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## Editorial Jottings.

It is an awful thing for one to throw away his life on earth, either by making it of no real value, or by making it a curse to others. He who does this in either way is sure to make life a total failure for eternity. Good were it for such a man had he never been born.

So writes the *New York Independent*, and so said the Christ. (Read Matt. xviii. 7, xxv. 30.) Then when the overwhelming responsibility is realized, and the heart throbs:—"Who is sufficient for these things?" let this truth lift the burden. (2 Cor. iii. 5.)

MR. SPURGEON has withdrawn from the Baptist Union. Cause:—The Union has not done Mr. Spurgeon's bidding in casting out those who are not theologically of his way of thinking; for to say that they have departed from Christ because they do not "go it blind" on all those questions which a dogmatic age supposed it had settled, is the height of Pharisaic pride. We regret this step on Mr. Spurgeon's part; he has not been therein even just to his former self, for in the broad sense of the term he has been catholic and evangelical. But rheumatic gout is not calculated to calm the temper or to keep the judgment cool, and the veteran preacher, some day, looking back upon this point of his history will with the Psalmist say: "This was my infirmity."

With regard to Mr. Spurgeon's charge against the English Nonconformist churches, notably the Congregational and Baptist, of being on the "down grade" to Agnosticism, we cannot do better than give from the *Nonconformist and Independent*, the following opinion of our esteemed friend, Dr. Hannay, the secretary of the English Union:

The question which Mr. Spurgeon has raised, and has put on the lips of some anxious, many unthinking,

and not a few unscrupulous persons is, not whether this or that view of Gospel doctrine is scriptural, but whether it is not the fact that the ministry of the Congregational and Baptist bodies is largely ceasing to be Evangelical. This, I venture to say, is an abuse—an unintentional abuse, no doubt, but not the less an abuse—on Mr. Spurgeon's part, of the great influence which his eminence as a preacher has given him; and it can hardly fail to lead to restlessness in the churches, and to unhealthy inquisitions by which the hands of many faithful pastors will be weakened.

Mr. Spurgeon is not the man to make such grave allegations as his articles contain without evidence which convinces him of their truth; but it is no violent supposition that he may be deceived as to the real value of much of that evidence. It is notorious that a little shrewd cross-questioning often changes the complexion, and indeed entirely reverses the effect, of testimony, even when that testimony is given on oath and in good faith. Under such a process it is not improbable that much of the evidence on which Mr. Spurgeon relies would shrink into insignificance.

I am disposed to think it would, because my somewhat extensive knowledge of the Congregational body has revealed to me no such state of things as Mr. Spurgeon deplors and denounces. My office brings me into habitual contact and frequent confidential communication with the ministers of the body in all parts of England and Wales. During the last seventeen years I have preached, I believe, in every county of England, occupying different pulpits at the rate of, say, thirty per annum, and have freely mixed with the ministers and representative members of the churches at Union and County Association meetings. If there had been any such defection as Mr. Spurgeon and his informants confidentially affirm, it could not have escaped my observation. That the type of doctrine which underlies Mr. Spurgeon's own preaching is not held by the greater number of Congregational ministers, I frankly admit; that many interpretations of Scripture which were relied upon by the preachers of the last generation, and some forms of presenting the Gospel which they used with great power, are not now heard in any but a very small number of Congregational pulpits, cannot be questioned. But this is not necessarily defection; it may be progress. The world is not standing still. If it may not be said that the Spirit of God has given to this generation a new word, He has at least poured fresh light on the old word; and howsoever, under this process, doctrinal forms and methods of pulpit ministration may have changed, no charge of departure from the Evangelical faith can be made good