
THE
CONVERSION
OF A
MAHOMETAN
TO THE
CHRISTIAN RELIGION:

Described in a LETTER from GAIFER, in
ENGLAND, to ALY-BEN-HAYTON, his
Friend in TURKEY.

WE SPEAK THAT WE DO KNOW.

DEAR HAYTON,

YOU cannot be ignorant, that the imperfect, though awakening information given me of the Christian religion, by an English slave under captivity, to our bigoted Mahometan neighbour, Abdala, put me upon a restless desire of a farther knowledge therein. This, I was convinced, could not be obtained in my present unhappy situation; being in a country where it is death to give the least suspicion of favouring the Christian profession, where every eye and every ear were dangerous watchers over all my behaviour. Therefore it was, with all the caution necessary to so hazardous an attempt, I happily got on board the Expedition, bound from Constantinople to London.

When I came to England, as soon as I had opportunity of making my observations, I found that
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the Christian religion was, in general, professed throughout this kingdom. But notwithstanding the purity it enjoins, it appeared that the generality of its professors were very loose in their morals, profane in their discourse, and debauched in their lives. I also found that the professors of Christianity were divided into many religious sects; and, what is much to be deplored, each carry their opposition, for the most part, against the other, to that height of inveteracy, as if they worshipped not the same God.

This put me upon farther inquiry into the principles of the Christian religion; a task difficult enough for a stranger to undertake, who had then but a small acquaintance with the English tongue. But that impediment was removed in a shorter time than was expected, by the assistance of a humane, sober gentleman, whose profession was to teach the languages, and instruct his pupils in the religion of his country. He took much pains in teaching me both, and furnished me with such books as were necessary, particularly that which they called the *Bible*, which is to Christians what the *Alcoran* is to the Mahometans. This is their perfect rule of faith, and contains a full declaration of the will of God, with a full account of future rewards and punishments for the good and evil.

As I read these sacred pages with an unprejudiced mind, and a desire of information, I soon found how mistaken I had been concerning the terms of man's acceptance with God, and of his final salvation, viz. that it is *not by works of righteousness which we had done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost; and that by grace we are saved through faith, and that not of ourselves; it (even faith) is the gift of God.* I clearly saw, according to this book, *that to*
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him that could not work, previous to his justification, but believeth on Jesus Christ, his righteousness, being received by faith, is imputed to him for justification. I saw also both the nature and extent of the moral law, the fall of man by the transgression of Adam, our general root and representative ; that the first covenant being broken, man was utterly unable to obtain salvation thereby ; and that Jesus Christ, the second Adam, came into the world to be the Saviour and living Head of all that believe in him : for them he fulfilled the law ; for them he satisfied divine justice ; and that the only way to eternal life, was by receiving his righteousness, which is imputed to all them that believe.

When I began to understand something of the differences amongst the various professors of Christianity, I found them all remote from the tenor of scripture ; that all within the circle of my acquaintance seemed totally to neglect those doctrines the holy scriptures made absolutely necessary to salvation, and warmly to contend for *forms and modes*, and whatever the Bible was either quite silent about, or laid no stress upon. But what I wondered at, most of all, was, that those who are called clergymen, and are, by the laws of their country, separated from the rest of the people, to teach the principles and practice of their holy religion, are, for the most part, the greatest strangers to the essence of the gospel. As for their lives, they are as vain, trifling, and irreligious as any others. They frequent all public theatres, balls, and the vilest assemblies. In short, they are a common reproach, a public scandal, and the very hindrance of others' repentance ; but still they call themselves the ministers of the gospel, the ambassadors of Jesus Christ, and expect to be revered of all men, for being the followers of his humility, his contempt of the world, and purity of life.

