

# THE CANADIAN INDEPENDENT.

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## EDITORIAL NOTES

OUR respected friend, Rev. J. Guinness Rogers, in his New Year's address, in the *Congregationalist*, which lies before us, writes some suggestive sentences fitted for our readers as well as for his. The first deserves to be pondered and practically acted upon by our constituency, and reads thus: "A magazine which is not a mere literary venture or a commercial speculation, but which exists for the advocating of great principles, and rendering service to a body of Christian churches, has distinctive aims of its own. The Editor's success is to be tested, not by the mere commercial result he may secure, but rather by the spiritual and moral influence which he can exert; and it is not easy to find a test by which this can be satisfactorily proved." This is a time when the principle underlying these words should be fully understood and practically exhibited. The success of Christian effort does not lie in the plane of the financial and popular, but in the line of Christ and His righteousness, and these are often clothed with sackcloth, thrust into the manger, whilst the inn of life resounds with mirth and blazes with the light of a hundred lamps in the hands of the alien.

"For Congregationalism apart from its vital relations to Evangelical Christianity we have no care," writes Mr. Rogers; "so with emphasis say we, Christians first, and Congregational or Independent, because our Christian life finds the more readily its expression therein. Wherever Congregationalism degenerates into mere opinionativeness, or throws the shadow of its great name over some clique where a dissatisfied Diotrophes rules, it parts from its fundamental principle and spiritually suffers loss. The task, therefore, we have set before us in our editorial chair is to inculcate Christian Independency rather than Congregational Christianity, and in doing so to feel

that we have before us, as a denomination, a distinctive and a noble work. In this age of shams, of shallowness, and thoroughly commercial spirit, where even violated virtue is legally condoned by a money consideration, there is special need for a manly exhibition of Christian virtue. This is our liberty, a liberty for Christ rather than for ourselves—our liberty in Him. We aim for an Independency to work, and love, and wait: not an Independency which beats the air and separates us from our friend. Some forms of Church polity are specially anxious about manifesting the Church's unity, and virtually for themselves and children mark the traditional way whereby the manifestation may be made. Congregationalism, if true to itself, cares first for the individual soul in its direct relation to Christ, and looks for unity as the necessary outcome of the Spirit's power. "Congregationalism has neither form nor rigid creed, believing 'in liberty and progress,' and fails, where it fails, only because it has brought strange fire to its altar and lit its torch at other shrines than 'the blood-besprinkled mercy seat.' The magazine, therefore, that would serve Congregationalism must be judged by the efforts it directs in the manner indicated. Thitherward will our efforts trend. That which is Christ-like, and therefore free, we shall endeavor to commend; and when falseness, degenerate Christianity, crosses our way, such as unhesitatingly shall we condemn."

DR. NEWMAN, a prominent member of the Methodist Church, has taken charge of the Madison Avenue Church (Congregational), New York. Noticing this fact, the *Methodist* says: "Dr. Daniel Curry states that at the present time there is in a section of New York, which he names, nine pastors of prominent non-Methodist churches, who formerly were Methodists. Dr. Curry justly deems the withdrawal of so