

the Son of God," Acts vii. 57. was the acknowledgment of the Ethiopian.

Dr. Lightfoot, and other eminent authorities, inform us, that to be new-born, and to be made a new-creature, were expressions used by the ancient Jews, signifying merely a change of religion. "One of their sayings was, 'If any man become a proselyte, [namely, from Paganism to Judaism,] he is like a child new-born.' And, of Abraham, when he renounced idolatry and was chosen of God, they said 'He was made a new creature.'"

This phraseology was doubtless familiar to Nicodemus; and hence Jesus said to him, "Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?" John iii. 10. He was not ignorant of the meaning of the new birth, and he would not have been astonished if it had been spoken of concerning a proselyte from heathenism; but he was so unsuspicious that it could rightly be applied to the conversion of Jews, that he did not understand our Saviour's meaning. "Ye must be born again." Ye Jews are indeed the descendants of Abraham by the birth of the body; but "ye must be born again," ye must believe in me as the Christ, ye must be converted from Judaism by faith in the Messiah, or "ye cannot enter into the kingdom of God." It was a very simple condition, there being but a single article of faith; "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God."

II. We must not suppose, however, that nothing further was required of the proselyte or disciple. The conviction or faith of the mind (connected with a public profession) that "Jesus is the Christ," entitled such an one to admission to the outward kingdom of heaven, or visible church—for that the phrase, "kingdom of heaven," frequently means nothing more than an organized society, is very clear. Thus:

The kingdom of heaven is likened to a net cast into the sea, gathering of every kind, Matt. xiii. 47; also to ten virgins, five wise and five foolish, xxv. 1. The violent took this kingdom by force, and it therefore suffered violence, xi. 11, the Pharisees shut it up against men, neither entering themselves, nor suffering others to enter, xxiii. 13. Those who broke the commandments and taught others to do so, were in that kingdom, and were called *least* therein, v. 19.

These and many similar passages, plainly speak of the kingdom of heaven and kingdom of God as a merely outward economy or visible church, into which every one was admitted as a proselyte on a profession of faith in Jesus as the Christ. And all such were declared to be *born of God*, in the sense already given of that phrase.

But besides the outward or visible kingdom referred to, we read of an inward kingdom. "The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost," Rom. xiv. 17. "The unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God . . . and such were some of you—but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified," 1 Cor. vi. 9—11. Sinful persons might be in the kingdom of heaven, as an outward or visible church; but not until they were purified inwardly, could they inherit the spiritual kingdom, which pertains to "the inner man."

We have discovered that a more abstract

faith in Jesus as the Christ, may be only a head-religion. Faith is to become an active principle, working by love in "the hidden man of the heart." Gal. v. 6; Acts xv. 9; 1 Peter iii. 4; Rom. v. 3.—Hence it is written, "Beloved, let us love one another—for love is of God; and every one that loveth, is born of God, and knoweth God," 1 John iv. 7. Accordingly, all the commandments are comprehended in love to God supremely; and love to mankind universally.

III. But there is still another step.—The faith of the head and the love of the heart are to be manifested in *THE LIFE*.—Accordingly it is written, "If ye know that he is righteous, know ye that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him," 1 John ii. 29. And this testimony completes the proof of the statement, that the scriptural doctrine of the new birth is resolved into *practical conformity to the heavenly law*.

The intimate association of faith in Christ and love of man, is thus spoken of in the Scriptures: "As many as received him, to them gave he power to become sons of God, even to them that believe on his name, which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of man, but of God." John i. 12, 13. See also 1 Peter i. 22, 23.

