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GOING OVER TO "THE CHURCH."

The recent defection of some Canadian Congregational ministers to the Church of England, and the occasional adhesion of influential lay members of our churches to the same communion, are facts of sufficient general interest to call for some special notice in this place.

It is not at all in accordance with our feelings or convictions to take up these cases individually. The longer experience that we have of human nature and human life, the more we see of the complicated workings of thought and feeling in any mind, and of the influence of circumstances in forming opinion and determining action, the less inclined do we feel to enter upon personalities of any sort; and the more, to deal with essential *principles* of truth and duty.

But as the influences which have operated in these cases, may be fairly supposed to be likely to affect other minds as well, and as the leap from Congregationalism to Anglicanism has been generally considered a pretty wide one, it may be of service to examine anew the principles involved in such a transition.

It is not enough to say that in the practical working of Congregational churches, there are certain evils and defects which render ministers and members uneasy in the system. We must not only examine what we are going *from*, but what we are going *to*. It is no argument in favor of the Baptismal Office, that church meetings are sometimes disorderly.

Nor is it sufficient to point to many good features in the worship and working of the Episcopal Church, or to certain excellent men who minister at its altars. Such a line of argument would cover all the enormities of the Papacy.

Surely we ought to give no heed, in such a matter, to considerations of "good society," and the like. These arguments, in a religious question, worth *naught*, should never be endowed with the power of the cypher in numbers, giving ten, or a hundred, or a thousand-fold value to the weaker pleas to which they are attached.