

those principles that differentiate us from all other churches of Christ. Have we not equal right and authority with any and every other evangelical denomination to exist, as an organization, to Christianize peoples by the never-to-be-forgotten essentials of the Gospel? There is no monopoly of the commission, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature." We, likewise, inherit a common faith and share the intransferable responsibility of proclaiming to a lost race, salvation by grace through faith in the blood of Christ and regeneration by the Holy Spirit. We, too, are called to be Christian channels of thought and life. Then *mere* Congregationalism is *poor* Congregationalism. We have been taught that our College expects her graduates to go forth into a lost world to make much of the essentials of truth, to lift up the cross, to honour God in Christ and thereby renew and sublimate man. Moreover, every church we organize is designed to be primarily a personal medium of "the truth and the life." Evangelical churches, each and all, have one and only one fundamental reason for existence, viz., the aggressive and defensive witness for the truth. "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy" (preaching). The more this function is exercised by the church the greater will become its power. To make denominational peculiarities the prime reason for existence is to render prominent the idea of the casket, "Their Church," and wrongly relegate into the shadow, "The Church." That denomination will be most serviceable to God and the world which realizes Christ's purpose, "Ye are My witnesses." Natural science is now spreading out before the mind its wealth of discoveries. These results, when properly understood, become potent witnesses of the power, skill, infinite wisdom and goodness of the Creator. Although physical science may lift her many voices on behalf of God as the Creator, the church alone has been raised up to hold in her hand the Gospel Light, reflecting, "How shall man be just with God?" Truly a high and honourable vocation "To bear witness for God." We have equal authority, right and privilege to go into every needy nook and cranny of the world to lift up Him who will draw all men unto Himself. This being understood, it behoves us to meet the great world's need with forms of thought and life that do no violence to truth. Here we advance to what is more non-Catholic in our denomination. Though it be the circumstantial, it does contain another powerful reason for continued Congregational Church life. How can I best give to the world Christ's life and dying love; their end and bearing on common experience; the Lord's Supper, its nature and design; Christian fellowship, its bonds of union, its separating and uniting claims. In a word, how can we, as Independents, to use a good old word, best witness for the truth in form and life? From the time of the planting of that

early evangelistic missionary church at Antioch down to our own date,

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has its place and power. Mosheim, Waddington, Neander, Gieseler, historians of other denominations, write that the Congregational system was practised by the churches of the successors of the Apostles. Then the mission of our faith and order was more aggressive than defensive. Heralds of the cross planted successful missions in Europe, Asia and Africa. When this aggressive spirit changed into the conservative and defensive, priestcraft and formalism settled down like a pall of death upon the churches. Christian people were slowly but surely lapsing back into barbarism. Especially was this felt and seen about three hundred years ago. Then Puritan Congregationalism grew out of an unwillingness to conform to idolatrous ceremonies, such as the wearing of the surplice, the sign of the cross, and kneeling at communion. Legion are their names; Puritans, Brownites, Separatists, Congregationalists, Ropes of Sand, etc. The exigencies of the times demanded exponents of the freedom of speech, faith, conscience and worship. These principles, partly religious, partly civil, found able defenders in Pym, Hampden, Hazlrigg, Hollis and Strode, Cromwell and Milton. They fought and won the battle of freedom. Their mission bore much fruit. We have not to contend for liberties at the hands of a dominant hierarchy in Canada to-day; though we may all too soon have to do that, if power be narrowed and centralized. Canada, with its sacerdotal assumptions in the Province of Quebec, and with its centralizing tendencies in the West (otherwise called union), calls for independency with its simplicity of faith and order, its system of making most of the individual, its essential principle of purity of communion, etc. The conviction is growing that more and more are we needed, not so much to propagate denominationalism as to plant and sustain churches wherein men and women can best grow up into true Christian manhood and womanhood by worshipping God and proclaiming the "Glorious Gospel of the Grace of God." Active, vigorous congregational churches are needed.

Another reason for our continued existence lies in the extent of our country, its growing population and fast developing resources. Every denomination now at work in the Dominion is taxed to its utmost resources to meet the demands made upon its missionary societies working in the different Provinces and also in foreign lands. Canada, as a mission field, contains about 3,513,325 square miles. This area is greater than three times the extent of the Central American Republics; and greater, too, than six times that of the combined areas of Great Britain and Ireland, France and Germany, with their aggregate