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Upon the whole, I could form no other judgment of the divinity of the gospel, from the deportment of the bulk of its professors, and especially of their teachers, than that it was a cunning fable, devised only to aggrandize a set of men, that call *themselves* the clergy. Their public exhortations faintly recommend a conduct of life, such as they themselves are mostly strangers to, though it be no more than a little dry *heathen* morality. From all this, I could see them in no other light than the very enemies to the cross of Christ, the greatest opposers of true Christianity, and deceivers of the people.

Thus, my dear Hayton, instead of the real happiness I promised myself in the society of Christians, and the glorious privileges of their religion, so recommended and adorned by that poor exiled slave, I met with very little else here in this Christian land (so called) but infidelity and profaneness; which sore disappointment hardened my heart against all religion whatever. What could I then conclude, but that the Bible was a cheat, and their religion a craft? And I had well nigh resolved to loose the reins of my passions, and follow the multitude to do evil.

But one Sabbath evening, (and let me not forget that day) as I was taking a solitary walk, musing on these things, I passed by a very crowded assembly of people. Led, as I thought, by curiosity, I entered the place with no little contempt in my heart. But, O my Hayton, how shall I describe the strange emotions I felt, whilst joy sat upon the countenances of those about me! The solemnity of the place, and the awful behaviour of the assembly, was such as I had never seen before; and, what struck me with wonder and deep attention, one spirit seemed to animate the whole body; and what one man offered up in prayer,

prayer, the rest made their joint request to God for. O, what I felt when I heard the King of kings addressed in these words ! *Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O thou most mighty, and in thy majesty ride prosperously upon the word of truth, meekness and righteousness. Thine arrows are very sharp in the heart of the king's enemies.* I trembled, and thought I doubted if I had not better fly away. I could not, I dared not leave the awful place. Prayer being ended, from the sacred oracles the man of God read these words : *Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.* He shewed the holiness of that God with whom we have to do ; the great *design* of redemption by Jesus Christ ; the depravity of our souls ; the nature of that happiness which is set before sinners ; the absolute necessity of being born again, in order to obtain a present pardon, and persevere to future salvation. He not only proved the necessity of our regeneration from these, and many other substantial arguments ; but there was something like a judgment-seat set up in my own conscience. I was, by some power more than human, indicted, arraigned, proved guilty, and condemned. The sinful actions of my life were now laid open before me : I was compelled to assent to what I never knew before, viz. that all my sinful actions proceeded from a corrupt fountain, a nature universally depraved and polluted. Each sentence he spake, came with authority and conviction to my heart ; especially such as these : *Every mouth must be stopped, and all the world* (even they that have not the written law) *become guilty before God. No man can redeem his brother, nor give unto God a ransom for him. He that believeth on Jesus Christ shall be saved ; and he that believeth not, shall be damned.* Now it was that my heart failed within me. I groaned in spirit. I cried, I am undone ! my sins are gone over my head : the remem-

brance of them is grievous, and the burden of them is intolerable.

When all was ended, I strove with all my might to conceal the confusion of my mind from those happier souls I was surrounded with ; but some of them perceived my concern ; and one said to me, with tears in his eyes, “ The Saviour of sinners have mercy on thee, and reveal himself to thy soul ! ” But O, my load was great ! I returned with a heavy heart. When I entered my closet, I threw myself prostrate on the ground, and attempted to pray ; but it was long before I could speak a word. At length, under some heart-meltings, and in broken accents, I cried out, “ O Lord God, thou Maker of all things, and the Governor of the world, unto thee all power belongs : thou canst kill, and make alive : mercifully behold a poor, miserable sinner, ruined and undone. I confess, O God, that I have justly deserved eternal death ; and it is alone of thy sparing hand that I am yet alive. Thou canst, in a moment, crush me to death, and in just vengeance destroy me for ever. But, O my God, glorify thyself in the salvation even of such a wretch as I am. For the sake of all thy goodness, and all that whereby thou makest it known, turn me, even *me*, and save me for ever and ever.”

