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P O E M S

O N

VARIOUS SUBJECTS,

RELIGIOUS AND MORAL.

B Y

PHILLIS WHEATLEY,

NEGRO SERVANT TO Mr. JOHN WHEATLEY,
of BOSTON, in NEW ENGLAND.

L O N D O N:

Printed for A. BELL, Bookfeller, Aldgate; and sold by
Messrs. COX and BERRY, King-Street, BOSTON.

M DCC LXXIII.

D E D I C A T I O N .

To the Right Honourable the
COUNTESS OF HUNTINGDON,

THE FOLLOWING

P O E M S

Are most respectfully

Inscribed,

By her much obliged,

Very humble,

And devoted Seryant,

Phillis Wheatley.

*Boston, June 12,
1773.*

P R E F A C E.

THE following POEMS were written originally for the Amusement of the Author, as they were the Products of her leisure Moments. She had no Intention ever to have published them; nor would they now have made their Appearance, but at the Importunity of many of her best, and most generous Friends; to whom she considers herself, as under the greatest Obligations.

As her Attempts in Poetry are now sent into the World, it is hoped the Critic will not severely censure their Defects; and we presume they have too much Merit
to

P R E F A C E. v

to be cast aside with Contempt,
as worthless and trifling Effusions.

As to the Disadvantages she has
laboured under, with Regard to
Learning, nothing needs to be of-
fered, as her Master's Letter in the
following Page will sufficiently shew
the Difficulties in this Respect she
had to encounter.

With all their Imperfections, the
Poems are now humbly submitted
to the Perusal of the Public.

The

The following is a Copy of a LETTER sent by the
Author's Master to the Publisher.

PHILLIS was brought from *Africa to America*,
in the Year 1761, between Seven and Eight
Years of Age. Without any Assistance from School
Education, and by only what she was taught in the
Family, she, in sixteen Months Time from her Ar-
rival, attained the English Language, to which she
was an utter Stranger before, to such a Degree, as
to read any, the most difficult Parts of the Sacred
Writings, to the great Astonishment of all who
heard her.

As to her WRITING, her own Curiosity led her
to it; and this she learnt in so short a Time, that in
the Year 1765, she wrote a Letter to the Rev.
Mr. Cocom, the *Indian Minister*, while in *England*.

She has a great Inclination to learn the Latin
Tongue, and has made some Progress in it. This
Relation is given by her Master who bought her,
and with whom she now lives.

JOHN WHEATLEY.

Boston, Nov. 14, 1772.

To the P U B L I C K.

AS it has been repeatedly suggested to the Publisher, by Persons, who have seen the Manuscript, that Numbers would be ready to suspect they were not really the Writings of PHILLIS, he has procured the following Attestation, from the most respectable Characters in *Boston*; that none might have the least Ground for disputing their *Original*.

WE whose Names are under-written, do assure the World, that the POEMS specified in the following Page, * were (as we verily believe) written by PHILLIS, a young Negro Girl, who was but a few Years since, brought an uncultivated Barbarian from *Africa*, and has ever since been, and now is, under the Disadvantage of serving as a Slave in a Family in this Town. She has been examined by some of the best Judges, and is thought qualified to write them.

His Excel'ency THOMAS HUTCHINSON, *Governor,*

The Hon. ANDREW OLIVER, *Lieutenant-Governor.*

<i>The Hon.</i> Thomas Hubbard,	<i>The Rev.</i> Charles Chauncy, <i>D. D.</i> ,
<i>The Hon.</i> John Erving,	<i>The Rev.</i> Mather Byles, <i>D. D.</i>
<i>The Hon.</i> James Pitts,	<i>The Rev.</i> Ed. Pemberton, <i>D. D.</i>
<i>The Hon.</i> Harrison Gray,	<i>The Rev.</i> Andrew Elliot, <i>D. D.</i>
<i>The Hon.</i> James Bowdoin,	<i>The Rev.</i> Samuel Cooper, <i>D. D.</i>
John Hancock, <i>Esq;</i>	<i>The Rev.</i> Mr. Samuel Mather,
Joseph Green, <i>Esq;</i>	<i>The Rev.</i> Mr. John Moorhead,
Richard Carey, <i>Esq;</i>	Mr. John Wheatley, <i>her Master.</i>

N. B. The original Attestation, signed by the above Gentlemen; may be seen by applying to *Archibald Bell*, Bookseller, No. 8, *Aldgate-Street*.

* The Words "*following Page*," allude to the Contents of the Manuscript Copy, which are wrote at the Back of the above Attestation.

To the Public

As the Government of this State is now in the hands of the People, and as the People are now in the hands of the Government, it is the duty of the Government to be true to the People, and of the People to be true to the Government.

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VARIOUS SUBJECTS. 17

To the KING's Most Excellent Majesty.

1768.

YOUR subjects hope, dread Sire—

The crown upon your brows may flourish
long,

And that your arm may in your God be strong!

O may your sceptre num'rous nations sway,

And all with love and readiness obey!

But how shall we the *British* king reward! 5

Rule thou in peace, our father, and our lord!

Midst the remembrance of thy favours past,

The meanest peasants most admire the last. *

May *George*, belov'd by all the nations round,

Live with heav'n's choicest constant blessings
crown'd! 10

Great God, direct, and guard him from on high,

And from his head let ev'ry evil fly!

And may each clime with equal gladness see

A monarch's smile can set his subjects free!

* The Repeal of the Stamp Act.

On being brought from AFRICA to
AMERICA.

'T WAS mercy brought me from my *Pagan*
land,

Taught my benighted soul to understand

That there's a God, that there's a *Saviour* too:

Once I redemption neither fought nor knew.

Some view our fable race with scornful eye, 5

“ Their colour is a diabolic die.”

Remember, *Christians, Negros*, black as *Cain*,

May be refin'd, and join th' angelic train.