

## CONGREGATIONAL LIFE.

*To the Editor of the Canadian U. P. Magazine.*

SIR,—Will you permit me to occupy a little more of your space, with some additional remarks suggested by the Treasurer's Returns for 1859? I have had the curiosity to go over the corresponding returns in the *Home Record* for April, and I find that out of upwards of 500 Congregations, only 24 stand entirely blank on that list; while we with our 117 Congregations have 34 that have given nothing during the past year to any Synodical purpose. Still further I notice that while in our 83 contributing Congregations, 12 have given less than 10 dollars, only 16 of the 500 have come to the same lowly position. What conclusion can any one draw from that simple fact? Not surely that our Congregations are so much poorer as a whole, than those at home, that such is necessarily the result. No one acquainted with the facts will say so. A Congregation of Canadian farmers, in ordinary circumstances, is out of sight, abler to do something *extra* for the cause of Christ, than the average of our country Congregations in Scotland. What is the reason then? There can be no good done by slurring over the answer. It must just be said fairly and honestly, a want of Christian Congregational life.

We are not, however, so bad as the Antiburghers from 1808 to 1820; (see the *Home Record* for April,) but we are not very greatly better. One-third of their Congregations, it seems, contributed to no Synodical purpose. We have not quite a third in that predicament, but we have rather more than a fourth. Out of 81 Congregations of Antiburghers only 12 managed to raise more than \$25; we on the other hand, have 47 above that point. The Antiburghers could only muster an average of \$20 a Congregation; we on the other hand are nearly at \$59. But what are these same Antiburgher Congregations doing now? Raising for Synodical purposes at an average rate of \$223 each. And what is the consequence? Are their Ministers starved? Their Ministers are better supported now than ever they have been before. Are they involving their Church property in debt in order to appear liberal to extra-Congregational objects? On the contrary, there never was such a spirit displayed for paying off all debt. Are they better able to give? That I do not believe. What is the reason then that they give more than *eleven times* what they gave 40 years ago? I believe the secret is, increased Congregational life; and that increased Congregational life, brought round in some measure, at any rate, by an increased sympathy for others, and increased efforts to help them. Why, Sir, one of these 81 Congregations, which from 1808 to 1820, unitedly raised every year about \$1640, in 1858 contributed *alone* to Synodical purposes \$2950; and the United Presbyterian Church, in 1859, not over three and a half times more numerous than the Antiburgher Synod in 1820, raised for Synodical purposes the large sum of \$170,000.

I know our cause here is but young yet. Youth, however, is a comparative term, and if young, we should show some of the fire and