After some time I rose from the ground, but in great distraction of mind. Sometimes I had thoughts of going in search of the preacher, in hopes of finding relief from him ; but this seemed impracticable, it being now late in the evening ; and besides, I knew not where to seek him. Then I condemned myself for not having inquired where he lived, and looked upon this neglect as a bad omen. It now darted into my mind, whether or not the minister I had heard was really a man of like passions with others, or rather an angel sent from God. In the multi-
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tude of my thoughts within me, I cast my eye upon my quite neglected Bible, which I had before carelessly thrown aside, finding it so little regarded by the generality of those called Christians. I read, and pondered, and read on; but alas! every line seemed to militate against me, and, instead of ministring relief, to increase my torment. I closed the book, and paused; then opened it again, and found these words: *The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me. I found trouble and sorrow. Then called I upon the name of the Lord: O Lord, I beseech thee, deliver my soul.* This scripture, for a moment, conveyed some light and comfort to me in my distress. I saw my case was not, as I supposed, peculiar to myself. I said, Surely this man has been in like trouble of soul, and has felt the pains of hell too; and yet the Lord graciously delivered him out of all. But this small glimmering of light was soon extinguished. All that night I had no rest. My slumberings were attended with astonishing terror. Death, judgment, and eternal destruction, was all I could see, and all I could hear; and a terrible sound it was. The preacher's text was continually ringing in my ears—*Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of heaven.* For some time I confined myself to my room, and hardly took so much sustenance as was sufficient to preserve me alive. The comforts of this life were now blasted: I laid under sharp convictions. *The arrows of the Almighty struck fast in me: they drank up my spirits, whilst his hand pressed me sore:* Then cried I, *What must I do to be saved?* At other times I was more easy; then again under amazing horror and dread, because I was so thoughtless and stupid, while my case was so dreadful. I was often under violent temptation to destroy myself, and so put an end to a wretched life: for I thought, Surely, the longer I live, the more sin I commit; consequently, my punishment must be greater

greater in the end. Then I was without hope of deliverance, and concluded, the sooner I put an end to my misery, the better. Now and then I had a small transient gleam of light darting into my soul, which, for the time it lasted, gave me some hope of deliverance; at least, peradventure that the Lord might have mercy on so vile a wretch as me.

At this season, I was led to discover more clearly the secret workings of corruption in my heart. The Spirit of God convinced me, that my understanding was, by nature, blind and ignorant, *till God, who caused the light to shine out of darkness, shines into the heart, to give the knowledge of his glory in the face of Jesus Christ.* I saw, more than ever, that my will was stubborn and perverse, even to an enmity against the law of God; also that my affections were all disorderly, impure, sensual and devilish; and, what was even beyond this, that I could not love the Lord Jesus Christ, who had done and suffered so much on my account. I felt that all my designs wholly terminated in myself. I was spiritually and rationally convinced, that for me to deny natural, moral, and religious *self*, and come to Christ as a poor, miserable, wretched, empty creature, to live upon his righteousness forever, as my Bible directed me, is as supernatural and wonderful, as to see mountains and hills removed, and cast into the depth of the sea. I now began to feel more than ever, what I had before read in the Bible, but could not comprehend, that salvation was entirely of *grace*; that nothing less than sovereign grace could save my soul from the guilt and dominion of sin, and make me a partaker of the glorious privileges of the sons of God. During this confinement, my courteous friend, who before had taken such pains to instruct me in the manners and language of the country, made me a visit. He was greatly surprised to see my countenance

