have been gather'd, and trade has been good;
And since food and fuel diminish in price,
Have not we much reason to sing and rejoice?
From Winter's approach then what harm can we fear,
When bounteously furnish'd with comforting cheer?

Birmingham, for arts renown'd,
 O'er the globe shall foremost stand;
 Nor its vast increase be found
 To be equall'd in the land.
 If the will of fancy ranges
 From the *Tagus* to the *Ganges*,
 Or from *Lapland* Cliffs extend
 To the *Patagonian* Strand,
 For mechanic skill and pow'r,
 In what kingdom, on what shore,
 Lies the place that can supply
 The world with such variety?

AIR.

What relief in the fare

Of all heavy ware,

When the whole undertaking is finish'd!

In affairs, what a turn,

When cattle and corn

In their rates shall be greatly diminish'd!

In war and peace,

All commerce cease,

Was't not for a free Navigation:

'Tis of riches the source,

When such plans we enforce,

And of Freedom, our dear preservation.

Arts, genius, and science,

On thee have reliance,

And reverence thy conquering pow'r,

Whose castles of wood

Floating bulwarks have stood,

To the terror of Gallia's *proud shore*.

Still may our Vessels, o'er the briny deep,

To sundry ports their various courses keep:

May Navigation, Liberty's dear friend,

Her wonted fame to greater lengths extend;

Open her sluices and through mountains force,

To distant Lands and easy intercourse:

And *Birmingham*, for every curious art

Her Sons invent, be *Europe's* greatest mart;

In States and Kingdoms ever stand enroll'd,

The grand Mechanic Warehouse of the World!

B I R M I N G H A M L A D S.

Tune - WARWICKSHIRE LADS.

This day, for our new Navigation,

We banish all cares and vexation;

The sight of the barges each honest heart glads,

And the merriest of mortals are Birmingham *lads*,

Birmingham *lads*

Jovial blades,

And the merriest of mortals are Birmingham *lads*.

With rapture all hearts will be glowing,

Stamps, Presses, nor Lathes shall be going;

The lads to the wharf with their lasses repair,

And smile at the streamers that play in the air,

Play in the air,

Free and fair,

And smile at the streamers that play in the air.

Let Stratford's *sons boast out of measure,*

The fruits of their mulberry treasure,

Such treasure for once may cause Jubilee joys,

But riches spring daily from Birmingham *Toys*,

Birmingham *Toys*

All men prize,

But riches spring daily from Birmingham *Toys*,

Of Thames, Severn, Trent, and the Avon,

Our countrymen frequently rave on;

But none of their neighbours are happier than they,

Who peaceably dwell on the banks of the Rea,

Banks of the Rea,

Ever gay,

Who peaceably dwell on the banks of the Rea

Not Europe can match us for traffick,

America, Asia and Afric':

Of what we invent, each partakes of a share,

For the best of wrought metals is Birmingham *Ware*,

Birmingham *Ware*,

None so rare,

For the best of wrought metals is Birmingham *Ware*.

Since by the Canal Navigation,

Of coals we've the best in the Nation:

Around the gay circle your bumpers then put,

For the Cut of all Cuts is a Birmingham *Cut*,

Birmingham *Cut*,

Fairly wrought,

For the Cut of the Cuts is a Birmingham *Cut*.

The ARTISTS JUBILEE.

Tune – NANCY DAWSON

Ye jovial lads come join with me,

In pleasing mirth and jollity,
For pleasure bids us haste away
To crown the undertaking:
The Strikers from their anvils run,
The Founders break their pots, and shun
Their toil, to join the glorious fun,
And go a Navigating.
From break of Day, till Sol *goes down*,
Are thousands flocking from the town,
And joy in ev'ry face is shewn
Upon this good occasion;

The grave, the gay; the old, the young;
Nay, cripples, 'mongst the motley throng,
Go hobbling cheerfully along,
To view the Navigation.

Britannia *gladly views the scene*,
By which her Sons much wealth must gain,
And cries let peace and freedom reign,
To bless our happy station:
So far from briny lakes to be,
'Twould make old Neptune *smile to see*,
Such inland, English *hearts as we*,
So fond of Navigation.
On the FIRST ARRIVAL of the

BARGES with COALS.

Tune – HARVEST-HOME

Ye good fellows all,

Attend to the call,
Salute the occasion with joy;
The cause is inviting,
The scene is delighting,
Then what can our pastime annoy.

CHORUS.

Let Envy begone,

The business is done,
And all honest hearts rejoice!
Hearts rejoice!
And all honest hearts rejoice!

November of old,

The Month is enroll'd,
For bonfires to blaze in the Land;
With joys so enticing,
Uncommon rejoicing
The present time sure must demand.

CHORUS. – *Let Envy begone, &c.*

To sing and to dance,
The lads shall advance;
No labour be follow'd to-day:
In streets, lanes and alleys,
A pleasing sound rallies
Each mortal to sport and to play.

CHORUS. – *Let Envy begone, &c.*

From business and toil,
The Tradesman a-while
Shall sit at the fair festive board;
And leave dull employment
For sumptuous enjoyment,
As good as the land can afford.

CHORUS. – *Let Envy begone, &c.*

May Englishmen join
In each good design,
Their Freedom and Laws to defend;
And bless Navigation
(Support of the Nation)
Prosperity ever attend.

CHORUS. – *Then push the glass round,*

And let mirth abound
In every jovial heart!
Jovial heart!
In every jovial heart!