

ENG 074

'B.'

"The Cordon Sanitaire"

1822

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‘B.’, “The Cordon Sanitaire” (1822)

A Spaniard to our soldiers cried,—
(‘Twas from a Pyrenean brow,
In tones of conscious power and pride)—
“Where is your country’s freedom now?”
He check’d their tale of days gone by,
Of victories won,—but now forgot:—
“There is but *one* true victory,
“TIS TO BE FREE,—and you are *not*.”

He came from Spain:—His steps advance;
And these reproaches reached their ear;—
“What, warriors, have you gained for France
“By conquests, that have cost so dear?
“In History’s weary page to see
“Your names with barren wreaths inwrought?—
“There is but *one* true victory,
“TIS TO BE FREE,—and you are *not*.”

“A King, enshrined in Gothic rust,
“With distaff-sceptre, crazy, weak.
“Shall *he* crush Frenchmen into dust,
“And wave a rod a child might break?
“Talk not of all your fame to me,—
“It is not worth a word, a thought:—
“There is but *one* true victory,
“TIS TO BE FREE,—and you are *not*.”

Our Soldiers then indignant rose,
And flashing brands implied revenge:
Loud cried the warrior, “Know your foes;—
“No blood of mine your soil should tinge!
“If ye want victims,—let those be

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“The victims, who your chains have wrought;—
“There is but *one* true victory,
“‘TIS TO BE FREE,—and you are *not*.”

Even as the lightest clouds disperse,
So is our warriors’ anger gone;
They clasp their friend—the universe
Hears thus their intermingling tone:—
“O yes! we swear, that Liberty
“Shall pass the Loir—amidst the cry,
“We swear, we swear, by Victory,
“Freemen to live, or freemen die!”

And then, to form our badge of fight,
A Colonel gave his robe of blue,
And on the hated Lys of white
Open’d a vein and stain’d it thro’;
And, as a light-house splendidly
Shines from some cliff sublimely high,
Our flag shall wave—for victory,
Or pleased to live or proud to die!

B.

Examiner.