nance so fallen, and kindly inquired into the cause. As he was called a *teacher in Israel*, and one that I had often heard animadvert warmly on the bad behaviour of the generality of his brethren ; I simply related the trouble I was in, and what I apprehended was the cause of it, and what I more than feared must be the fatal consequence. He looked earnestly at me, and, with concern in his countenance, replied, " I pity your condition from my heart. Your disorder is a religious distraction of mind, which we call enthusiasm. We have a great deal of this in England. The person you heard preach, and who was the cause of your trouble, is a *grand deceiver*, one whose constant employment is to *turn the world upside down* ! Not being content with the happy established form of religion, he has got some novel, wild chimeras in his head ; and being fired with the irrational ideas of his own brain, he frightens his poor deluded followers out of their senses ; most of whom are poor illiterate persons, the *very scum and off-scouring of the world*. My advice to you, Sir, (said he) is never to go near them more, by any means. Attend the regular stated service of our excellent church ; go abroad into cheerful company ; shake off that corrosive melancholy, and resume your wonted sprightliness. God is a merciful being, and does not require so much strictness at our hands. You may use the pleasures of this life, love the world, and go to heaven too." I asked him the meaning of those words, *Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God*. He said, " You must be baptized, and lead a moral, sober life ; but not think to receive the Holy Spirit."

Now I saw what he was, and knew, that if he was *right*, the word of God was *wrong* ; if the word of God was *truth*, he must be in *error* and *delusion*. He left me grievously oppressed and heavy laden with

with sin. I was under the clearest conviction, both from what the preacher declared, and what I read in the Bible, that no righteousness could serve to justify my person at the tribunal of a just and holy God, but that which is altogether perfect, fully commensurate to the utmost demands of the moral law. This, I more than saw, was altogether impossible for me to perform. In fine, I found my acquaintance was a physician of no value, altogether a stranger to my disorder, and quite unacquainted with the only sovereign remedy for perishing souls. Just then came into my mind, some passages I had read in my Bible, of false prophets, who cry, *Peace, peace, when there is no peace*; and the blessed Author of Christianity's words, *Beware of false prophets, who are only blind leaders of the blind*. I was enabled to take these hints, and to beware of falling into the ditch with him. I longed exceedingly for the return of the next Lord's day; resolved to go (notwithstanding all the doctor said) to the same place where God had so wonderfully wrought upon my soul before.

The blessed morning being come, I worshipped the God of heaven in fervent prayer, committed my body, soul, and concerns to him, and begged that this day might be a feast of marrow and fat things to my soul; and soon hastened to the assembly of saints: and as they began their worship sooner than most others, I was again a little too late. The same minister was there, and my very heart leaped at the sound of his voice. He was just taking these soul-reviving words for the subject of his discourse: *Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest*. He told us, that this was the voice of our Lord Jesus Christ himself, inviting weary, hungry, and perishing souls, to a feast of mercy and grace. And in order to prevail upon his hearers

hearers to accept the invitation, he shewed, 1. That the burden of sin is a heavy burden. 2. That the Spirit of God always makes us feel that burden, and groan to be delivered, before we find rest. 3. That Jesus Christ only can give rest to the weary soul. 4. That he will do it to all that come unto him; viz. to all that believe. He insisted upon all these points, and was large in the inferences he drew from them; then concluded in prayer and praise. During the whole time, the most devout affections were to be discerned in the whole assembly. As for me, I found that every word was exactly levelled at my heart. He could not have spoke more pertinently to my case, if I had told him all the exercises of my distracted mind. I sometimes thought he had surely been informed of all my griefs, and hence he directed his discourse only to me. He opened all my disease, probed the wound to the bottom; and it was as though I was shaken over the mouth of hell. Then he applied the precious *balm of Gilead*; he preached Jesus Christ in all his offices, especially as the glorious Physician, who heals the wounded conscience, for his own name's sake.

