

MINUTES
OF THE
ANNUAL MEETING
OF THE
CONGREGATIONAL UNION
OF
CANADA,

HELD IN HAMILTON, CANADA WEST,

11th-17th June, 1856.

TORONTO:
MACLEAR, THOMAS & Co., PRINTERS, 16, KING STREET EAST.
1856.

OFFICE BEARERS
OF THE
CONGREGATIONAL UNION OF CANADA,
FOR 1856.

FOR 1856.

Chairman.

REV. E. J. SHERRILL.

Secretary-Treasurer.

REV. KENNETH M. FENWICK.

Committee.

REVDS. DR. WILKES AND A. BURPEE, MESSRS.
C. ALEXANDER, R. HOLLAND, J. McWATERS, SEN.,
R. BIRKS, T. M. TAYLOR AND H. LYMAN.

Next Annual Meeting at Montreal, C. E., on the Second Wednesday
in June, 1857, at 4 P. M.

N. B. The Constitution and Standing Rules will be found at p. 21.

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CONGREGATIONAL UNION OF CANADA.

The Annual Meeting of the Congregational Union of Canada was convened in the Congregational Church, Hamilton, C.W., on Wednesday, 11th June, 1856, at 4 o'clock, P. M.

Roll of Members present during the Session.

MINISTERS.

W. H. Allworth, W. Burgess, J. T. Byrne, J. Campbell, W. F. Clarke, J. Climie, D. Dunkerley, J. Durrant, E. Ebbs, K. M. Fenwick, J. Fraser,	W. Hay, J. Hay, Wm. Hayden, S. Harris, W. Hugh de Burgh, S. King, H. Lancashire, A. Lillie, D. D., F. H. Marling, D. McCallum, J. McKillican, N. McKinnon,	E. A. Noble, A. J. Parker, T. M. Reikie, J. B. Robinson, Robert Robinson, E. J. Sherrill, S. Snider, H. Wilkes, D. D., A. Wickson, M. A. H. Wilson, John Wood.
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DELEGATES FROM CHURCHES.

<i>Brantford</i> —Jas. Wilkes. <i>Eramosa</i> —J. Peters, T. Armstrong. <i>Hamilton</i> —J. McKeand, W. Edgar. <i>Hawkesbury</i> —John Lamb. <i>Indian Lands</i> —J. Finlayson. <i>Inverness</i> —D. Campbell. <i>Kingston</i> —W. Massie. <i>London</i> —H. Matthewson, M. Holmes. <i>Markham</i> —P. Eckhart, <i>Martintown</i> —B. Helmer.	<i>Montreal, First Church</i> — J. McWatters, Sen., R. Holland. C. Alexander, <i>Sp. Del.</i> <i>Montreal, Second Church</i> — A. McDonald. <i>Newmarket</i> —R. H. Smith. <i>Southwold</i> —A. Horton. <i>Stratford</i> —J. McWatters, Jr. <i>Stouffville</i> —Wm. Tracey. <i>St. Andrews</i> —D. Dewar. <i>Toronto, Second Church</i> — Robert Hay.
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Delegates from Corresponding Bodies.

Rev. H. D. Kitchell,	}	General Association of Michigan.
“ J. Anderson,		General Association of Connecticut.
“ A. Atwood,	}	U. P. Synod of Canada.
“ Dr. Ferrier,		
“ F. Lees.		

Honorary Members.

- Rev. Stephen Johnson, Missionary from China.
 " William Stephenson, Primitive Methodist.
 " William McClure, New Connexion Methodist.
 " David Dyer, Albany.
 " S. L. Pomroy, D. D., Secretary of A. B. C. F. M.
 " W. P. Wastell, Agent of F. C. M. S.
 " Wm. Standerwick, Cobourg.
 " J. Unsworth, Georgetown.
 " E. Barker, Eramosa.
 Mr. Foote, Agent Mass. S. S. Society.
 " J. Lowrie, City Missionary, Hamilton.
 " J. Boyd, Student.
 " Shanks, "
 " M. McKillop, "
 " J. R. Kean, "

In the absence of the Chairman, (the Rev. W. F. Clarke,) the Rev. E. Ebbs, Pastor of the Hamilton Church, presided. The Session was commenced with devotional exercises. The Rev. W. F. Clarke having arrived, took the Chair.

The Secretary read the Constitution and Standing Rules. Rev. J. T. Byrne was elected Minute Secretary.

The following Committee was appointed to prepare business :

J. Wood, E. Ebbs, R. Robinson, J. McWatters, jun., J. Durrant, *Convener*.

Resolved, That the hours of meeting during the Session be from 9 A. M. to half-past 12; and from 2 P.M. to half-past 5 o'clock.

Adjourned till evening service.

7½ P. M.

The Rev. Kenneth M. Fenwick (in the absence of the Rev. F. H. Marling from indisposition) preached the annual Sermon from Rom. xiv. 8, Revs. J. T. Byrne and D. Dyer assisting in the service.

Thursday, June 12th, 9 A. M.

Devotional exercises. Minutes read and confirmed. Roll called.

Resolved, That the following Brethren be invited to sit as Honorary Members: Revs. D. Dyer, Dr. Pomroy, W. P. Wastell, T. M. Reikie, Wm. Standerwick, J. Unsworth, E. Barker, J. Campbell, S. Harris, Mr. Foote and the Students of the Theological Institute.

The Rev. A. Atwood, Delegate from the General Association of Connecticut, presented his certificate.

The Rev. W. F. Clarke, as retiring Chairman, delivered his address.*

* See end of Minutes.

The Secretary, by request, occupied the Chair ; when it was

Resolved, That this Union presents its cordial thanks to the Rev. W. F. Clarke for his timely, faithful, and valuable address, and hopes that he will lay his sentiments, as thus indicated to us, before the Churches at large in our denominational newspaper, and that at a suitable time the Union be resolved into a Committee of the whole, to consider those parts of it which have a practical bearing on our present denominational condition.

The ballot for Chairman taken. A majority of votes being for E. J. Sherrill and E. Ebbs, the latter declining, E. J. Sherrill was declared duly elected, and took the Chair.

The Committee for preparing business reported, recommending the appointment of the following Committees:—

1. *Business Committee*:—J. B. Robinson, W. F. Clarke, C. Alexander, and J. Durrant, Convener.

2. *Finance Committee*:—A. Wickson, R. H. Smith, J. McKeand, J. McWatters, jr., and John Wood, Convener.

3. *Nomination Committee*:—Robt. Robinson, A. J. Parker, J. Lamb, and F. H. Marling, Convener.

4. *Public Service Committee*:—D. McCallum, H. Lancashire, and E. Ebbs, Convener.

5. *Membership*:—Dr. Wilkes, J. Fraser, W. H. Hugh de Burgh. Wm. Allworth, Convener.

The nomination was adopted.

The following Delegates to corresponding bodies, appointed last Annual Meeting, reported :

F. H. Marling, appointed to General Association of Massachusetts, reported that he did not attend, but wrote a fraternal letter.

E. A. Noble, appointed to General Convention, Vermont—not present, hence no report.

K. M. Fenwick, appointed to General Association of New Hampshire, reported that he did not attend, and failed to write.

Dr. Wilkes, appointed to General Association of New York, reported that he did not attend, but wrote.

W. F. Clarke, appointed to General Association of Michigan, reported that he did not attend, and did not write.

W. Hay, appointed to U. P. Synod of Canada, not present, hence no report.

Committee on Public Services reported order of service for Public Meeting this evening. The report adopted.

Adjourned till afternoon.

