

Editorial.

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CONGREGATIONALISM IN SILVER SLIPPERS.

Conversing, while travelling the other day, with a Methodist minister of some prominence, on the relative merits of different Churches, and methods of Christian work, we were pleased to hear him say, as we had heard him say once before, "If I were in England, I would be a Congregational minister." The confession was entirely voluntary, and not called out by any remark of ours; but not being disposed to perplex or pain our friend by any awkward questions, we let it pass without reply. It set us to thinking, however. We had heard, not long before, a similar remark from a minister equally prominent in another denomination, who was about to change his ecclesiastical relations,—“If I go to the United States, I shall join the Congregationalists; but if I stay in Canada, I shall become a Presbyterian.” He has since done as he said he would.

What can be the reason? thought we. What can make right wrong in Canada, or wrong right in England, or the United States. It was evident that there was conviction in both cases that Congregationalism is good and right in itself, and that in England and in the United States it has certain elements in it so attractive as to make it more desirable

to these men than Methodism or Presbyterianism. Why then is it less so in Canada?

We concluded that, perhaps unconsciously to themselves, these estimable brethren were thinking more of convenience and social position than of principle, and finding their present systems more popular than ours, they made choice accordingly.

It is only human nature—rather more candid than wise. It is no disgrace to be poor, but it is often *very inconvenient!* And not a few ministers among us pay from \$500 to \$1,000 a year for adherence to principle, choosing rather to follow out their convictions on “a dinner of herbs,” than to enjoy the “stalled ox” among a richer and more influential community. We are sorry the fact is not always understood or appreciated as it should be.

But it is not among ministers alone that the failing of which we speak is found. There are numbers of church-members who adopt the same policy. They are Congregationalists in England or in the United States, but Presbyterians or Methodists in Canada. Or they are Congregationalists in the flourishing city church, but something else in the country or little provincial town, where the Congregational Church is struggling and poor, or where connection with some other denomination would bring them more customers or a better practice. Or again, they love the little un-