In the application of the whole, he shewed the many hindrances which lie in the way, and the perplexing doubts and slavish fears which possess the burdened conscience at its first coming to Christ; and withal, how able and willing he is to receive and give them rest. My soul failed within me. My spirits sunk under the weight of a comfortable hope, that Jesus would have mercy on *me*, even *me*! Just as he drew to a conclusion, he raised his voice, and with great earnestness quoted these words:—*I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins, saith the Lord.* The blessed Spirit applied them home to my soul, and wrote them, by the finger of God, upon
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the table of my heart. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, the scales fell from my eyes ! I beheld *Jesus of Nazareth* by the eye of faith, as evidently crucified before me, bearing my sins in his own body on the accursed tree. The prison doors were thrown open ; my soul, that was before bound in misery and iron, and locked up in the prison of unbelief, was now set at liberty. God helped me to come as a poor, perishing, undone sinner, and cast my soul upon Jesus Christ. O ! he graciously received me ; and according to the multitude of his mercies, and the faithfulness of his promise, he *blotted out all my sins !* I received Christ into my heart, *the hope of glory* ; and put a new song in my mouth, even praises unto God for his *discriminating grace !*

He hath lov'd me, I cry'd,
He hath liv'd and hatin dy'd
'To redeem such a rebel as me !

O my dear Hayton, I cannot describe the thousandth part of that transport of joy, that substantial bliss I then felt ; and blessed be God, *even now*, while I am writing, I yet feel it in my soul. I was in a moment translated from darkness to light ; from sickness to health ; from pain to ease ; from misery to happiness ; from bondage to liberty ; from death to life ;—yea, I may truly say, from hell to heaven !

Had I but one wish left, it should be, that my dear friend, even while he reads the language of my happy soul, *might taste and see how good and gracious the Lord is !* might himself feel the sweetness, life and power of Christ ! Well, my soul is concerned for, and, I trust, I shall always remember *thee*, my Hayton : and when I bow before the throne of Jesus, O let my prayers come up before him, and be heard for you !

Now

Now I begun to live. From this moment commenced my *spiritual* and *eternal* life, *which is hid with Christ in God*. Jesus Christ is become to me a head of influence, and I daily *receive out of his fulness, grace for grace*. The whole body of sin is condemned in the flesh, and has already received its mortal wound. Jesus gave me to drink of the living water, and it flows, and ever will flow unto eternal life. The Sun of righteousness shines with a new light in my *understanding*, sets a new bias to my *will*, and all the *passions* and *affections* of my soul run in a *new channel*. In a word, the Holy Ghost has wrought a real, thorough change in my heart: all old things are done away, and all things are become new: for being now become dead to the law, and married to Christ, I am enabled to *bring forth fruit unto God*.

But O! when I view my interest in Christ, and consider what an inexhaustible fund of *grace, strength, and righteousness*, is lodged for me in the Redeemer's hands; this proves the sweetest and most powerful engagement to all evangelical obedience, and the only spring of all true consolation. May the dear Immanuel draw thy heart into a union with his glorious person, which is eternal life! Then, and not till then, you shall enjoy a kingdom of heaven in your own breast, a very paradise in your soul, unspeakably better than what the *Alcoran* deludes us with a false expectation of. If it be so, my dear Hayton, as it really is, that all real Christians are thus happy in a world of woe, and under the incumbrances of flesh and blood; how transcendently glorious, how unspeakably happy must they be, when these impediments are removed; when the soul becomes at liberty to range the whole paradise of God, and taste the joys of infinite delights!—And thus shall it be done unto every man whom Jesus delights to honour.

I must farther relate to you, that when I had the happiness of being acquainted with the *evangelist* that first brought the glad tidings to my ears, and by whose ministry the grace of God reached my heart, I related my experience to him, and a few of his intimate friends. O how did they weep for joy over me ! They strengthened my faith in Christ, and gave glory to God, who had added another lost sinner to his militant church. These knew how to sympathize with me, when I lay under the *wrath of God*, the *curse of the law*, and the *terrors of conscience* ; for by comparing *notes*, our experiences exactly tallied, as *face answereth to face in a glass*.

But here give me leave to make a few observations of another kind.