The result of this association of faith and love—the morality of the new birth—is mentioned in Eph. iv. 22—24,

In this scriptural exposition of the matter in hand, nothing supernatural is implied—and nothing that involves the idea of a change of nature. The process is natural and comprehensible. The understanding is first to be convinced, by an appeal to the evidences of truth, that Jesus is the Christ—and whosoever thus believes is *born of God*. Not all the excellencies of the Savior's character are immediately perceived: but the new-born child of the kingdom is enjoined to grow in grace and in knowledge, until his heart is filled with the love of God and man. Then he is *born from above* in a new and living sense; and it becomes his meat and drink to do the will of God. Not by its stature, nor the symmetry of its branches, nor the verdure of its leaves, nor the beauty and fragrance of its blossoms, is the tree to be known—but by its fruits. And the faith of the head, and the love of the heart, can best be testified by *RIGHTEOUSNESS OF LIFE*.

Finally: The mediatorial kingdom is not to be delivered up to the Father until all things shall be subordinated to Christ; and then God shall be all in all, 1 Cor. xv. 24, 28. And we are certified that God hath highly exalted the Messiah, to the end that every knee should bow to him, and that every tongue should confess that he is Lord, to the glory of God the Father, Phil. ii. 9—11. This implied universal faith in Christ, is associated with that universal righteousness which can only be wrote by the principle of love: "Every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear—surely shall say, In the Lord have I righteousness and strength," Isa. xlv. 22—24.

Conformably, the primitive believers could say, "Of his own will begat He us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of *first fruits* of His creatures," James i. 18. They were "the first fruits unto God and the Lamb," Rev. xiv. 4.—The first fruits are a sample of the harvest.

Accordingly, the believers who enjoyed the first fruits of the spirit, testified that not themselves only, but "the creature, [THE WHOLE rational CREATION] itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." Rom. viii. 21.—They waited for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the universal body of humanity, verse 23; and the holy spirit of promise which the believers possessed, was an earnest or pledge of their inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, Eph. i. 14; 1 Tim. ii. 6; Heb. ii. 9; 1 John ii. 2—not the believers only—for these were simply the first fruits—but the harvest also, THE WHOLE WORLD.

From this essay the reader will learn, that Universalists believe in a change of heart, as well as of head and life; and that they differ mainly from other Christians, in maintaining that this change is rational and comprehensible, and that, in the Lord's own time, it will be wrought in every soul of the family of man. A. C. T.

WHO IS A UNIVERSALIST?

That thousands takes to themselves the name, who are not entitled to it, can not be denied. For, is that man a Universalist, who is in the constant practice of defrauding and cheating his neighbours, and of trampling upon the rights and privileges of others? No. He has not yet the principles of our holy faith fixed in his heart—he has not yet learned the way of life everlasting—he has not been spiritually renewed in the inner man, nor blessed with the glorious influence of a full and perfect knowledge of Heaven's truth! No—he is not a Universalist!

Is that man a Universalist, whose mouth is continually filled with oaths and cursing, who is in the habit, daily, of taking the name of God in vain? No. He is yet without the kingdom. He is afar from Universalism as earth from heaven—salvation has not yet come unto his house. No—he is not a Universalist!

Is that man a Universalist, who manifests no engagedness in behalf of the cause—who feels no interest in its welfare, and is not zealously engaged in the propagation and defence of the doctrine of true and universal salvation? No. The depths of his soul have not yet been lit up with the glories of Universalism—its spirit and sanctifying power have not yet entered into his heart. He has scarcely entered the vestibule of the glorious temple! No—he is not a Universalist!

That man, and that man, only, is a Universalist, who refrains from evil practices and vicious habits—whose mind is filled with high and holy impulses to action, and in whose daily walk is preserved a corresponding likeness between his profession and practice. That man is a Universalist who is continually alive to his duty—who is ever found at his post, like a tried and faithful soldier of the Cross, and whose determination is, to fight the good fight, and keep the faith! A. C. T.

THE MYSTERY EXPLODED.