Thursday, 2 P. M.

Opened with prayer.

Delegates and letters from corresponding bodies heard.

1. General Association of Massachusetts—letter read from Rev. L. H. Sheldon.
2. General Association of New York—letter read from Rev. E. Colton.
3. General Conference of Maine—letter read from Rev. J. J. Caruthers, D.D.
4. General Association of Michigan—Revs. H. D. Kitchell and J. Anderson addressed the Union.
5. General Association of Connecticut—Rev. A. S. Atwood addressed the Union.

Dr. Pomroy from Massachusetts, and Mr. J. Foote, Agent for Massachusetts Sabbath School Society, on invitation, addressed the Union.

The Committee on Nominations reported the following as the Missionary Committee:—W. F. Clarke, J. Wood, E. Ebbs, A. J. Parker, H. Cochrane, C. Alexander, R. H. Smith, J. Peters, and W. Tracey. Dr. Wilkes, *Secretary-Treasurer*.

Report adopted.

Resolved, That a Committee be appointed, consisting of W. H. Hugh de Burgh, K. M. Fenwick and J. Wilkes, (W. H. Hugh de Burgh, Convener), to consider what this Union can do towards the promotion of Foreign Missions—to report at a subsequent Session of the Union.

Resolved, That we hail with cordial satisfaction the presence among us of the Brethren delegated from Bodies in the United States which correspond with this Union. That we accept gratefully their expressions of sympathy and friendship, and have heard with much pleasure the statements they have made in reference to their several localities; nor can we refrain from testifying our deep interest in the moral struggles that are going on in the neighbouring Republic, and our earnest desire that they may be guided by an all-wise Providence to such a termination as shall establish freedom, virtue and peace in the land.

Resolved, That this Union has heard with much satisfaction the statements of Mr. Foote in reference to the character and operations of the Massachusetts S. S. Society, and heartily commends its publications to the attention of the Congregational Churches of Canada.

Adjourned till evening.

Thursday, 7½ P. M.

Public Meeting opened with devotional exercises by Rev. D. Dunckerley.

Secretary read statistical summary.

Narratives of the state of religion in their respective Churches, were given by Revs. F. H. Marling, J. Wood, R. Robinson, K. M. Fenwick and Dr. Wilkes.

Closed with devotional exercises.

Friday, June 13th, 9 A. M.

Devotional exercises. Minutes read and confirmed. Roll called. Dr. Pomroy addressed the Union on Foreign Missions, especially in reference to the Turkish Empire.

Resolved, That the Union tender to the Rev. S. L. Pomroy, D.D., its cordial thanks for his attendance at these meetings; and through him would convey to the Board of which he is the representative the expression of its hearty sympathy with him in their noble work, congratulating them on the glorious work of grace with which their Armenian Missions have been favoured; especially on account of the wonderful facilities recently granted for evangelizing the Moslem population of Turkey.—Nor can this Union withhold the avowal of its lively interest in the present attitude of the Board towards Slavery.

The Union then adjourned to give place to the annual meeting of the Theological Institute, which was then held and continued till the hour for adjournment.

Friday, 2 P. M.

Opened with prayer.

Resolved, That inasmuch as the Minutes of last year have been printed, the reading of them be dispensed with.

A letter from the Indian Church, Saugeen, having been read, it was

Resolved, That this letter be referred to the Missionary Committee.

P. Freeland, Esq., on behalf of the Committee on Chapel Deed, read a report and made some explanatory remarks, when it was

Resolved, That the Report now read be adopted, and that the present Committee be instructed to carry out the Report—the smaller size of Deed being adopted.

The Committee on Public Services reported arrangements for the Missionary Meeting this evening. Report adopted.

The Committee on Membership reported, recommending for admission, Revs. J. Campbell, T. M. Reikie, L. P. Adams, A. Burpee, S. Harris;—and for standing proposed: Revs. J. Unsworth and J. Middleton—the Church at Garafraxa and the Church at Eden Mills.

Report adopted.

Dr. Wilkes read a considerable portion of his Report as Secretary of the Canadian Congregational Missionary Society.

Resolved, That the Union do now allow time for statements relative to the *Canadian Independent*.

W. F. Clarke then presented his statements.

It was proposed that guarantees be at once given for the future support of this paper.

The Chairman being unwell, retired, and J. Durrant, at his request, took his place.

The Committee on Nominations reported the following as Delegates to Corresponding Bodies :—

U. P. Synod of Canada : W. F. Clarke and F. H. Marling.
 General Association Massachusetts : Dr. Wilkes, Primary ; E. Ebbs, Secondary.
 General Association Connecticut : A. J. Parker, Primary ; T. Bayne, Secondary.
 General Conference, Maine : E. J. Sherrill, Primary ; J. T. Byrne, Secondary.
 General Convention, Vermont : K. M. Fenwick, Primary ; E. A. Noble, Secondary.
 General Association, New York : F. H. Marling, Primary ; J. Fraser, Secondary.
 General Association, Michigan : J. Wood, Primary ; W. F. Clarke, Secondary.
 General Association, New Hampshire : Dr. Lillie, Primary ; W. H. Hugh de Burgh, Secondary.
 The nomination adopted.
 Adjourned till evening.

Friday, 7½ P. M.

Public Missionary Meeting.
 Devotional exercises by W. Burgess.
 Dr. Wilkes, as Secretary, presented a verbal summary of report.
 The meeting was then addressed by Revs. W. F. Clarke, D. Dyer, A. S. Atwood, H. Lancashire, and A. J. Parker. Closed with Prayer by S. Harris.

Saturday, June 14th, 9 A. M.

Devotional exercises. Minutes read and confirmed. Roll called.
 The Chairman read a Letter from Rev. S. Snider relative to the sudden death of one of his children, which had led him to leave the Union.

Committee on Public Services reported arrangements for Sabbath. Report adopted.

Mr. C. Alexander, Special Delegate from Zion Church, Montreal, presented a report of "Committee appointed at a meeting of Zion Church, April, 1856, to draw up a plan for aiding the Widows and Orphans of Ministers in connection with the Congregational Body in Canada." After discussion, it was

Resolved, That the cordial thanks of this Union be presented to the First Church, Montreal, for their thoughtful kindness in preparing the plan now submitted, and in sending a special Delegate to introduce it here ; and that the plan be referred to a Committee, who shall report thereon on Monday at 10 A. M.—the said Committee to consist of Messrs K. M. Fenwick, C. Alexander, McKeand, Durrant, Dr. Wilkes, R. Holland and F. H. Marling—C. Alexander, Convener.

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Dr. Wilkes spoke in reference to the loss sustained by the Rev. W. F. Clarke in the service of the denomination, by the publication of the *Canadian Independent*. After which about £50 were guaranteed by several present. It was also

Resolved, That a Committee be appointed to obtain subscriptions without delay, to make up if possible the sum of £150, as a compensation to the Rev. W. F. Clarke for his services in conducting the *Canadian Independent*—said Committee to consist of Rev. J. Wood and Jas. Wilkes, Esq., of Brantford, and Mr. W. R. Hibbard of Montreal. J. Wood, Convener.

The Committee on Membership reported, recommending that the application of the Church at Guelph stand over for a year until more information can be obtained in regard to it; that the Revs. T. Rattray and J. Vincent be dismissed at their request, and that the name of Rev. T. Snell be erased from the book of the Union.

Resolved, That this Report be adopted, with the amendment, that the name of Rev. T. Snell be referred back to the Committee.