The Christian religion is, I presume, not only to be demonstrated by the Spirit's secret operations in the soul ; but it may be proved from rational grounds, to be a system altogether agreeable to *right reason*, and the moral *fitness of things*. For what so fit for, and suitable to, a lost, ungodly, helpless sinner, as an all-sufficient Saviour ? What so suitable to the weary, as rest ; to the hungry, as bread ; to the thirsty, as water ; to the naked, as a garment ; to the blind, as sight ? &c. All these, and many more striking metaphors, has the Holy Spirit most elegantly borrowed from the creature, to shew how reasonable a thing it is, that we should believe on the Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. No man can be forced to believe against his inclination. Therefore the Spirit of God first enlightens the understanding, that it may *discern* ; the *will* and *affections* then naturally flow after. The soul is first drawn to Jesus, as if it would not come ; and then it comes as if it were not drawn. *He drew me with the cords of love, as with the bands of a man. And this is a faithful saying,*
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and worthy of all acceptation, (even of our enlightened age) that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. And I found that the greatest part of those whom I have been speaking of, could each say for himself, from the real experience of the heart, *Jesus Christ hath loved me, and given himself for me.* And the whole of their deportment and conversation in the world, shews them to be persons full of genuine humility, unaffected seriousness; being mild and gentle; free from all selfish design; wholly devoted to Jesus Christ, and earnestly seeking the good of all their fellow-creatures. And yet (wonderful to relate!) these people are contemned by almost all professors, both teachers and hearers: yea, they are persecuted, and loaded with all the obloquy that inveterate malice can suggest, and all the opposition that can be contrived to prevent the spreading of the glorious gospel, and the increase of the genuine followers of the exalted Redeemer. Nay, those that disagree in all other religious points, are unanimous in this, that they will root out, if possible, their memorial from the face of the earth. But notwithstanding all the opposition they meet with, the meekness, patience, and perseverance of these Christians, both ministers and people, (for I understand there are many more of the same spirit) surmount all difficulties, and their numbers daily increase. And why not? Seeing the wonderful conversions that are among them, are surely enough to engage the greatest sceptic in religion to believe that the mighty power of God is with them! O that our countrymen would but admit this true gospel of Christ amongst them! Surely, if it were preached by some of these despised messengers of the living God, they would, I doubt not, through *divine grace*, embrace the truth as it is in Jesus; and be a reproach to this nation, who resist the calls of God; and though they are called by his name, will not have this man, this
God-man,

God-man, Christ Jesus, to reign over them. O how fatally successful has the enemy of mankind been, by engaging in his interest that very power, which, by primitive gospel institution, was ordained as a barrier between the people and his subtle inventions ! Surely he has gained his point, by bribing the *watchmen* with riches, power and pleasure ; so that when they riot in luxurious ease, the poor souls under their mistaken care fall an easy, willing sacrifice to his rapacious power. Woe, woe to the *watchmen*, and woe to the *people* ! for the carelessness of *those* will not extenuate the guilt of *these*. *If the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch together.* But every soul shall be required at the watchman's hand. It appears to me, that this corrupt ministry is a greater enemy to their nation than the most formidable powers about them ; for those, at the worst, can but annoy them in their temporal interest ; but these wound them deeply in temporal and eternal at the same time ; inasmuch as if we practised the gospel of Jesus Christ, and lived by the faith of the Son of God, it could not fail of engaging the arm of Omnipotence in the defence of both : then, having our anchor within the vail, we might justly triumph with those worthy heroes of old, who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword ; out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, and turned to flight the army of the aliens. Whereas, on the contrary, a dissolute, debauched, profane life, a land full of infidelity, must cause the Divine Majesty of heaven to rise up against them.

I should swell my Letter to too great a length, should I pursue my inclination on this subject. But what I have said, I hope, through the assistance of
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divine grace, will excite your desires and diligence to become acquainted, experimentally acquainted, with the doctrines of the gospel.

