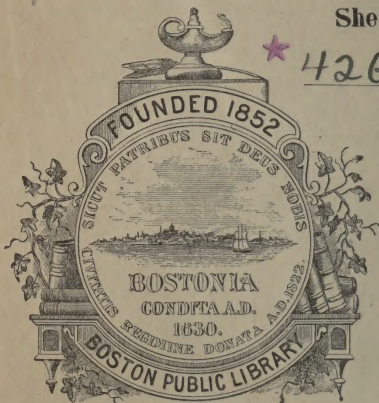




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THE  
NEGRO MOTHER'S APPEAL.



“If I did despise the cause of my man-servant, or of my maid-servant, when they contended with me; what then shall I do when God riseth up? and when he visiteth what shall I answer him? Did not he that made me, make him? and did not one fashion us?”

Job xxi. 13—15.

White Lady, happy, proud and free!  
Lend, awhile, thine ear to me;  
Let the Negro Mother's wail  
Turn thy pale cheek yet more pale.

Yes, thy varying cheek can show  
Feelings none save mothers know;  
My sable bosom does but hide  
Strong affection's rushing tide.

Sold at the Depository, Gracechurch Street; by HARVEY & DARTON, 55, Gracechurch Street; HOULSTON & SON, Paternoster Row; EDMUND FRY, Houndsditch; E. ALBRIGHT, Newington Causeway, London; and other Booksellers.—Price 3s. 6d. per 100.

Joy, fair Lady, with the name  
 Of Mother, for thy first-born came,  
 Joy unmingled with the fear  
 Which dwells, alas ! for ever here.

Can the Negro Mother joy  
 Over this, her captive boy,  
 Which, in bondage, and in tears,  
 For a life of woe she rears ?

Though she bears a mother's name,  
 A mother's rights she may not claim,  
 For the white man's will can part  
 Her darling from her bursting heart.

Safe within thy circling arms,  
 Thou mayst watch the opening charms  
 Of the babe who sinks to rest  
 Cradled on thy snowy breast ;

Confiding in thy right divine,  
 Press his rosy lips to thine ;  
 By no force, nor fraud can he  
 Snatched from thy embraces be.

Gently nurtured shall he grow ;  
 Bitter toil shall never know ;  
 Never feel the gnawing pain  
 Of the captive's hopeless chain.

And thou wilt bid him fix his eye  
 On a bright home in the sky ;  
 And teach him how to lift his prayer  
 To a gracious Father there.

I hear, too, of that God above,  
 Some tell me that his name is Love ;  
 That all his children, dark or fair,  
 Alike his pitying favour share.

They tell me that our Father bade  
 All love the creatures he has made ;  
 That none should ever dare oppress,  
 But seek each other's happiness.

Yet I see the white man gain  
 His riches by the Negro's pain ;  
 See him close his eyes and ears  
 To his brother's cries and tears.

But, Lady, when thy look, so mild,  
 Rests upon thine own fair child,  
 Think, then, of one less fair, indeed,  
 But one for whom thy heart should bleed.

Born to his parents' wretched fate,  
 Him no smiling hours await ;  
 Toil, and scourge, and chain, his doom,  
 From the cradle to the tomb.

When bow'd beneath his earthly woes,  
 His fainting heart would seek repose,  
 And listen to the holy call,  
 Which bids him trust the Lord of all ;

When he in lowly prayer would bend  
 Before an everlasting Friend ;  
 Learn how to reach those mansions blest,  
 Where even *he* at length may rest ;

By a stern master's jealous pride,  
 This blessing, too, may be denied ;  
 He may forbid his care-worn slave  
 To look for hope beyond the grave.

Oh ! if that blessed law be true,  
 They tell me Jesus preach'd to you,  
 'Tis well, perhaps, to veil its light,  
 From the poor bondsman's aching sight.

Lest too clearly he might trace  
 The records of a Father's grace ;  
 Read his own wrongs in words of flame,  
 And his lost birthright proudly claim.

Yet, white men, fear not ; even we,  
 Despised, degraded, though we be,  
 Have hearts to feel, to understand,  
 And keep your Master's great command.



That faith, your kinder brethren bring,  
 Like Angels on their healing wing,  
 To cheer us in the hour of gloom,  
 With glimpses of a brighter home;

That faith, beneath whose hallow'd name,  
 Ye work the deeds of sin and shame;  
 Which bids the sinner turn and live,  
 Can teach the Negro to forgive.

For all the gems of Afric's coast,  
 And fruits her palmy forests boast,  
 I would not harm that boy of thine,  
 Nor bid him groan and toil for mine.

I would but, on my bended knee,  
 Beseech that mine might be as free;  
 Child of the same indulgent Heaven,  
 Might share the common blessings given.

I would but, when the lisping tone  
 Of thy sweet infant mocks thine own,  
 That thou shouldst teach his earliest thought  
 To spurn the wealth by slavery bought.

I would but, when thy babe is prest  
 With transports to a father's breast,  
 Thy gentle voice should plead the cause  
 Of nature and her outrag'd laws;

Should bid that father break the chain  
 In which he holds our wretched train,  
 And by the love to thee he bears,  
 Dispel the Negro Mother's fears.

By thy pure, maternal joy,  
 Bid him spare my helpless boy;  
 And thus a blessing on his own  
 Seek from his Maker's righteous throne.

[PECKHAM.]