Invitations were presented by Revs. F. H. Marling, Dr. Wilkes and J. Wood, to hold the next annual meeting of the Union at Toronto, Montreal and Brantford.

Committee on Public Services reported arrangements for Monday evening. Report adopted.

Resolved, That we do now adjourn until Monday morning at 9 A.M

Sabbath, June 15th.

Rev. E. J. Sherrill preached in the Congregational Church at 11 A.M., from Acts xxiv. 16; and was assisted in the devotional exercises by Revs. W. Hayden and J. Fraser.

On invitation of the Church, the Ministers and Delegates, with the Church, observed the Lord's Supper in the afternoon. The Pastor of the Church was assisted by several Brethren.

Dr. Wilkes preached in the evening from 2 Cor. v. 4, and was assisted by Revs. R. Robinson and J. McKillican.

Monday, June 16th, 9 A.M.

Devotional exercises. Minutes read and confirmed. Roll called. The Report of Committee on Widows' and Orphans' Fund was read, and was again remitted to the Committee.

The Treasurer of the Union presented his annual statement, which was received and adopted.

A deputation from the U. P. Synod of Canada consisting of the Revs. Dr. Ferrier and Mr. Lees was introduced to the Union, welcomed by the Chairman, and by request addressed the Union.

Resolved, That this Union receives with cordial pleasure and hearty reciprocation the salutations of its United Presbyterian Brethren, presented by the esteemed Delegates from that Body, and joins in the hope and prayer, that the bonds of Christian love and intimacy which unite us may be drawn more and more closely.

The Committee on the publication of Rev. E. Ebbs' Sermon reported through Dr. Wilkes.

The questions referred to the Committee of the Union last year were reported on through the Secretary ; when it was

Resolved, That the Report be received, and referred to a Committee of the whole.

Resolved, That this Union would convey to their beloved Brother, the Rev. S. Snider, the expression of their sympathy with him and his bereaved family while suffering under this severe afflictive visitation—rendered the more heavy by its unexpectedness, and their earnest prayer in his behalf, that the consolations of God may enable him and his beloved partner while sorrowing to rejoice, and that abundant spiritual blessings may accrue to themselves and to the people of our Brother's charge; and that a copy of this Resolution be sent to Brother Snider.

The Committee on Widows' and Orphans' Fund presented their final Report.

Resolved, That this Report be received, and considered clause by clause.

After discussion, the following resolutions were adopted :—

I. *Resolved*, That this Union approve the general principles of the plan submitted by the Committee, viz :—

1. The formation of a vested Fund from special donations and legacies, congregational collections annually, and Ministers' annual subscriptions.
2. A fixed payment to all Beneficiaries alike. £— for a Widow, and £— additional for each Orphan under and until 14 years of age.
3. The Fund to be managed by Directors chosen by the Subscribers—namely, Ministers, Collecting Churches, and donors of over £—.

II. *Resolved*, That a Committee be appointed to report to our next Meeting upon the details of the Constitution of the Fund ; the reception of Ministers' Subscriptions and the payment of Annuities being deferred until the details have been adjusted by the Union, upon which the Union shall appoint the first Directors, and call a Meeting of the Subscribers at the time and place of its following Meeting, to choose the next Board.

III. *Resolved*, That the same Committee be authorized meanwhile to receive contributions, as a commencement of the Fund.

IV. *Resolved*, That the said Committee be divided into two sections.—that for the East (from Kingston, inclusive) consisting of Reys. Dr. Wilkes, A. Burpee, E. A. Noble, Messrs. H. Vennor, J. P. Clark, W. R. Hibbard, T. M. Taylor, W. Moodie, P. W. Wood, and C. Alexander, Convener ; and that for the West : Messrs. M. Holmes, James Wilkes, H. Cochrane, Patrick Freeland, E. F. Whittemore, Revs. E. Ebbs and F. H. Marling, and Mr. James McKeand, Convener. Three in each section to form a quorum ; the two Sections to correspond with each other, and present a joint or separate Report, as they may see fit.

Closed with prayer.

Monday, 2 P. M.

Opened with Prayer.

In the absence of Chairman and Secretary, it was

Resolved, That Rev. W. F. Clarke take the Chair, and Rev. R. Robinson act as Secretary.

Resolved, That this Union now resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole for the purpose of discussing the Address of the late Chairman.

Resolved, That Rev. E. Ebbs be Chairman and Rev. R. Robinson Secretary of said Committee.

Resolved, That this Committee recommend to the Union the adoption of a resolution having reference to the Colonial Missionary Society, and the position of the British Churches in relation to Canada.

Resolved, That this Committee recommend to the Union the consideration of the propriety and desirableness of sending a delegate from our Union and Missionary Society, to the Congregational Union of England and Wales and Colonial Missionary Society, and through them to the British Churches, with a view to laying the condition and difficulties of Canadian Congregationalism before them.

Resolved, That the Committee rise, and report progress to the Union, to-morrow morning at 11 o'clock.

The Committee rose and requested permission to report to-morrow morning at 11 o'clock.

Granted.

Resolved, That the next Annual Meeting of the Union be held in Montreal on the second Wednesday of June, 1857, at 4 P. M.

The Committee on Membership reported, recommended that Rev. T. Snell be dismissed at his own request, and that the Church at Stanstead stand proposed for membership.

Report adopted.

The Finance Committee reported that the funds obtained were sufficient to pay only three-fourths of the travelling expenses of the Members of the Union, and also recommended that the balance, if any, be appropriated to the payment of the expenses of delegates to Foreign Bodies. Report adopted.

Adjourned till evening.

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R. Birks, T. M. Taylor and H. Lyman. Secretary—Treasurer, Rev. Kenneth M. Fenwick.

LOCAL MISSIONARY COMMITTEES.

Western.—Revds. W. F. Clarke, E. Ebbs, W. Hay; Messrs. H. Mathewson, F. P. Gould, C. F. Smithers, H. Cochrane, J. Oswald. Rev. J. Wood, Secretary.

Middle.—Revds. T. Baker, J. Wheeler, Dr. Lillie, A. Wickson and F. H. Marling; Messrs. E. Childs, Patrick Freeland, E. F. Whittemore, J. A. Smith. Rev. J. T. Byrne, Secretary.

Eastern.—Revds. R. K. Black, J. Fraser, H. Lancashire, H. D. Powis; Messrs. H. I. Meland, G. C. Chaffey, W. Massie, J. Noon, K. M. Fenwick, Secretary.

Lower Canada.—Revds. A. Burpee, A. J. Parker, E. J. Sherrill, Dr. Wilkes; Messrs. A. Savage, C. Alexander, R. Holland, R. Birks. J. P. Clark, Secretary.

The Report was adopted.

Resolved, That this Union now renews its expression of confidence in the French Canadian Missionary Society, rejoices in the success and progress of its work during the past year, and recommends the Churches to sustain it liberally.

Resolved, That this Union views with devout thankfulness to God, the recent triumph in England of the friends of the Sabbath, and regarding the day of rest as of vital importance to the temporal and spiritual welfare of the human race, pledges itself to unceasing and untiring efforts to promote its observance in this country by the closing of our post offices, and the entire cessation of all labour, travel, and traffic on that day.

Resolved, That this Union while heartily approving of the main object of the American Tract Society, and rejoicing in the measure of good effected by its operations, would frankly express utter disapproval of its policy on the subject of slavery, of its suppression of truth and of the unfair manner in which it has mutilated the writings of men, however moderate their language in exposing the evils of the system; it however rejoices in the prospect of a change, and congratulates the Society on the steps taken at its recent Meeting in May, in the appointment with its concurrence of a Committee of investigation; the Union would farther express the sincere hope that a much larger measure of prosperity may characterize the future labours of that honoured institution.

