

THE CANADIAN DAY-STAR.

"I am the light of the world."
"Preach the Gospel to every creature."—JESUS.

JULY, 1863.

BORN OF WATER AND OF THE SPIRIT.

The first thing to which our Lord turned the attention of Nicodemus when he entered into conversation with him, was regeneration, or the new birth. "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." This was something new to the old Israelite,—something strange, —something which he did not understand. He had marvelled at the mighty works which the great Teacher performed; now he marvels at the mysterious words which flowed from his lips. To be born again, was to the Jewish Rabbi something quite as much out of the ordinary course of nature as any of the miracles which Jesus had performed. "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mother's womb and be born?" These questions show clearly that he did not comprehend our Lord's meaning. He was a stranger to their spiritual significance, and like multitudes at the present day, he was ignorant of the first principles of practical and evangelical Christianity. Though well acquainted with the Jewish religion, and instructed in the school of the prophets, Nicodemus was at first but a dull scholar in the school of Christ. When that Heavenly Teacher told him that a man must "be born again," his mind wandered away back to his childhood—his infancy,—his natural birth.

The compassionate Jesus, perceiving as he did the error and ignorance of the old man and the false ideas which he entertained, repeats in substance his former statement and explains what kind of a birth it was to which he referred, and the super-human agency by which it is effected. Mark his words: "Jesus answered, verily, verily, I say unto thee except a man be born of water and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.