

him. The difficulty in the way is, that, in the now divided state of the Church, it cannot be executed. If any one denomination were to claim the right of visiting every house, it would be vigorously opposed by nearly every other denomination. This is one of the evils which have arisen from breaking up the unity of the Church. The Church is, after all, one, but it cannot reach all its members.

The Congregational method has some advantages. It allows every member of the church to go to whatever place of worship he prefers. In the church he joins he has a vote in the choice of a pastor. A congregation thus organized has commonly more energy, because it has more unity than one composed of gregarious parishioners who have no common interests. But the system is not fitted to accomplish the whole end contemplated by our Lord. Under it, churches will be apt to spring up where they will pay, rather than where they are needed. We see this very strikingly in the city of New York, where the churches have great difficulty in supporting themselves in the poorer districts, and have a tendency to go up town among the wealthier classes. The congregations being planted on no fixed principle, there will be neglected regions between them.

In all our great cities, and even in our villages and rural districts, there are masses of people who never think of going to any church. Our philanthropists scarcely know what to do with them. In most places, they appoint missionaries to labor among them. But the missionaries will tell you that their work, as a whole, is a very unsatisfactory one. The lapsed population, as a rule, is a migratory one; they are here to-day and in another district to-morrow. The impressions for good which may be made at one meeting are effaced by the surrounding temptations long before the missionary can pay a second visit, and hold a second meeting. There is need, therefore, of a more effective system, in which no one can escape from the Gospel appeals made to him.

IV. THE FEDERATION OF THE CHURCHES. Every earnest Christian is asking how are the prevailing evils to be remedied. It is evident that no one church can do this, and the common answer is: Let the churches unite. But every one who has tried it knows that, with the prevailing sentiment, this is impossible. Every church says, in effect, I am most anxious for a visible union of the Church, but it must be by every sect joining our denomination.

In the present day, the effective method of conducting the work is to combine in a judicious way the Territorial and Congregational modes of operation. The minister may feel it to be his first duty to look after his own people, who have called him, and sit under his ministry. But he knows that Christ came to *seek* as well as *save* that which is lost; to seek in order to save. He does not wait till the people come to him; he goes out to seek them. But it is an unsatisfactory way of ac-