Resolved, That this Union deeply deploring the existing prevalence, power and outrages of the sin of Slavery in the neighbouring States, hereby expresses its ardent and prayerful hope that the days of American slavery are numbered.

Resolved, That the Union approving of the principle of a Prohibitory Liquor Law, do earnestly exhort Christian electors to use their influence to secure reliable representatives in the next Legislature, that we may not again be disappointed when support is pledged.

Resolved, That the address of W. F. Clarke be published with the Minutes of the Union, and that 250 copies of said Report be without the address.

Resolved, That we do now adjourn until the next Annual Meeting of Union in Montreal.

KENNETH M. FENWICK,
Secretary of the Congregational Union of Canada.

LIST OF MINISTERIAL MEMBERS OF THE UNION.

Adams, L. P.	Fenwick, K. M.	Powis, H. D.
Allworth, William H.	Fraser, J.	Raymond, A.
Armour, J.	Hall, R. V.	Reikie, T. M.
Baker, T.	Harris, S.	Ritchie, G.
Bayne, T.	Hay, Wm.	Robertson, J.
Black, R. K.	Hay, James	Robinson, J. B.
Bucher, G. B.	Hayden, Wm.	Robinson, Robert
Buckham, J.	Hugh de Burgh, W. H.	Scaright, T.
Burgess, Wm.	King, S.	Sim, A., M.A.
Burpee, A.	Kribs, L.	Sherrill, E. J.
Byrne, J. T.	Lancashire, H.	Snider, S.
Campbell, J.	Lillie, A., D.D.	Ward, S.
Clarke, Wm.	Marling, F. H.	Wilkes, H., D.D.
Clarke, W. F.	McCallum, D.	Wickson, A., M.A.
Climie, J.	McKillican, J.	Williams, R. J.
Denney, H.	McKinnon, N.	Wilson, Hiram
Dunkerley, D.	Noble, E. A.	Wheeler, J.
Durrant, J.	Parker, A. J.	Wood, J.
Ebbs, E.		

LIST OF CHURCHES CONNECTED WITH THE UNION.

Abbotsford, C. E.	Hopetown, C. W.	Owen Sound, C. W.
Albion, C. W.	Indian Lands, C. W.	Phillipsburgh, C. E.
Belleville, C. W.	Inverness, C. E.	Port Sarnia, C. W.
Brantford, C. W.	Innisfil, C. W.	Quebec, C. E.
Brockville, C. W.	Kelvin, C. W.	Russeltown, C. E.
Brome, C. E.	Kingston, C. W.	Scotland, C. W.
Bowmanville, C. W.	Lanark, 1st Ch., C. W.	Simcoe, C. W.
Caledon, C. W.	Lanark Village, C. W.	Sherbrooke, C. E.
Cobourg, C. W.	London, C. W.	Springford, C. W.
Cold Springs, C. W.	Markham, C. W.	Southwold, C. W.
Danville, C. E.	Melbourne, C. E.	Stratford, C. W.
Durham, C. E.	Martintown, C. W.	Stouffville, C. W.
Eaton, C. E.	Montreal, 1st Ch., C. E.	St. Andrew's, C. E.
Eramosa, C. W.	Montreal, 2d Ch., C. E.	Toronto, 2d Ch., C. W.
Georgetown, C. W.	Newcastle, C. W.	Vaughan, C. W.
Granby, C. E.	Newmarket, C. W.	Warwick, C. W.
Hamilton, C. W.	Oro, C. W.	Whitby, C. W.
Hawkesbury, C. W.		

SUMMARY OF STATISTICS
OF
CANADIAN CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES;
CONDENSED FROM REPORT PRESENTED AT THE ANNUAL MEETING OF UNION,
HAMILTON, JUNE, 1856.

1. *Number of Congregational Churches.*

There are 74 churches generally recognised as belonging to the denomination.

2. *Ministers.*

51 Ministers are stationed, and; with only one or two exceptions, are settled Pastors over churches. There are 2 Professors in the Theological Institute. 3 Missionaries, and 3 native Indian Missionaries. There are, therefore, in the field 59.

There are also two beloved brethren who have long laboured in Canada, unable for the present to be actively engaged, and 4 others are without pastoral charges. There are, therefore in the Province 65 Congregational Ministers.

3. *Churches without supply.*

There are 10 vacant charges; one or two of these, however, must for the present, if not permanently, be abandoned.

4. *Attendance on the Sabbath.*

On this and the following heads it is needful to state, that only 45 returns were received, giving statistics for 54 churches out of 74. For the churches reported we give their own figures; for the others we give the figures for last year; and in a few instances where we do not have these, a moderate estimate.

It will also be noticed, that this year we give only the *average* attendance. The 54 churches report an average attendance of 10,560. The unreported 20 churches will have at least 1,920. Total average attendance 12,480.

5. *Membership.*

The number of members in the 64 reported churches on 7th May, 1856, was 2,805; in the other 20 churches, on the lowest estimate, there will be 578; total, 3,383. In the 54 churches reported, there were received during the year 164 by letters, and 319 by profession; total 483. Removed from the membership of the same churches, during the year, by death, letters, and discipline, 205. By reference to the statistical book, the real comparative increase during the period from 7th May, 1855, to 7th May, 1856, was 241. For the unreported churches, we cannot give any estimate of their increase.

6. *Church Property.*

57 chapels have been reported, with accomodation for 15,045; in value £36,706, with a debt of £5,569. There are only 6 ministers' houses, in value £800; but many of the churches have ground on which houses could be built.

7. *Insurance of Property.*

Special attention is called to the fact, that out of the 57 chapels above mentioned, only 13 are insured, 6 have not been reported on, and 38 are declared to be without insurance. The whole amount insured on church property, which unitedly amounts to £37,506, is the very small sum of £9,600.

8. *Sabbath Schools and Bible Classes.*

The 54 churches report in their Sabbath Schools 306 teachers and 3000 scholars. 490 attending Bible Classes.

9. Finance.

£8,492 is the sum reported by the 54 churches as raised by them during the past year for all purposes. Of this was raised for

Ministers' Support.....	£3,816 12 8
Ordinary Incidentals.....	851 13 2
Missions.....	851 5 1
Theological Institute.....	246 17 6
Church Property.....	1,933 2 10
General Purposes.....	792 17 11

In comparing the above with the statements of last year, we find that under almost every head there is reason for gratitude and encouragement.

We have more churches, more settled ministers, and the *average* of congregations reported this year is more than equal to the *whole* of the congregations as reported last year.

As to membership, it is still more encouraging. Last year there were received into the churches, 376; this year, 483. Of these, last year 208 were by letter, 171 by profession; this year only 164 by letter, but 319 by profession. Last year 215 were removed from the churches; this year, 205.

The net increase on the year, as already stated, is 241; and as this refers only to the 54 churches which have reported, fully one-twelfth has thus been added to the membership of last year.

The reports on Sabbath Schools show a slight decrease in the number of teachers, but an increase of scholars.

The financial position of the body is most hopeful. Although in the report of last year an estimate was made for some churches which did not report, and although the number of contributing churches was thus greater than the 54 to which we confine our calculations this year, we have the following gratifying results:

The sum raised for all purposes this year, exceeds that of last year by £1,346. 3s. 2d. The sum for ministers' salaries is greater by £156. 9s. 7½d. This however, does not rightly indicate the real progress; for, as already mentioned, there were more churches reported in our statement last year, than this year. The following, however, will help us. Only one minister receives less from his church this year, although other three have nominally less, but not really so; 9 have received the same as last year, and 21 have received £441. 12s. more than last year. The amount raised for ordinary incidentals is less by £350. 10s. 2d; but this is the only item which shows a decrease, and is probably caused by placing under other heads, what previously was placed under this.

