



AN INDIAN'S THOUGHTS;

OR,

ALL MEN ARE SINNERS.

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A MISSIONARY was preaching to the Indians. He told them that all men were sinners; and that all sinners hate God. An Indian

*A. M. Dilling*

chief named Bamet was very angry at this. "It's a lie," he said to himself. "I am not wicked." The missionary supposed that some of them would think that what he said was not true; for he knew something about human nature. He had learned that people are naturally inclined to think well of themselves. So he told them that if they did not believe what he said, he would show them how they could tell whether it was true or not. He told them about God—how holy, and just, and good he is. He repeated and explained the ten commandments. Then he told them to try their feelings, and see whether they loved such a God as he had described, and such

a holy law as he had repeated. "I will do so," Bamet said, "and I am sure I shall prove that he lies." He went home thinking of it all the way. Then he sat down by himself alone in his wigwam, and began to look into his heart, and examine his feelings, and compare them with the pure and holy character of God and his law. At first he held up his head and looked very proud. But presently his countenance changed; he began to look sad, and to hold down his head. He saw that he did not like the good God that the missionary had described to him. And the more he thought of him, the more his heart rose up against him. And now he saw that it was

true, as the missionary had said, that he *hated God*. This made him feel very bad, for the missionary had told them that God was very great and powerful, and that he would punish all impenitent sinners forever in hell. Then he began to look back on his past life. He tried to remember all that ever he did. And, as he thought of one thing after another that he had done, he compared it with God's holy law. The Spirit of God showed him his heart, and he found that he had broken all God's commandments.

This was *conviction*. And this is the way that the Holy Spirit convinces us of sin. He applies his holy law to our hearts, and shows

us how we have failed in everything of keeping it. This makes us feel that we are great sinners, and prepares us to come to Christ. And this is what the Apostle Paul meant, when he said, "The law was our schoolmaster, to bring us to Christ."

If my dear little readers will do as Bamet did, they will be convinced of sin as he was.

Some little girls once came to a minister's house, to tell him how they felt about their souls, and ask his advice. After he had talked with all the rest, he came to the youngest, and asked her if she thought God had pardoned her sins. She said no, she knew he had not. She had been so great a

sinner, and had sinned so long, she was afraid God would never forgive her. The minister inquired how old she was, and she said nine. She was right in thinking that she was a very great sinner. She did not think her sins were more or greater than God saw them to be. He saw every sin she had ever committed. She saw only a few of them. God saw how great an evil one sin is ; but she could not tell what an evil and bitter thing it is to sin against God. But she did wrong to think that her sins were too great to be pardoned, for, "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin ;" and he never turned away any who came to him. He says himself,

“Him that cometh to me, I will in nowise cast out.”

Another little girl, only eight years old, in relating how she had felt, said, “It seemed to me that I was one of the greatest sinners in the world. I thought I was so great a sinner that I could never be saved. I thought God would do right to cast me off forever; so I gave myself *right up*, to let him do with me just as he pleased. I then felt happy; and everything seemed to be praising God.” This little girl was no worse than many others; but the Spirit of God had opened her eyes to see something of her own heart. She did not think herself to be a greater sinner than she really was, but she

was wrong in thinking that she was "too great a sinner ever to be saved," as she saw afterward. She had committed a great many sins against God; and one sin deserves everlasting punishment. But if they had been ten thousand times more and greater than they were, the blood of Jesus Christ was sufficient to atone for them all.

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