O Hayton ! did you but know the joy of believing in Jesus Christ, and the heaven I enjoy in communion with him, it would soon wean you from your superstitious and fruitless pilgrimage to Mecca and Arafata, in honour of a grand impostor, and engage you to come and see the salvation of God.

If it please the Redeemer to breathe on these lines, this humble attempt to inform your judgment, and awaken your conscience, so that they are brought with conviction to your heart, I shall, (if the Lord please) send you another Letter, to give you a brief account of the doctrines, practice and discipline, the officers, members, glory and symmetry of a church of Christ, according to the Bible plan.

Farewel, my dear friend. May the contemned Nazarene bring thee to a knowledge of thyself, and a knowledge of his pardoning love, which is eternal life !

Then you will not envy our great Sultan his glory, but be happy, unspeakably happy, in your own breast ; as is

Your joyful,

Self-exiled Friend, &c.

GAIFER.

THE BIRD OF PARADISE.

By the late Rev. Dr. SAMUEL STENNETT.

[Extracted from the BAPTIST REGISTER, published in England
by the Rev. Dr. RIPPON.]

AH me ! I've lost my liberty ;
And in this cage
My active mind
Is close confin'd :
Nor can I hope again
My birthright to obtain,
Till this my gilded tenement shall be
Destroy'd by some disaster or by age.

II.

But—How came I here ?
Who was it that depriv'd my heav'n-born soul
Of the freedom she enjoy'd
In the paradise of God,
Where no base passion could my peace control,
Or in my breast create a fear ?
'Twas Satan, aye, 'twas he
That robb'd me of my liberty :
His artful snares th' insidious Fowler laid,
And to this captive state my innocence betray'd.

III.

Cruel enemy, to try,
When I fear'd no danger nigh,
Thus to deceive and ruin me
With basest arts of treachery !
But boast not, Satan, thou thy point hast gain'd.
Heaven permits it so to be,
That all the world may one day see
Justice triumphant over perfidy ;

For

For know, that Christ the conquest hath obtain'd.
 Yes, and he'll quickly come,
 And publicly pronounce thy doom.
 So shall the horror of this cruel deed,
 By which thy malice had design'd
 To draw down vengeance on mankind,
 With double fury light on thy devoted head.

IV.

In the mean while I sit,
 And here, in groans
 And silent moans,
 Lament my prison'd state :
 Ah me ! I once was us'd to mount and fly,
 Up through the trackless regions of the sky ;
 And as I pass'd along,
 In sweetly pleasing strains,
 To trill my warbling song
 All o'er th' ethereal plains.
 But now, condemn'd within this cage to lie,
 I droop the wing,
 Refuse to sing,
 And sighing, wish to die.

V.

But why despair ?
 Come, try thy voice, and stretch thy wing :
 A bird within a cage may chirp and sing,
 And taste what freedom is, e'en while she's here.
 Strike up some cheerful note ;
 With fond desire,
 Peep through the wire :
 Thy keeper'll quickly come and let thee out.

VI.

This, O this is happy news !
 Now to sing I can't refuse :
 These shall be the notes I choose :
 " Satan, the cruel Fowler, put me in,
 " And fast inclos'd me round with sense and sin :
 " But

" But Satan cannot keep me here ;
 " For not to him the cage belongs ;
 " 'Tis Christ's, and he shall have my songs,
 " Since he's my kind deliverer."

VII.

Thus awhile,
 I will beguile
 The passing hours away ;
 Assur'd my Master 'll not forget
 To make my bed, and find me meat,
 So long as 'tis decreed that here I stay.
 Wherefore, free from all cares,
 From all dangers and snares,
 While Jesus, my Saviour, is by ;
 O how happy I dwell,
 Though immur'd in a cell,
 Not anxious to live, nor yet fearful to die !

VIII.