For missions there is an increase of £66. 14s. 4d. For the Theological Institute £41. 10s. 3d. For Church Property, including money expended for building, repairs, and payment of debt, the increase amounts to £1,066. 8s. 2d. There is also an increase on the sum raised for general religious purposes of £366. 1s. 1d.

Far from regarding the present position of the body as what it might be, we would yet devoutly recognise the good hand which has enabled us to accomplish what has been done; and believe that, instead of having ground for discouragement, there is ample cause for hope, and motive for increased consecration to the "furtherance of the Gospel," and the advocacy of those distinctive principles, deemed by us so vital to the spread and development of a spiritual Christianity.

During the past year, one of our churches has enjoyed, to a large extent, the quickening influences of the Holy Spirit. May the year on which we now enter, witness other and still more extensive displays of Divine power.

KENNETH M. FENWICK,

Secretary of Congregational Union of Canada.

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CONTRIBUTIONS TO CONGREGATIONAL UNION FUND, JUNE, 1855.

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
Albion	1	15	0	London	2	15	0
Bowmanville.....	1	12	6	Markham	1	0	0
Brantford	3	0	0	Martintown	1	5	0
Brockville	1	0	0	Melbourne	0	15	0
Caledon	0	15	0	Montreal, 1st Church.....	14	10	0
Cobourg	1	0	0	Newmarket	1	0	0
Coldsprings.....	1	5	0	Owen Sound	1	10	0
Danville	2	10	0	Port Stanley.....	1	5	0
Durham.....	0	10	0	Scotland	1	0	0
Eaton	1	0	0	Stouffville.....	1	2	6
Georgetown	1	0	0	Simcoe	0	10	0
Hawkesbury.....	1	5	0	St. Andrews	1	15	0
Hamilton	5	5	0	Toronto, 2nd Church	7	1	0
Indian Lands	0	5	0	Warwick	1	5	0
Kingston	2	18	10½	Whitby	1	10	0
Lanark, 1st Church.....	0	18	6	Patrick Freeland, Esq.....	1	5	0
Lanark Village.....	1	1	3	Rev. H. D. Powis.....	0	15	0

CONTRIBUTIONS TO CONGREGATIONAL UNION FUND, JUNE, 1856.

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
Albion	1	0	0	Martintown	1	17	6
Bowmanville.....	1	16	3	Melbourne	0	15	0
Brantford	5	0	0	Montreal, 1st Church	11	16	3
Brockville	2	0	0	Newmarket	1	0	0
Caledon	0	10	0	Quebec	4	10	0
Cobourg	1	5	0	Scotland and Kelvin.....	1	2	6
Coldsprings	1	5	0	Stouffville.....	1	0	0
Danville	2	15	0	Stratford	0	18	9
Durham.....	0	15	0	Southwold	1	0	0
Eaton	1	0	0	Simcoe	0	10	7½
Georgetown	1	0	0	St. Andrews	1	10	0
Glanford and Barton.....	0	16	3	Stanstead	2	0	0
Hawkesbury	1	0	0	Toronto, 2nd Church	8	15	0
Hamilton	16	0	2	Warwick	2	0	0
Indian Lands	0	15	0	Whitby	1	10	0
Inverness	0	10	0	Patrick Freeland, Esq.	2	10	0
Kingston	2	0	0	M. M. Holmes, Esq.	1	13	1½
Lanark Village	1	5	0	Jas. Wilkes, Esq.	0	13	9
London	3	1	3	Rev. R. Robinson.....	0	10	0
Markham	2	0	0	Rev. A. Wickson.....	0	10	0

, JUNE, 1855.

	£	s.	d.
.....	2	15	0
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.....	0	10	0
.....	1	15	0
.....	7	1	0
.....	1	5	0
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CONSTITUTION

OF THE

Congregational Union of Canada.

I. That the name of this Association be "The Congregational Union of Canada."

II. That it shall consist of Ministers and Professors, or Tutors in Colleges or Theological Institutes, of approved character, and of Churches of the Congregational or Independent order, duly received at a general meeting. In the admission of new members application shall be made in writing, addressed to the Secretary six weeks prior to the general meeting, in which a statement of doctrinal and ecclesiastical sentiments shall be made, and testimonials, if any, be supplied. Students who have finished their course at the Canadian Congregational Theological Institute, and who are ordained to the Ministry, and persons recommended by Associations of the same Church Order in other countries with which a fraternal correspondence is maintained, shall be eligible for admission without any probation; others shall be received only after having been proposed at the previous meeting.

III. That this Union is founded on a full recognition of the distinctive principle of Congregational Churches, namely, the Scriptural right of every separate Church to maintain perfect independence in the government and administration of its own particular affairs; and therefore that the Union shall not, in any case, assume Legislative Authority or become a Court of appeal.

IV. That the following are the objects contemplated in its formation. 1. To promote evangelical religion in connection with the Congregational Denomination. 2. To cultivate brotherly affection, and co-operation in everything relating to the interests of the associated Churches. 3. To establish fraternal correspondence with the several Congregational Unions on this Continent and in Europe. 4. To address an annual or occasional letter to the associated Churches, accompanied with such information as may be deemed necessary. 5. To obtain accurate statistical information relative to the Congregational Churches throughout the British American Provinces.

V. To promote the accomplishment of these objects and the general interests of the Union, an Annual Meeting of its members shall be held, each of the associated Churches being represented by two lay delegates, the meeting to be held at such time and place as may be appointed at each Annual Meeting.

VI. That the Officers of the Union be a Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Minute Secretary, and Committee, all to be chosen annually, by ballot with nomination, who shall execute the instructions of the Union, and prepare a docket of business for the Annual Meeting.

STANDING RULES OF THE UNION.

I. The Union shall meet annually on the 2nd Wednesday in June, at 4 o'clock, P. M., for organisation; to commence with devotional exercises; the Chairman of the last meeting, (or, failing him the Pastor in the place of meeting,) to preside then, and until his successor be appointed.

II. After the above exercises, the Constitution and Standing Rules shall be read, and a Minute Secretary for the Session appointed.

III. The Roll of the Union shall be called, and a Sessional Roll formed.

IV. A Committee of *five* shall then be chosen, on nomination of the Chair, for Business and Nominations.

V. An Annual Sermon shall be preached, on the Wednesday evening; the preacher being appointed at the previous Annual Meeting.

VI. On Thursday morning, after the Devotional Services, the retiring Chairman shall deliver an address; new members shall be admitted, and the new Chairman chosen by ballot, without nomination.

VII. The Minutes of last Meeting shall be read, and the Report of the Union Committee presented.

VIII. The meeting shall be daily opened and closed with prayer; the morning devotional exercises to extend to an hour.

IX. No motion shall be discussed unless seconded; and no member shall speak more than twice to the same motion, without permission from the Chair; and every motion shall be presented in writing by the mover, if required by the Chair.

X. The Roll shall be called, and the Minutes of the preceding day read at the opening of each day's session; and the minutes of the last day at the close of the session.

XI. The Church in whose locality the Annual Meeting shall be held, shall be requested to celebrate the Lord's Supper in connection with such meeting; with which Church the members of the Union shall individually seek occasional fellowship.

