

our interest at once threefold. It a false economy that begins retrenchment in the Sunday school, or that stints the young of the many attractions that can be provided. If the school is really the nursery, and the prayer meeting the thermometer of the church, we have been indifferent house-keepers, if we have frozen out the young from our central fold. Let every church expend a sum of money annually upon its nursery to interest the young. And bring into its church services every point that will help to draw them there. Let the enthusiasm of the school be a propelling power within the church. Let pastors, deacons and people, become young again, for the sake of Christ and His work; and we believe that a change for the better will come, where it does not already exist.

I have endeavored to give you two wheels of progress. The larger and smaller for the fitting of a church bicycle. It is a safety combination. Nothing but what you knew before. No brilliant new originality. But, after all, the old methods are all that are needed if put in practice. Christ knew how to win the young. It was by Love.

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### THE TRUE BASIS OF CONGREGATIONAL POLITY.

Among the changes taking place in our denominational history, none has more significance than the increasing tendency to drop the old word "Independent" and to use the other appellation "Congregational." The thoughtful observer will at once enquire whether this is a mere fashion, or whether there is a meaning therein which does not readily appear upon the surface. On this American continent the term "Congregational" has ever prevailed, the other word in the old land. The reason is not far to seek. Nonconformity in England has had to contend for very existence, and only now is beginning to enjoy what on this continent it ever had, "freedom to worship God." Hence in Britain, Independency was a thing to be secured, the Independent ideal was forced into the foreground; here freedom, in the New England States even supremacy, was found; and the Congregational or fraternal ideal becomes more promi-

nent. Liberty gained, fraternity is called for. Not that fraternity had been wanting. The struggle forced into fellowship those who were seeking one end; but without that outward pressure, individuality has more scope, and fellowship is the great want. We in Canada owe much of our weakness to our holding on to the traditional independence of our English sires, with surroundings that do not call forth energies in the same direction. Independence is a *fait accompli*. Our need is Congregational. The principle established "One is your master, even Christ," we need more earnestly and definitely to follow after "all ye are brethren."

In thus feeling after a closer fellowship, we may at once enquire whether a *jure divino* polity is to be an object of search. Certainly this must be conceded that a *jus divinum* is exclusive. Establish a divine law, and transgression is sin. If then what is known as the Congregational polity exists *jure divino*, in the sense of being the mandate of the New Testament, we at once place a bar to Christian communion, as absolute as do the creeds which distract and divide wherever imposed. Indeed the writer cannot distinguish between a creed of polity and a creed of doctrine as a basis of fellowship; and though in some sense both must enter into our fraternal relations, for there is both Christian dogma and Christian polity, we must guard against that which will take away the independency of the individual to fellowship with all who in sincerity and truth call Jesus, Lord. There is a *jus divinum* somewhere; where is it? We may the more readily find it, in the writer's judgment, by dismissing all past controversies and seeking direct from first principles. Prejudice is blind.

The Church of Christ is plainly not contentious with the church of Rome, of England, of Scotland; nor exclusively Presbyterian, Episcopalian, Methodist. Geographical bounds must determine our homes and our nationality; but the nation is greater than the family, and the comity of nations broader than selfish patriotism. Have we not all one Father? Denominational lines must to a large extent prevail, and local churches present the lines along which Christian work is to be carried on, but there are broader fields which call for Christian recognition. "Abide in me" enjoins the Saviour, and in that "abiding" must