

Our Canadian Pulpit and Ministry.

ORIGINAL SKETCH OF SERMON.

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"Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit—John iii. 7, 8."

In consequence partly of our natural blindness and ignorance, and partly of the deception the enemy of souls exercises upon us, the nature of true religion is much misapprehended. Hence many things are substituted for it. A part is put for the whole,—as repentance, opinions, ceremonies, attendance on outward worship. But we need be under no mistake as to its true nature. The Scripture is plain, clear, and full in its descriptions of the subject. No person with a candid mind, who will read with prayer, need mistake on this most important of all points.

Our blessed Saviour is the way, the truth, and the life; and the teacher of the true way to life; and in the scriptures we have the record of his teaching, and may by them reap the benefit of so important a help.

Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews, or a member of the Jewish Sanhedrim, having heard of the miracles of Jesus, and being convinced of his divinity thereby, came to him by night to be taught. Our Lord proceeded to correct his false notions, and to impart correct ideas. He was sufficiently sincere and desirous as to be induced to go to Christ, but so much under the influence of fear as to choose the night season, when the eye of man would not be upon him. However, he afterwards became more bold. We should learn from this, reason for judging properly of beginners. There is much of the mixture of carnality and worldly views, with true desire to save the soul. What an interesting interview! What important instructions and directions he would receive! We have the substance of them before us. We will enter upon their consideration. Notice,

I. THE "NATURE" OF THIS CHANGE.

A necessary and important change is frequently alluded to in Scripture. Sometimes as conversion, regeneration, a new creation, a new creature, putting *off* the old man, and putting *on* the new man, walking not after the flesh, but after the spirit, etc. Whatsoever term is used one thing is meant,—viz., *a change of heart*.

The term "Being born again" was used among the Jews. * * *

It is that work of the Holy Spirit by which we experience a change of heart, or the renovation of the soul by the Holy Spirit. It is the infusion