

subject much in the way it might be taken up in some country church-yard, ere the congregation had fully gathered, by some of the "grave-livers" of the parish, or as it might be discussed in the more northern localities of the kingdom, at some evening meeting of "the men." I attempted showing, step by step, that God did not give to himself his own nature, nor any part of it; that it exists *as it is*, as independently of *his* will as our human nature exists *as it is* independently of ours; that his moral nature, like his nature in general, is underived, unalterable, eternal; and that it is this underived moral nature of the Godhead which forms the absolute law of his conduct in all his dealings with his moral agents. "You are, I daresay, right," said the countryman; "but how does all this bear on the doctrine of the atonement?"

"Very directly on your remark respecting it," I replied. "It shows us that the will and power of God, in dealing with the sins of his accountable creature, man, cannot, if we may so speak, be arbitrary, unregulated power and will, but must spring, of necessity, out of his underived moral nature. If it be according to this moral nature, which constitutes the governing law of Deity, — the law which *controls* Deity, — that without the 'shedding of blood there can be no remission,' then blood must be shed, or remission cannot be obtained; atonement for sin there must be. If, on the contrary, there *can* be remission without the shedding of blood, we may be infallibly certain the unnecessary blood will not be demanded, nor the superfluous atonement required. To believe otherwise would be to believe that God deals with his moral agent, man, on principles that do not spring out of his own moral nature, but are mere arbitrary results of an unregulated will." — "But are you not leaving the question, after all, just where you found it?" asked the countryman. — "Not quite," I replied: "of