XII. On the Monday evening, during the sittings of the Union, a Public Meeting of the Union shall be held.

XIII. The Pastors, or the Officers of the Churches are expected to send to the Secretary, one month at least before the Annual Meeting, a brief narrative of the State of Religion, with statistics, in their several localities; that he may prepare a condensed narrative of the whole for the Annual Meeting, and for printing, if so ordered.

XIV. That a Collection for the Funds of the Union shall be made annually in each Church on, or near the Lord's day, prior to the meeting. From the Fund so raised the *extra* travelling expenses of Ministers and Delegates, arising out of the amalgamation of the Unions, shall be paid; as also the expenses of Delegates to Corresponding Bodies.

XV. That Delegates from the Union to Corresponding Bodies, who may fail to fulfil their appointments by personal attendance, shall address those Bodies by letter, communicating in substance such information and sentiments as they would furnish if present at their Annual Convocation.

XVI. In case of disagreement between members of the Union, it shall be regarded as incumbent upon them to seek, without delay, an adjustment of their difficulties and a mutual reconciliation; and the party refusing to give or accept satisfaction according to Christ's rule, may be dealt with by the Union on that account.

XVII. That the travelling fares of the ministerial members of this Union, and of one delegate from each Church, be paid in full, if possible, or otherwise according to an equal rate of per centage, on the understanding that such ministers and delegates remain during the sessional meetings.

XVIII. Should any Ministerial Member of this Union remove from Canada, and not apply for a letter of dismissal for the space of a year after his departure the Secretary of the Union shall, if he can ascertain his address, forward to him a letter certifying his membership up to the date of his departure : and if his location be unknown, his name be reported in order to erasure from the roll.

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CHAIRMAN'S ADDRESS.*

Men, Brethren and Fathers,—In retiring from the Chair in which your suffrages placed me a year ago—more a post of honour than of toil, it devolves upon me, according to rule and custom, to deliver an address. My idea of the sort of production suited to such an occasion, is not that of an elaborate essay on some well chosen topic, or a finished literary effort which is to go forth to the world as a pedestal on which to rear a pillar of fame to one's self; but rather that of a free, cordial, unaffected utterance of thoughts and feelings in reference to matters of importance to us as a religious denomination. The prime object of our Congregational Union is the promotion, by all means consistent with an untrammelled Christian liberty, of the interests of those Churches of Christ with which we are jointly and severally connected. The interchange of views, and the comparing of notes on various subjects rendered prominent by our peculiar circumstances and the character of the times we live in, cannot but be beneficial to enquiring and earnest minds. It is highly useful to call up great principles and suggest their true scope and application, to examine practical difficulties and search out suitable modes of overcoming them, to sift received opinions, and if possible separate the chaff from the wheat, to bring to light truths that have been partially thrown into the shade or wholly concealed from view—to look around and ask what of good we can borrow from others and appropriate to ourselves without impoverishing them—to search after flaws and defects in our ecclesiastical machinery that they may be removed—and to stimulate each other to greater singleness of purpose and ardour of zeal in the Master's service. "Ointment and perfume rejoice the heart, so doth the sweetness of a man's friend by hearty counsel." "Iron sharpeneth iron, so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend."

In traversing a portion of the field I have just roughly sketched, it is more than probable that I may now and then diverge from the beaten track, nor is it impossible that I may unwittingly seek to decoy you into labyrinths whither I have unconsciously wandered myself. There is no garden in this disordered world, so clean and fair, that there are not worthless and noxious weeds in it which the inexperienced may mistake for wholesome herbs; and no road so plain, but that by-paths may tempt unwary feet astray. But since in common with all *true* Protestants, we lay claim to no infallibility whether latent or active in the head, trunk, or tail of the Ecclesiastical body formed by our Pastors and Churches in this their collective capacity, no one will be overtaken with great astonishment, or overwhelmed by inconsolable grief, if there be now and then an enunciation of what will not bear the test of a rigid and impartial scrutiny. To appropriate the dedicatory words of a living poet:—

* For obvious reasons, it has been thought best to print this address almost word for word, as it was delivered, although destitute of the elaboration and finish which literary law requires in productions for the press. It is hardly necessary to state, that while it is published at the instance of the Union, the author only is responsible for the views expressed.—[W. F. C.]

"Thoughts that have tarried in my mind and peopled its inner chambers;
The sober children of reason, or desultory train of fancy;
Clear, running wine of conviction, with the scum and lees of speculation;
Corn from the sheaves of wisdom, with stubble from mine own garner;
Searchings after truth, that have tracked her secret lodes,
And come up again to the surface-world, with a knowledge grounded deeper;
Arguments of high scope, that have soared to the key-stone of heaven,
And thence have swooped, to their certain mark, as the falcon to its quarry;
The fruits I have gathered of prudence, the ripened harvest of my musings;
These commend I unto thee, O docile scholar of Wisdom,
These I give to thy gentle heart, thou lover of the right."

"I speak as to wise men, judge ye what I say." "Prove all things,
hold fast that which is good."

On glancing around upon the well-known and beloved countenances that cluster at this annual gathering, intermingled here and there with fresh and unfamiliar faces, almost the first enquiry that presents itself to the mind, is in reference to our growth and progress as a body. We have had, each of us, during the year that has passed since we met together thus, our alternate experiences of encouragement and depression, both in reference to our personal labours, and the general condition and prospects of the cause with which we are identified in this Province, and it is natural that when we assemble as at present, we should try to ascertain whether hopefulness or despondency be the more befitting state of mind. But it is not always easy to decide in view of the connexion between means and results; the duty of diligently using appointed means, and the promise of a blessing with them; whether the cheerful or the sad ought to be the preponderating influence. There is need for the exercise of a good degree of caution, lest on the one hand, a too sanguine spirit paint unreal brightness, or on the other, a tendency to gloom render the picture too sombre and forbidding.

I shall not be accused of looking too intently and exclusively at the dark side of things, if I frankly admit that our progress is not such as to put us in danger of yielding to undue exhilaration, or becoming "exalted above measure." We grow slowly. Some of our Ecclesiastical compeers outstrip us in numbers and in influence. The advocates of other systems point to these admitted facts as evidences of radical deficiency in Congregationalism, and tells us if it were the Divine plan of Church polity, as we aver that it is, it would secure a wider adoption, and wield a mightier influence. It is easy to frame a reply to such objections, and to show how all reason and analogy demonstrate the superior value and more certain permanence of that which grows slowly. We can contrast the oak with the mushroom; the volcanic island that rears itself up suddenly, and is quickly covered with a vegetation that grows all the faster for the inward heat that will one day burst forth in fury to destroy, with the island of coral, slowly built up by patient workers, and not soon clothed with verdure; the evanescent monarchies, republics and empires of "*la belle France*," with the stable institutions of Albion, the slow but giant growth of by-gone ages. We can refer to the Gospel itself, which, with all its array of evidence that it is Divine, progresses but tardily in this evil world, while human systems of religion start into sudden life, and quickly make a growth which astonishes mankind. We can urge the fact that our country is young—in the formative stage of its history—and say we are toiling at the foundations, and our work has scarcely yet risen to view.

