

MR. HAYES FOND OF CONTROVERSY
MR. CODDINGTON TALKS OF NEWARK MINISTER
CHURCH DIDN'T SEEK HIM

He Asked for Admission to Ministry After Leaving Christian Church,
Says Rochester Minister—Universalists Defended Against Charges

Though Rev. F. M. Hayes, D.D. of Newark, who openly renounced the doctrines of Universalists Sunday night, is well known to the Universalist clergymen in Rochester, their acquaintance with him dates no farther back than two years ago, when, according to Dr. I. P. Coddington, pastor of the First Universalist Church, he left the Christian Church and applied for admission to the clergy of the Universalists. Dr. Coddington, when asked for a statement yesterday, said he had very few words to say, because of his slight acquaintance with Dr. Hayes.

"I wouldn't have anything to say," said Dr. Coddington, "had not Dr. Hayes declared that the Universalist Church was dying. The Universalist Church is my mother and anything appertaining to her interests me.

"You can't say that the Universalist Church is Dr. Hayes' mother, for she never sought him. Dr. Hayes sought our church, and if he chooses to renounce her now, the church has not been robbed. The Universalist Church was healthy two years ago when Dr. Hayes came to her and I presume that she will continue to be healthy. In my opinion, that is the only thing that caused Dr. Hayes to speak as he did Sunday night. If he had made any impression on the church he wouldn't have been so disappointed. In my opinion it is bad taste to leave a church and slap her face in leaving.

"The facts of the matter are that Dr. Hayes is a born controversialist. He likes to fight. Down in Newark he was constantly assailing the orthodox denominations, I am told. That doesn't pay. The world isn't big enough for that. Religion, though he thought so, doesn't consist of ridicule of our neighbors and the beliefs of our neighbors.

"Dr. Hayes says that the Universalist Church 'lives upon controversy and debate.' Let me say to Dr. Hayes that I would never allow a Presbyterian or former Presbyterian minister to occupy my pulpit for the purpose of denouncing the Westminster Confession. I don't think, though, to be fair to the Presbyterians, that they knew Dr. Hayes was going to denounce the Universalists, when he was given their pulpit. Nay, I believe further, that had they known, they would have denied him the pulpit.

"Dr. Hayes had been a Universalist two years. It is about time he had a change of religious belief. I wonder how long he was connected with the Christian Church. I wonder if he assailed the Christian Church when he left that.

"Religion does not consist of controversies; that is all I will say, in answer to him. Our religion, least of all, consists of controversy. We believe in charity for all men and toward all men, and if every Universalist lived up to that belief of ours, there would be none leaving either the pew or the pulpit. As for the rest of Dr. Hayes' charges, I will not notice them. Dr. Hayes wasn't a Universalist long enough to make his opinions weighty. He hasn't been in the Universalist ministry long enough to know whereof he speaks. He is as much a Universalist now as he was when he came to us and asked to be taken into the ministry two years ago, and a man who can change as rapidly as he from one religion to another is not entitled to consideration. His charges answer themselves. Neither is worth newspaper space.

"The Universalist Church is not a dying church. The Universalist Church will be alive long after Dr. Hayes is dead and long after the paper from which he read his philippic is decayed. The church has nothing to fear, at home or abroad, and certainly it has nothing to fear in this man of Newark."

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