

**MISSIONARY
TOILS, A POEM**

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Missionary toils, a poem by Matilda

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MATILDA

**MISSIONARY
TOILS, A POEM**

MISSIONARY TOILS,

A POEM.

MISSIONARY TOILS.

A POEM.



By MATILDA,

AUTHOR OF "MEDITATIVE HOURS," AND "SEASONS OF PEACE."

LONDON:
JOHN SNOW, PATERNOSTER ROW.

—
1848.

P R E F A C E .

CHEERED and encouraged by the kindness with which her former publications have been received, the Author of the following poem, ventures once more before the public.

“Missionary Toils” was written as a memento of christian affection to her dear and valued friend, the Rev^d. Stephen Kay, late Missionary in Southern Africa, and author of “Travels and Researches in Caffraria.” The composition of the poem solaced the writer in many an hour of pain and weariness; and if its publication may tend to promote the glory of God, and benefit those who shall favour her with their approbation of it, she will humbly thank Him, whose Spirit she trusts has guided her pen, and enabled her, a poor afflicted worm, to show forth his praise.

MATILDA.

Hayes, March 8th, 1848.

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MISSIONARY TOILS.

"In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren.

"In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness." 2 Cor. xi. 26, 27.

REFRESHING sleep, though woo'd, refused to shed
His gentle influence on my aching head,
And my worn frame, exhausted and oppress'd,
Sought, vainly sought, an interval of rest ;
From side to side in weariness I turned,
But partial slumber all my efforts spurned.
At length, o'ercome by long continued pain,
Or fever's power upon my heated brain,
Oblivion o'er my senses feebly stole ;
Yet then my active mind refused control,
For visions wild annoyed my wakeful sleep,
And left me still my lonely watch to keep.

The earth was wrapt in sable midnight gloom,
 No cheering moon-beam shot across my room ;
 Dull silence reigned,—a silence deep, profound,
 As if all life in peaceful sleep were drowned ;
 And (save at intervals, the night-wind drear,
 Which in hoarse murmurs broke upon the ear,)
 No sound disturbed the stillness ; and I lay
 Wishing, yet dreading the return of day.
 But as the quiet midnight slowly sped
 (Yet came not gentle sleep with velvet tread,)
 A wider range my meditations sought,
 And higher themes engaged my wakeful thought.

Far o'er the deep Imagination strayed,
 I laid me down beneath a palm tree's shade ;
 I gazed on scenes, beyond description fair,—
 Breathed with delight a pure and fragrant air,—
 Saw wild flowers springing on my mossy bed,
 And cloudless skies extended o'er my head.

Again by swift-wing'd Fancy borne along,
 I mingled now amongst a sable throng ;
 One stood apart from the attentive crowd,
 And spake in accents, audible and loud ;
 Spake of man's fall and sin's o'erwhelming flood,—
 Pointed to Jesu's all-atoning blood ;—

Told in affectionate endearing tone,
 How Jesus longed to claim them for his own;—
 Urged them with tears, salvation to receive,
 To attend the Gospel message and believe;
 Entreated them to yield to be forgiven,—
 Cling to the bleeding cross, and press to enter
 heaven.

Just within view, a giant temple high,
 Reared its imposing columns to the sky;
 But 't was no consecrated house of prayer,—
 Jehovah's name was never worshipped there;
 But senseless idols, formed of wood and stone,
 Received the homage due to God alone;
 And curséd altars in that temple stood,
 Which oft were deeply stained with human blood;
 For victims there in sacrifice were slain,
 To appease a god inanimate and vain.

How humbling, that the human form divine,
 Should e'er lie prostrate at an idol's shrine!
 That one whose spirit is the breath of God,
 Should bend in adoration to a clod!
 Yet, fallen nature thus debased and vile
 Is found, alas! on many a sunny isle:
 And many a lovely spot in far-off land,
 Rich with the proofs of a creative hand—