

Three lessons are here. First, that where the risk of a "society" cannot be legally dispensed with, the church should initiate all action as to a pastor, and the two bodies never meet as one, as was done in this instance. Second, that some manifestation of the fellowship of the churches is indispensable to the Congregational pastorate. And third, that an expedition for help to vital godliness and spiritual advancement to the Egypt of "popular preaching," or a trust in chariots because they are many, and in horsemen because they are very strong, instead of looking unto the Holy One of Israel, and seeking the Lord, is a very poor reliance, whether for peace or prosperity, for a Congregational church, even in this last quarter of the 19th century and in the city of New York."

THE COLLEGE AND THE CHURCH.

When I use the word church I do not desire to have in view any polity, be it Papal, Episcopal, Presbyterian or Congregational, but the deeper truths conveyed by the simple N. T. equivalent of the gospel *ecclesia*, the "body of Christ." Without arriving at philosophical exactness we may say generally, the body is that through which the living entity called self receives and imparts impressions. Not forgetting that mysterious region in which spirit may directly act upon spirit, our general experience is, that through the bodily organism the spirit thinks, feels, acts, and is thought of, felt, and acted upon. The very thoughts of the subtle thinker can only be manifested as put in audible speech or on written page. My body, in some form or other, is the only manifestation to you of what I, the spiritual being, am. The *ego* is only known outside itself by the *non-ego* environment.

Christ is to be made known to the world His gospel saves through His church, which is His active, speaking, living body. Of that church I would speak. First, I confess to finding little charm in that very popular conception of a Congregational church which sees therein a mere polity of liberty. The outlaw rejoices in a liberty which separates him from his fellows. I do not crave solitude, but fellowship and service, and liberty to fellowship and serve. Cursed be the polity which hinders service, or the creed which forbids me grasping by the hand a Christian brother and a man. I do hold very dear what was the original ideal of the Independent Church, and which Dr. Dexter thus puts: "We desire God's indwelling to shape our government and God's interworking to control it. We hold that the Great Head of the church dwells in every true believer, to prompt and shape his

acts, that he pre-eminently dwells in every *ecclesia* of such believers, giving definite promise of guidance to them in their associate capacity, in answer to their united supplications. The popular division of church polities into Episcopal, Presbyterian, Congregational, is certainly superficial, and in some cases misleading. I prefer to speak of a two-fold division, that which makes the church depend in whole or in part upon externals, and that which makes it dependent upon life, the externals being only its manifestation. The latter I humbly submit is the true Congregational ideal, the former—well, I do not care to place it, nor do I arrogate for Congregationalism exclusive claim for that truth, but I say that within the limits of union with Christ, wherever or however two or three meet in His name for His service, there is a church, His body in microcosm, and that only as any organization manifests the life, the will, and the heart of the Christ can it lay claim to being in the true sense of the term: "The Church, Christ's body" either in whole or in part; and I would further say, that only as Congregationalism realizes, or strives patiently for that ideal, can it keep its spurs upon the ecclesiastical field of the cloth of gold.

Church polity, to be real in the Christian sense of the term, must not forsake the fundamental of Christian life, and that we find expressed in Christ's own words: "Except a man be born again he cannot see the Kingdom of God;" for "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit." No other church foundation can be.

Some years ago it was put forth, after a series of supposed exact experiments by Dr. Bastian, "living matter is constantly being formed *de novo*." In other words, life is not the necessary and universal progenitor of life, which, under favourable conditions may spring forth of itself. Dr. Bastian's flasks of hay infusion were manifestly imperfectly sealed, life-germs had not been rigidly excluded. Prof. Tyndall, with the test of optical purity, manipulated his vessels, and with confessed reluctance declares "that no shred of trustworthy experimental testimony exists to prove that life in our day has ever appeared independently of antecedent life." As Huxley says, the doctrine of life, from life only, is "victorious along the whole line at the present day."