Our readers will recollect that we noticed, a few weeks since, a very mysterious account, which appeared in the "Advocate and Journal," of a converted Universalist preacher, who after having been twelve years in the ministry, is about to astonish the world with certain developments concerning Universalists that will rival those made by the notorious M. H. Smith. It now appears that this mysterious individual is no less a personage than one Rev. W. S. Clark, who having fallen into bad repute in our denomination, was dis-fellowshipped by the Maine convention, a year or two since. He subsequently joined the Campbellites, with whom it is presumed he still is, as he found it convenient, and has now turned Methodist. From the warm greeting that he has received, we presume that he will need no other recommendation to their favor, than a willingness to abuse Universalists in a most unscrupulous and unprincipled manner. Yet, the enemies of our blessed faith must be

reduced to great straits for means to oppose our sentiment, when they consent to use such weapons in carrying on their warfare. We deem it highly complimentary, that they can find nothing better to bring against us. While the hearts of all good men earnestly desire that our doctrine may be true, and even the enemies of our faith are obliged to pray for it, we have little to fear from the malice and envy of those who hate us only because of our faithfulness in warning them to discipline for their transgressions.—N. Y. Christian Messenger.

UNSAFE DOCTRINE FOR A FUNERAL OCCASION.

It is conceded by all denominations, that the Gospel is safe to preach on all occasions; and that it is particularly adapted to the house of mourning. Jesus, our great Master, took special care to bind up the broken hearted, and comfort those who mourned; and we should defame his doctrine to say that it was not directly calculated to accomplish the same objects.

But dare the advocates of a partial salvation make an honest application of their faith on a funeral occasion? We think not. No discreet man among them ventures, so far as our knowledge extends, to carry it out into legitimate results. And why?—Because it would, in most cases, shock the moral sense of all his hearers.

Let us illustrate a little. A woman, the mother of a large family of children, and the loved of an extensive circle of friends, dies. She never experienced religion, or joined a Church—and although amiable in the common expectation of the word, was not a fit subject of the kingdom of glory—orthodoxy being judge. A Methodist or Presbyterian preacher is called to attend the funeral. And now, what can he say in her favor? What must he say, if he speaks the sentiments of his creed? He must say there is no hope for her. Having never been converted—having never experienced religion in the technical sense, she has gone to hell. But he will not affirm this, except he be an imprudent, inexperienced young man, for the reason that it would fill the minds of his hearers with horror. He will probably say that he leaves her in the hands of a just God. True, he must leave her there, but that just God will certainly send her to the pit of endless despair, if his sentiments are correct; this legitimate result he is careful to keep to himself for the cause above stated.

If all such preachers were to apply their faith, as they ought, if true, on all funeral occasions, they would soon be left without hearers. They know this very well; and hence they are careful to conceal its dark features, and leave the destiny of those in reference to whom they speak with general remarks of a consolatory character.

Those assembled to mingle their tears and sympathies with bereaved friends would be startled at the mention of endless misery, as the fate of the deceased, whatever might be their faith. They could not bear it if ever so orthodox. Every good feeling of their souls would rise up in rebellion against it—and the spontaneous cry would be, "That theme is unsuitable to this place and occasion!" But why unsuitable if true? Here is a question for others beside Universalists to answer; and it is careful consideration does not lead to the conclusion that the peace-giving and heart-cheering Gospel of Christ is utterly at variance with endless death, we shall be deceived.—Satan in the West.

HYPOCRISY?—OR NOT?

Near the close of Mr. Hobson's last Lecture against Universalism, after using Dr. Rice's illustration of the "disagreeing Doctors," 99 to 1, or 999 to 1, the Lecturer thus expressed himself: "I avow, that, if I believed in Universalism, I would never tell it, even to my wife, or to my child."

On hearing these words,—for I did hear them,—the question irresistibly forced itself into my mind, How do you know, Sir, that you are not a Universalist, only you seek to conceal and deny your real sentiments? What guaranty can we have that you say, or disbelieve anything that you oppose? By what means can we know whether you are now an honest man, or a hypocrite, if, as you "avow," you would not acknowledge your faith in Universalism, even if you were convinced of the truth of that doctrine? I pause for a reply.—W. C.