

dist preacher. This was the immediate instrument of an entire change of heart and life.

Inducted into the ranks of Methodism, it was quickly perceived he was capable of becoming useful; and accordingly the subordinate, but important, office of class leader was assigned to him. This was his place. In the service of sixty years he never rose above it, or rendered himself unworthy of it. And in conformity to the genius of Christianity, and the aggressive principles of the rules of the body, he exhorted, reproved, or instructed all with whom he had any intercourse. Methodism is one in every town, in every village. Wherever he came by the clue of friendship and impulse of duty, his character, his office were respected; he naturally found a wider door of usefulness open to him; and, in the short space of a few days he came into personal and familiar contact with hundreds of souls, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, who rejoiced in his light and caught an increase of heavenly fire from the Spirit of burning which so eminently dwelt on him.—*N. Y. Christian Ad. & Jour.*

Doctrinal.

THOUGHTS ON THE DOCTRINE OF ATONEMENT.

NO. I.

THE atonement of Christ is described in sacred writ, as the grand and only medium of our access to God. This harmonizes the perfections of Deity, and wins their exercise on our behalf, removes the guilt of sin we have incurred, and opens the way for us to the forfeited paradise of God.

A religion without an atonement may please the fanciful and proud mind of a philosopher, unawakened to his true condition as a transgressor of the laws of God; but it would be poor consolation to a man conscious of his demerit as a sinner, and his exposure to the wrath of the pure and just Legislator of the universe. A man cannot be reconciled to his Maker, and be conscious of his approval, unless he firmly rely upon the atoning blood of Christ as shed for human transgression. The more enlightened we are in the knowledge of God's word, and of our own nature and character, the more need shall we see, and feel too, of just such an offering for sin as the Redeemer made upon Calvary. A truly enlightened man, sees a number of reasons for this atonement, he sees those reasons in his fallen, wretched and corrupted condition; and has such a scriptural view of himself as to cause him to believe, that there can be no heaven to him, a guilty sinner, without the firm belief of, and trust in, the atonement.

1. The blood of Christ is declared, in holy writ, a sufficient sacrifice for sin, and suited to procure the greatest blessings for mankind. This blood was that of a pure person, of him whose humanity was mysteriously, but ineffably and actually, united to the Divine-nature. The divinity of Christ is of the highest importance to us, for on it depends the worth and validity of the atonement he is said to have made. If belief in the Divine-nature of the Redeemer of sinners be given up, and exchanged for the Socinian and Unitarian view of his person, then the peculiarity of Christianity, and its distinguishing excellence, is forever lost: it is no longer a religion suited to sinners, to fallen and corrupted beings. Take away from Christianity the truth, that Christ is God-man, and that his merit, and his only, is the source of the

sinners' acceptance and justification by God, and what is there left in this religion to distinguish it from mere human systems of religious faith? A purer morality, indeed, would be inculcated by the Christian religion, than either Paganism or Mahometanism inculcates: but without an atonement for transgression, it would be a morality without sufficiently powerful motives to win the sinner's attention: it would be a morality a corrupt and unredeemed being could never perform.

The greatest peculiarity of the Jewish religion was its constant requirement of sacrifice,—of blood to be shed as a propitiatory offering to Deity:—and it was this which most nearly assimilated the Jewish and Christian systems, and made the former a suitable forerunner of the present dispensation. The Jewish sacrifices tended to keep up in the minds of the Jews the necessity of atonement, in order to the pardon of sin; and their sacrificial offerings were required by Jehovah, to direct the attention of mankind to the sacrifice, which in the fullness of time, he had determined should be made for sin by the Lamb of God—the Redeemer of the world.

As the offering of the Jewish sacrifices alluded to, were enjoined by God, and as the manner in which they were to be presented to Him was clearly, minutely revealed, the conscience of the Jewish worshipper was pacified, when the ceremonies connected with the laws of sacrifice and atonement were performed. If then, as the Apostle Paul, in the Epistle to the Hebrews argues, the Jews attained some benefits by the “shedding of the blood of bulls and goats, and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling the unclean;”—if they felt that the will of God had been complied with in the presentation of their offerings; if hope of pardon and enjoyment of the Divine favour resulted from their sacrifices; how much more cause has the Christian believer to rejoice; what a more complete and immovable foundation has he for hope and assurance of acceptance with God,—who has the perfect sacrificial atonement of an Almighty Redeemer to depend upon, as the source of his justification by his Maker, the medium of his intercourse with heaven, and of his attainment of every spiritual blessing.

2. The true sacrifice made for sin, St. Paul assures us, was offered to God. Many religions have existed in the world, and the ingenuity of men has been exhausted in giving variety to them. Many of these religious systems have made large demands on mankind. They have exacted of them much silver and gold; much labour and sufferings have they required of their votaries; and in not a few instances they have demanded from their most perfect and sainted adherents a whole life of self-denial, or a cruel death. But after all the labour endured by pagan idolaters, after all the tormenting ceremonies, and destroying rites, all the self-denial and painfulness produced by pagan superstition among succeeding generations, God may say—who hath required this of your hands? All has been the result of will worship; all the sad fruits of religions made by corrupt beings; and never required by the God of truth. The Christian system is distinguished by the stamp it bears on every part of it, of its Divine origin. Its fundamental doctrines could not have been invented by man; and agreeable to this declaration is the truth, that no individual or nation has ever, when left to their own reason without the Bible, invented the doctrines of Christianity, and furnished mankind with their momentous, sublime, and cheering doctrines. The doctrine of atonement was revealed by to God Adam after his fall, in the declaration,—that “the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head.” And if we diligently peruse the Sacred Scriptures we shall see, what regard he has had for the doctrine of atonement;—how exact he is in requiring satisfaction for sin;—