

ficial intercourse. These facts make the application of the proposed rule less simple and logical than might at first sight appear.

Moreover, by a usage having the practical force of law, the American local Associations have their well-defined "Articles of Faith" as a doctrinal basis, and a system of councils for the ordaining, installing, dismissing or disowning ministers, both of which would be resented and resisted by no small proportion of Canadian Congregationalists as inconsistent with liberty and independency. Our American brethren distinguish between "Congregationalism" and "Independency," the *differentia* of the former being its maintaining the necessity of "the fellowship of the churches" through councils as above. The Oberlin National Council passed the following resolutions, unanimously, without debate; "*Resolved*, that all ministers in our denomination ought to be in orderly connection with some ministerial or ecclesiastical organisation which shall be able to certify to their regular standing in the ministry. "*Resolved*, that churches be urged not to employ, as preachers, unsettled ministers without such evidence of their good standing in the ministry." The American "Independent" churches stand aloof from the Associations, refuse to submit to councils, and, in a word, "go on their own hook," generally. There are some of these in most of the States, but they are not numbered among the "Congregational" body known to other religious communities by its organized Associations or Conferences.

Is it designed, we would inquire, to adopt what we may call the American type of Congregationalism? to require, or expect, every minister, as a condition of his "good standing" being recognised, to connect himself with some local Association? This may, or may not, be an improvement; but it will be a change. It has always been held among us, hitherto, that connection with any Association, or the Union, on the part of any minister or church, was an entirely voluntary matter; that membership in one of these bodies conferred no superior, and non-membership involved no inferior, status. And as a matter of fact, there are several pastors, and a good many churches, outside of either one or the other, or both,—we believe all in Montreal, for instance.

Supposing that our usage in this respect is unaltered, there must then be two modes of admission into the Union, if the proposed change is adopted,—one for members of Associations, and another for non-members. In the latter cases, the Union will *not* be relieved of an onerous duty, and the end sought for will be unattained. It will still need its Membership Committee, and all its provisions for enquiry in the case of applicants for admission. And in cases where any charge is made against a member who does not belong to any Association, it will need to institute its own independent examination into the matter, for the Union cannot order an Association to investigate any case; the Association would very naturally decline to judge any one not belonging to it; and the accused would take up the impregnable position, of refusing to give account to a body with which he had no connection. Would not this have been the result in the case which sug-