But soon, alas ! secure of future bliss,
 Senseless I grow,
 And scarcely know
 What real freedom is.
 The little circuit of my cage
 Doth all my thoughts and time engage :
 With heedless feet from perch to perch I hop ;
 - And passing round,
 Pleas'd with the sound
 Of tinkling bell
 Hung o'er my cell,
 My nobler notes I drop.
 Ah ! how deprav'd this wretched heart of mine,
 So soon to lose its taste for joys divine !

IX.

Busied thus with motes and straws,
 Idle nonsense, empty joys,
 Without a hope, without a fear
 Of pleasures or of dangers near,

Asleep I fall :

Fatal security !

But hark ! I hear my keeper call.

Aye, 'tis his voice : now I awake,

Fancy I feel my prison shake,

And dire destruction's nigh.

Affrighted, round my cage I cast my eye,

And flutt'ring to and fro,

Not knowing where to go,

Attempt to make my escape, but cannot fly.

X.

Ah ! silly heart,

(I fetch a sigh,

And sighing, cry,)

Thus foolishly to part

With noble hopes, substantial joys,

For airy phantoms, gilded toys,

'Trifles, the fond pursuit of which unmans my soul,

And leaves me to the sport of every fancied fear

That would my peace control.

What miseries befall a heav'n-born mind,

By being thus within a cage confin'd !

Pity, Saviour, pity me,

And quickly come and set me free !

XI.

My Saviour hears, and straight replies,

With soft compassion in his eyes,

“ Thy silent moans

“ And piteous groans

“ Have mov'd my heart ;

“ Ere long I'll come,

“ And fetch thee home,

“ Where reason and the passions ne'er shall part.”

XII.

'Tis Jesus that speaks ! how charming his name !

At the sound of his voice,

O how I rejoice,

And kindle all into a flame !

I leap

I leap and I fly,
 And in ecstasy cry,
 Vain world, I bid thee adieu :
 I'll wait not for age
 To pull down my cage,
 But, fearless of danger, will force my way through.

XIII.

Check thy passions, foolish man ;
 The longest life is but a span.
 Be contented here to stay
 Another hour, another day ;
 To feel a joy, to bear a pain,
 To do some good, some good to obtain,
 Think not the moments long, Heav'n hath decreed ;
 Impatience cannot lash them into speed.
 With meek submission wait the approaching hour :
 The wheel of time will quickly whirl about,
 And then thy keeper'll come, and ope the door,
 Put in his hand, and gently take thee out.

XIV.

The day arrives.
 Now, through the wire,
 With strong desire,
 I cast my withful eyes.
 I see him come : Yes, yes, 'tis he !
 Hither he hastes to set me free.
 O the music that I hear,
 Sweetly warbling in my ear !
 " Little songster, come away ;
 " In this vile cell no longer stay ;
 " But take thy flight to realms above the skies."

XV.

I hear, and instantly obey ;
 Out of my cage I spring ;
 And as I pass'd the wicker'd way,
 Thus to myself I sing :

" How

“How safe, how easy 'tis to die,
“With Christ, my guardian angel, by !
“He's my defence from pain and sin,
“From foes without and fears within.
“O death, where is thy sting ? O grave, thy victory ?”

XVI.

Now I'm happy, now I'm free :
My active spirit, heav'n-born mind,
From all the dregs of sense refin'd,
Feels and enjoys her godlike dignity.
No more oppress'd with the gross atmosphere
Of error, prejudice and sin,
Freely I breathe my native air,
And drink ambrosial fragrance in.
O, who can think—O, who can tell
The strange sensations now I feel !

XVII.

Awhile my wings, unus'd to flight, I try,
And round and round in sportive bliss I fly :
Then through the opening skies,
In rapt'rous ecstasy I rise,
Up to the flow'ry fields of Paradise ;
And as I dart along,
On full expanded wing,
Amid th' angelic throng,
Celestial anthems sing :
“Glory to Him that left his throne above,
“And downward bent his way on wings of love ;
“That wept, and bled, and died upon the tree,
“To conquer death and set the captives free.”

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