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ZEAL IN AND FOR CONGREGATIONALISM.

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The author of a work about to be published in London, entitled "Congregational History, 1567-1700 (English and American)," remarks in a private letter recently received: "I am much struck with the observation contained in the Congregational Year Book for 1873-4, p. 73: A similar state of things obtains to some extent amongst ourselves. Our ministers have had no instruction in our history, and the connection between the present and the past seems to be broken off." Turning up the page to which Dr. Waddington thus refers, the following just observations of our late chairman are presented: "Whilst some religious bodies have held up their peculiarities and emphasized their differences, Congregationalists have usually put stress on the grand cardinal elements of the common faith. This, doubtless, is the more amiable, and perhaps the more Christian method; but it has, nevertheless, done much to make others feel as if we had no distinctive principles of much importance to advocate, and to make them come to regard us as Christian people, somewhat spiritual, but withal shapeless and ill-defined, much in need of their more angular theologies, their centrepotency, and their better-ordered politics. Indeed it would appear that the practice referred to has reacted very strongly and very practically on ourselves. Our people have been so impressed with the many points of concord between their own churches and other denominations, and are so reluctant to study the contradistinctive principles which were wont to be regarded by our predecessors as so sacred, that many of them retain their hold with a feeble hand, and are ready, when the hour of trial comes, to forsake their former moorings. It is, moreover, the studied policy of certain churches to dwell on the points of agreement; to see no obstacles in the way of actual incorporation, provided always *our people* are willing to become incorporated."

It seems suitable at the beginning of a year to turn our thoughts to the important matter thus brought under review. The intention was to have done this in the first number of the year of the CANADIAN INDEPENDENT; but the "manifestation of Christian unity" was rather discussed as a preliminary topic, that there might be no doubt as to one's stand on that subject. And now, in perfect consistency with all that was therein urged, do we insist on fervent loyalty and zeal in relation to our Congregationalism. It is quite true, as has been often alleged, that we are not a sect, and that we can have no sectarian aims; our churches being so large and catholic in their spirit, so free from all interference with one another's rights, interests or course of action; and so comprehensive in their fellowship as to include cheerfully all the true and loving disciples of Jesus, however diverse they may be in their views and opinions. We have no ecclesiastical organization beyond the local church. Our associations and unions are for fellow-