But while we say all this, and with a certain degree of truth and propriety; while it is not difficult thus to silence objectors and set them thinking; there is need for our taking care lest we form an incorrect estimate of our true position, or make a *mérit* of feebleness, or lose a

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sense of duty in regard to zealous and responsible labour on our part. There is, after all, a degree of truth in what is said of us by the advocates of other systems, and it is not easy to persuade them, nor indeed ourselves, that all is right, though there be no more speedy advancement. The Gospel is yet to fill the earth, and he is a Christian of very inferior grade, who is not often smitten with shame and grief that its course is not more rapid. It must one day run far more swiftly, or it can never reach the ends of the earth. So of our New Testament system of Church polity. It ought to spread more quickly, and unquestionably might do so, under advantageous circumstances, and right agencies. As a matter of fact, its actual growth does not equal its apparent dimensions, for our Christianity and our Congregationalism do not keep pace with one another. There are not a few brought to God under the ministrations of our pastors, who, though Christians, and members of Congregational Churches, are not Congregationalists, for they have no intelligent acquaintance with our principles, and no special preference for them. Piety in our ranks, outstrips the form in which it is embodied, just as many a precocious intellect develops faster than the physical frame which enshrines it, like the casket the gem. It is thus doubtless to some extent with other denominations, but it is especially the case with us from causes peculiar to our system. These things being so, surely it ought to be with us a matter of deep solicitude that we have not a more manifest and distinguished prosperity.

A brief enquiry into the chief hindrances to such a prosperity, may not prove unprofitable. These exist, in the circumstances of our country—the nature of our principles—our antecedents, and ourselves.

The land which forms our sphere of operation is new. Its institutions are immature. The population is unsettled, floating and changeable. It is subjected to many moulding influences, not all of them happy and beneficial, by any means. It has reaped many of the bitter fruits of State interference in matters of religion, but has not been leavened with an evangelical and spiritual opposition to that interference. There has not been wanting strenuous resistance to the union of Church and State, but it has been too much the resistance of infidelity, indifferentism and republicanism, instead of downright, old-fashioned puritan non-conformity. The local causes that restrict Episcopacy mostly to England, and Presbyterianism mostly to Scotland, do not operate here; both therefore, have the freest scope on Canadian ground. Free Church Presbyterianism, which, as a natural result of its sacrifices for conscience sake, has become rich in the evangelical element, fills a sphere in Canada very similar to that occupied in England by Congregationalism, and presents a home to spiritual Calvinists, such as the Established Church of Scotland never furnished, and, from its connexion with the State, never could furnish. Every phase of Methodism, both British and American, exists in this Province. Nowhere in Christendom, perhaps, is the rivalry of Protestant sects greater than here. And where has Popery so fine an opportunity of developing itself, as in this country, where unprincipled politicians of all parties and of no party, vie with one another in paying honour to the image of the beast, and gilding its loathsome features and limbs, with money mal-appropriated from the public chest? What with the position of some bodies as Established Churches in the father-land—their temporary endowment here—their wide-spread influence and marvellous *prestige*—the advantages of pre-occupancy and long possession—their connexion with associations of nationality, and so forth, it is not at all surprising that we do not cope with them, much less surpass them in the race of prosperity. To all this it may be added, that perhaps there is no religious body in the land, that derives less strength from emigrating than our

own. But few English Congregationalists seek a home in Canada, and those few are thinly and widely scattered. American Congregationalists, though fired with a noble zeal to plant Plymouth Churches, and Churches of the Puritans in the New Western States, and ready even to brave the ruffian hordes by which Kansas is infested, to achieve this end, feel but little solicitude about Congregationalizing Canada. They are interested in it as an asylum for the fugitive slave, but not as a field for sowing Puritan principles. Then, the genius of our political system, and the tone of society, are inimical to Congregationalism. British, as opposed to American feeling, is assiduously cultivated, and a dread of democracy whether in Church or State, is nurtured, along with it. Our polity is known to be redolent of the democratic element—democracy is regarded as American—Anti-English, and therefore, not to be tolerated. Even American Presbyterianism can get no root in Canadian soil, though Scotch Presbyterianism thrives like a green fir tree on its native hills. Moreover, Independency has a mission in England as a checkmate and counterpoise to rampant Episcopacy, such as it cannot have here. It lays hold of, and uses with tremendous effect, an element in the British mind, which does not exist in Canada, because persecution for conscience-sake is unknown. These, and other peculiarities connected with the state of our country, contribute much to make the progress of our system, up-hill work.

In the second place, the nature of our principles themselves, must be looked at. We have no vast and towering organization, to impress beholders with our importance and strength. "The Congregational Church" is not an aggregate of all the ministers and private Christians, who, throughout the whole world, adhere to the principles of Congregationalism. We express a very simple and modest idea, when any one of us speaks of "our Church." It doesn't mean an immense confederacy, having gradations of office, pompousness of title, and splendour of array, with a Pope or Queen as its Head. It doesn't mean an extensive corporation of congregations and ministers, with a Synod or Conference as a focus of strength, and a mouth-piece of authority; it simply means, the local assembly of believers; the little band of brethren and sisters in Christ, whose hearts God hath touched with his renewing grace.

"What constitutes 'our Church'?"
 Not triple hierarchy or throned priest,
 The stolen trappings of the Roman beast,
 Altar, or well-sung creed,
 Rites, magical to save or sanctify,
 Nor ought that lulls the ear, or charms the eye.
 "A band of faithful men
 Met for God's worship in an upper room,
 On hill side, or lone glen,
 Or 'neath the midnight's starry dome,
 To hear the counsels of his holy word,
 Pledged to each other and their common Lord,
 These constitute 'our Church.'"

Like the "Kingdom of God" itself, Congregationalism "cometh not with observation." Its course in the earth, is not like the proud and public march of a worldly conqueror; but rather like the silent, unnoticed walk of Him, "whom none of the princes of this world knew, for had they known Him, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory." We derive no eclat from governmental patronage, for we refuse it in all its political forms, and the great ones of the earth prefer to lend their personal influence and patronage where they can get a fair exchange in kind, literally, a "quid pro quo." If we were a popular

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and fashionable body, merchant princes and official nabobs would seek our alliance, even though they might be sceptics at heart, and morally rotten in character and conduct. Selfish ambition has little scope for exercise in our midst. Among us, "Christian," is the "highest style of man." We have no long list of titles borrowed partly from Court and Vatican, but chiefly from Pandemonium, with which our distinguished men may disport themselves. We leave it to "the Gentiles," first to create, and then to adore, their "gods many and lords many," and are content to stand on the one level where our Master put us when he said, "all ye are brethren." Our only source of revenue is love, the secret of our strength, the faith we have in our Lord who is on high. There is too little hypocrisy about us to please a world that delights in nothing more than in masquerades. Amidst innumerable things that are hollow and only seeming, we are what we *look to be*. If love is low and faith is weak, the nakedness of the land is obvious to all beholders. We have no human watchwords that we can utter, all the more loudly, when the watchwords of the Gospel forsake our lips. We have no human name to shout forth, when our hearts no longer exalt to speak the name of Jesus. The man of Nazareth, and his disciples of old, are no more popular now than when in poverty, weariness, and toil, they walked among the living men of their day, and the building reared on "the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone," is set at naught by the master-builders of the world. We have no rites and ceremonies wherewith to weave a gorgeous robe of outward piety, in which even a skeleton form may parade itself and make a show. If real life and health do not give us strength and beauty, the shame of our nakedness and the droop of our weakness cannot fail to be seen. The gate of our fellowship does not spring open at the touch of carnal men. "Ye must be born again," bars it against the unrenewed, even as it bars heaven against the ungodly and the sinner. We treat with no idolatrous reverence the opinions of fallible men. It matters not who speaks, "what saith the Scripture," is the test question, and if they speak not according to this word, there is no light in their teachings, and no authority in their mandates for us.

