

Reflections on the State of my mind during my first Convictions;
of the Necessity of believing the Truth, and experiencing the
inestimable Benefits of Christianity

by
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Well may I say my life has been
One scene of sorrow and of pain;
From early days I griefs have known,
And as I grew my griefs have grown:

Dangers were always in my path;
And fear of wrath, and sometimes death;
While pale dejection in me reign'd
I often wept, by grief constrain'd.

When taken from my native land,
By an unjust and cruel band,
How did uncommon dread prevail!
My sighs no more I could conceal.

To ease my mind I often strove,
And tried my trouble to remove:
I sung, and utter'd sighs between—
Assay'd to stifle guilt with sin.—

But O! not all that I could do
Would stop the current of my woe;
Conviction still my vileness shew'd;
How great my guilt – how lost from God!

Prevented, that I could not die,
Nor might to one kind refuge fly;
An orphan state I had to mourn, –
Forsook by all, and left forlorn.

Those who beheld my downcast mien
Could not guess at my woes unseen:
They by appearance could not know
The troubles that I waded through.

Lust, anger, blasphemy, and pride,
With legions of such ills beside,
Troubled my thoughts, while doubts and fears
Clouded and darken'd most my years.

Sighs now no more would be confin'd—
They breath'd the trouble of my mind:
I wish'd for death, but check'd the word,
And often pray'd unto the Lord.

Unhappy, more than some on earth,
I thought the place that gave me birth—
Strange thoughts oppress'd—while I replied
“Why not in Ethiopia [i.e. Africa] died?”

And why thus spared, nigh to hell?—
God only knew—I could not tell!
A tott'ring fence, a bowing wall
thought myself ere since the fall.

Oft times I mused, nigh despair,
While birds melodious fill'd the air:
Thrice happy songsters, ever free,
How bless'd were they compar'd to me!

Thus all things added to my pain,
While grief compell'd me to complain;
When sable clouds began to rise
My mind grew darker than the skies.

The English nation call'd to leave,
How did my breast with sorrows heave!
I long'd for rest—cried “Help me, Lord!
Some mitigation, Lord, afford!”

Yet on, dejected, still I went –
Heart-throbbing woes within were pent;
Nor land, nor sea, could comfort give,
Nothing my anxious mind relieve.

Weary with travail, yet unknown
To all but God and self alone,
Numerous months for peace I strove,
And numerous foes I had to prove.

Inur'd to dangers, griefs, and woes,
Train'd up 'midst perils, deaths, and foes,
I said “Must it thus ever be?—
No quiet is permitted me.”

Hard hap, and more than heavy lot!
I pray'd to God “Forget me not –
What thou ordain'st willing I'll bear;
But O! deliver from despair!”

Strivings and wrestlings seem'd in vain;
Nothing I did could ease my pain:
Then gave I up my works and will,
Confess'd and own'd my doom was hell!

Like some poor pris'ner at the bar,
Conscious of guilt, of sin and fear,
Arraign'd, and self-condemned, I stood—
Lost in the world, and in my blood!

Yet here, 'midst blackest clouds confin'd,
A beam from Christ, the day-star, shin'd;
Surely, thought I, if Jesus please,
He can at once sign my release.

I, ignorant of his righteousness,
Set up my labours in its place;
Forgot for why his blood was shed,
And pray'd and fasted in its stead.

He died for sinners—I am one!
Might not his blood for me atone?
Tho' I am nothing else but sin,
Yet surely he can make me clean!

Thus light came in, and I believ'd;
Myself forgot, and help receiv'd!
My Saviour then I know I found,
For, eas'd from guilt, no more I groan'd.

O, happy hour, in which I ceas'd
To mourn, for then I found a rest!
My soul and Christ were now as one—
Thy light, O Jesus, in me shone!

Bless'd be thy name, for now I know
I and my works can nothing do;
“The Lord alone can ransom man—
For this the spotless Lamb was slain!”

When sacrifices, works, and pray'r,
Prov'd vain, and ineffectual were,
“Lo, then I come!” the Saviour cried,
And, bleeding, bow'd his head and died!

He died for all who ever saw
No help in them, nor by the law:—
I this have seen; and gladly own
“Salvation is by Christ alone!”