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Phillis Wheatley

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TO THE PUBLIC.

THE Publisher, in presenting the following Memoir to the public, ventures to call the attention of its readers to the motives with which it has been prepared, and to the design in the execution of which it has been intended as the first step.

The Publisher now entertains the project of a series of similar publications; and embraces, with great pleasure, this occasion of announcing to that large and increasing portion of the community who are benevolently interested in the condition and prospects of our colored brethren, that he has been able already to effect such arrangements as will enable him, as he confidently trusts, to render these publications equally instructive and interesting to all of this class of readers, and especially to the young, without giving just cause of dissatisfaction or displeasure to any. It is intended, as far as possible, to avoid every subject of a controversial nature, and to concentrate the efforts of those concerned, wholly, upon the grand object of presenting anecdotes and traits of the history, biography, capacity and condition of the race of which we speak, to the consideration of the friends of that race, and to the study of the youthful intellect, in such a manner as to promote, as far as may be, clear, unprejudiced and enlightened views of the whole subject.

Of the various subjects which will be treated of in this series, it is unnecessary to speak more particularly, as

these will be left for the most part to the judgment and taste of the respective writers, with no other restriction than may seem to be implied by the principles above stated. In addition to the individual who has furnished the first of the course, the Publisher is happy to announce that he has secured the services of several distinguished authors, both male and female, and he trusts that their established character will be deemed to furnish a sufficient guaranty of the faithful and able performance of so much of his plan, at least, as shall depend upon their contributions.

The Publisher would suppose it a work of supererogation to point out the benefits which may be reasonably expected to arise from these publications in their effect on the young. It must be, under circumstances now existing in the country, that a curiosity will be felt by this class in the subjects which these essays will discuss. How desirable is it that such curiosity should be gratified by aliment which shall be, not only unexceptionable in regard to its influence on both the heart and the head, but shall possess also the merit of conveying information of a valuable kind, selected, simplified, and prepared with especial reference to the taste and necessities of this numerous and important class of readers. Such an end, it is confidently hoped, will be attained by the series of which this Memoir is the commencement.

MEMOIR.

NOT a great many of the younger readers of this little book may know much about Slavery, though they have all heard and read, of course, that such a thing exists, and that even in the southern and western parts of our own country. I do not intend here to discuss the nature of it, or the circumstances that gave rise to it in the first instance, or the effect it is believed to have on the country and the people in and among which it is found. All these matters are more proper for another place. My object is simply to call the attention of those who feel an interest in the condition and character of the African race, to some particulars respecting individuals of that race, who have, at different times, been slaves in different parts of this country, and whose characters were quite too interesting to be passed over by the historian in utter silence.

MEMOIR
OF
PHILLIS
WHEATLEY

B. B.
THATCHER

1834