The Factory Operatives Call on Humanity

Arranged by Caroline Price
The Full English

The Full English was a unique nationwide project unlocking hidden treasures of England’s cultural heritage by making over 58,000 original source documents from 12 major folk collectors available to the world via a ground-breaking nationwide digital archive and learning project. The project was led by the English Folk Dance and Song Society (EFDSS), funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and in partnership with other cultural partners across England.

The Full English digital archive (www.vwml.org) continues to provide access to thousands of records detailing traditional folk songs, music, dances, customs and traditions that were collected from across the country. Some of these are known widely, others have lain dormant in notebooks and files within archives for decades.

The Full English learning programme worked across the country in 19 different schools including primary, secondary and special educational needs settings. It also worked with a range of cultural partners across England, organising community, family and adult learning events.

Supported by the National Lottery through the Heritage Lottery Fund, the National Folk Music Fund and The Folklore Society.

Produced by the English Folk Dance and Song Society (EFDSS), June 2014
Arranged by: Caroline Price

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Introduction

This song comes from the Frank Kidson collection of folk material, and was published by J.O. Bebbington on a printed broadside (lyric sheet).

Caroline Price chose to arrange this song, and several others, as part of The Full English community event held at The Met, Bury in on 8 March 2014. Over 50 singers came together to learn material that originated from the North West, led by Caroline and the Stream of Sound youth chorus from Stourbridge.

Scores of the other songs Caroline arranged are available for free download at www.efdss.org/resourcebank

Caroline Price and Stream of Sound

Caroline Price is a dynamic choir leader and prolific arranger of folk material! She researched and arranged a variety of songs and warm ups for The Full English community event in Bury.

Stream of Sound is a youth chorus, led by Caroline, who sing a-cappella harmony, and founded on a variety of musical traditions from around the world. They are known for their energetic and inspiring performances, and aim to share their love of harmony with as many people as possible.

Together, Caroline and Stream of Sound run a variety of workshops and events to encourage people to sing. They are often to be found at folk festivals encouraging more singing too!

Photo: Caroline teaching at The Met, Bury (taken by Frances Watt)
The Factory Operatives Call On Humanity

Published on a broadside printed by J. O. Bebbington within the Frank Kidson collection
http://www.vwml.org/record/FK/18/82/2

Trad./Arr. Caroline Price
Roud Number: V16539

NB: Verse 1 is under Tun part, other verses under other parts

Soprano
V4: The factory longing sits so easy: While us workers

Alto
V3: The factory masters joined to goth or For to bring our

Tune
V1: You working men of every station, High and low of

Bass
V2: With cheerful hearts we went each morning, To the fac to-

starve and pine. Re clining on his easy chair, His stores well-stocked with

wa ges low, While we, with heart felt sup pli cations begged of them to

each de gree, Be hold, the proud oppre ssors hand... Has brought us to this

did he. The while, our hard and cru el mas ters in their down

cost ly wine. Like Phar oah in the days of old... He's hard ened un to mer cy's

spare the blow. But they were deaf to every care that on hu man ity was

mi ser y. While sum ptuous ta bles they have spre ad In deep dis tress we have to

beds did lie. Their cof fers we have filled with gold, They laugh at our ca la mi

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The Factory Operatives Call on Humanity

1. You working men of every station,  
High and low, of each degree,  
Behold, the proud oppressor’s hand  
Has brought us to this misery.  
While sumptuous tables they have spread,  
In deep distress we have to roam.  
Our wives and children, they are starving  
In a sad dejected home.

2. With cheerful hearts we went each morning,  
To the factory did hie,  
The while, our hard and cruel masters  
In their downy beds did lie.  
Their coffers we have filled with gold,  
They laugh at our calamity:  
While in the streets, half clothed and starved,  
Our little children you may see.

3. Assist us in our righteous struggle  
Our cause should be close to your heart.  
For like us, you are unprotected  
From the proud oppressor’s smart.  
We little thought, in days gone by,  
When fortune smiled on us with joy  
That men we placed in stately mansions  
Would our peaceful homes destroy.

4. The factory masters joined together  
For to bring our wages low,  
While we, with heart-felt supplications  
Begged of them to spare the blow.  
But they were deaf to every care  
That on humanity was cast:  
The factory doors were locked against us,  
To endure the winters’ blast.

5. The factory lordling sits so easy:  
While us workers starve and pine:  
Reclining on his easy chair,  
His stores well-stocked with costly wine.  
Like Pharaoh in the days of old,  
He’s hardened unto mercy’s call.  
O free us from his iron grasp,  
That we his victims may not fall.
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At the English Folk Dance and Song Society, we champion the folk arts at the heart of England’s rich and diverse cultural landscape.

Our award-winning Resource Bank contains over 100 resources – incorporating hundreds of audio files, videos and supporting documents, all free to download. They offer endless practical ways to use folk song, music, dance, drama and more in all sorts of community settings, as well as in formal education.

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