Principles such as these, have no special attractions to the eye of the world, and many Christians, even, who to some extent are "carnal, and walk as men," fail to appreciate them. From this source, therefore, impediments to progress, of no slight nature, present themselves.

The next point, our antecedents, is a delicate one, and I would not venture to touch it but for two reasons; *first*, because my subject would be very incomplete without it; and *secondly*, because the liberty we have in the Gospel, is large enough to tolerate, at least a reference to it. A review of the past twenty years, nearly the whole life-time of Canadian Congregationalism, cannot fail to reveal some practical mistakes. Our fathers and brethren in England, who founded and have continued to sustain the Colonial Missionary Society, knew but little, at the outset, of the field whose waste places they sought to reclaim, and it was not surprising, if their plans were not always adapted to succeed. A better acquaintance with the country, and a juster idea of the nature of our principles, would have prevented bright visions of sturdy, self-supporting churches being indulged so suddenly, alas, to be so sadly dissipated. It was a mistake to multiply stations so largely, when the funds were limited and the work was arduous. The captain who has a slender stock of provisions, and a long voyage in prospect, must not take too many passengers, nor scatter his supplies, at first, with too lavish a hand. It was no doubt a very pleasant thing for the Committee, seated upon easy chairs in Bloomfield Street, Finsbury, to anticipate the speedy conquest of Canada—to picture to themselves vigorous Colonial

churches garrisoning the entire land, but war is a different thing when seen in the distance, from what it is in hand-to-hand encounter, and it is only little by little, that a stalwart foe will yield the ground. Too much was expected of the pioneers in the work, and under a plan of operation that put Independency in leading strings, and fastened it to a go-cart, the babe was a good while in getting the right use of its feet, and is to this day a little rickety and band-legged. To speak without a figure, whether from the battle-field or nursery, laborious and faithful pastors were hampered in their work, were discouraged at symptoms of disappointment and dissatisfaction with their labours, were sometimes tempted too successfully, to abandon fields that might ultimately have proved productive, for others that seemed to promise a more speedy harvest, but alas, were found to be infested with similar difficulties. In the earlier periods of our history we broke ground in too many places; there was too much prospecting, and too little patient running. We ought to have concentrated on a few really good points, and rendered them safe and productive, instead of attempting to occupy a great deal of ground all at once. In our over anxiety for territory, we took up stations, from which it was fallacious to expect satisfactory results, and after much expenditure of money, and a good deal of discouraging and heart-breaking toil, these stations have come to take almost a permanent place on our list as "vacant charges," and so far as Congregationalism is concerned, they might truly be written down as *hopeless*. "Not how much, but how well," ought to have been the rule of action, and instead of a large number of stations, with ministers at them just kept above the starvation point, under a policy of well-meant, though mistaken economy—fewer posts filled by strong men, well backed up, would, in the end, have yielded more satisfactory results.

There was a period in our history, when a promising future seemed to spread itself out before us. Prior to the revival of spiritual religion among our Presbyterian brethren, which resulted from the Scottish disruption, there was a field "white unto the harvest," inviting our earnest toil, but alas we were not in working order. There was not that mutual confidence and harmony, without which the movements of a small phalanx could not possibly prove effective. Misunderstandings and strifes weakened our hands, and prevented our going up to possess the land. Is there not a "tide" in the "affairs" of denominations, as well as of individuals, "which taken at the turn leads on to fortune?"

Unfortunately for us, just as the Society had come to take sounder views of things, to adopt a different mode of operation, and a wiser policy, and just when restored harmony had begun to give us strength, the rush to Australia diverted a large amount of the Missionary resources of Great Britain to that colony. Was it well to prefer the spiritual interests of transient gold-diggers, here to-day and away with their spoils to-morrow, to those of life-long settlers, who had come to Canada to make a *home* as well as a *fortune*? The adventurer has a soul to be saved, not less so has the emigrant; is there difficulty in judging which is the more hopeful subject for evangelistic labour? Far let the thought be banished that would grudge the gospel to the man *least likely* to be saved by it, but when only a limited work can be done, ought it not to be laid out to the best possible advantage? Scarcely have our good friends at home carried coals to Newcastle, by sending unusually large grants of gold to a land already full to overflowing of that commodity, than they discover through the medium of their lean Exchequer, that Canada is able to find its own Missionary funds. Under the pressure of the Eastern war, the Society's receipts fall off somewhat. The conviction forthwith arises, "that we are better able to send missionaries to England, than she is to provide them for us," and so high an authority

as the *Canadian Independent of Toronto*, echoes the sentiment, and approvingly asks, "Is not this about the fact?" Many fine things have been said, for a year or two past, both in England and in Canada, as to the ability of the Canadian Churches to support themselves. The sun of our provincial prosperity has flashed full into the faces of many, the conviction that hardly a Congregational Church in Canada needs to be fostered by British Missionary aid. If this be so, the sooner we cease sponging upon a Missionary Society, and drawing milk from the breasts of British Christians, the better. But what are the facts? Are they not these,—that though this country as a whole is rich, or at any rate fast becoming so, the land is mainly possessed by others, Congregationalism having only a small and meagre territory; that so far as our people have participated in the increase of means, they have had to meet a proportionate increase of demands, and that generally speaking, the members of our churches give a *larger* proportion of their means to the cause of God, than do the members of other bodies that surround us? Doubtless, if the general standard of giving were raised throughout Christendom, as unquestionably it *ought* to be, more might be done and would be done by the Congregational Churches of Canada among the rest, but as there are no natural laws warranting the expectation that water will rise at any one point above its general level, so it is unreasonable to expect our members to rise far above the ordinary standard of Christian liberality. The truth is, most of our Churches are weak and small; they need the sustentation of Missionary aid. Let that be withdrawn and the pastors must either abandon their fields of labour, or buckle to and make tents. If they do the former, the Churches will most likely become defunct, if the latter, they work at a disadvantage as compared with other bodies, and, however excellent the system they are seeking to establish, ministers of other denominations will easily outstrip them in the race of usefulness, from having their undivided time and energies to bestow on their fields of labour. The following language of one of our most experienced and valued Missionary pastors, given in the last Report, is doubtless only the echo of many voices on this subject:—"We could not have held up under the pressure, but for the aid the Society has so kindly and so promptly rendered. IF THAT MUST BE WITHHELD IN THESE TIMES, WE MUST WITHDRAW FROM THE FIELD."

It must be borne in mind, that it is not every man who is either able or willing to turn his head or hand toward some mode of supplementing a too limited salary. Besides, our congregations will not submit to be fed with chaff, or pulse, or crumbs. They must have the finest of the wheat, and drink honey out of the rock. The peculiar state of society *here*, demands a higher order of pulpit talent than many of our brethren in England dream of, while the simplicity of our worship, and the lack of ornamental appendages to it, makes the preaching, what indeed it ought to be, the *chief business*, and necessitates its being substantial. If the style of preaching be at all below par among us, people seem to have a wonderful faculty of finding it out, and a strange *penchant* for proclaiming it upon the house-tops, while in other not very remote quarters, inferior efforts gain at least a tolerable degree of acceptance. I have heard in our Canadian St. Paul's, things "*called sermons by an unwarrantable stretch of respect*," of which the greenest novice in our Theological Institute might justly be ashamed; but amid the imposing circumstances of Gothic architecture—stained glass—the organ's solemn peal—the dazzle of chandeliers—the rustle of gown—the dangling of bands—"our sublime Liturgy" and "our venerable Church," they passed for very decent performances. "A horse is neither better nor worse for his trappings," but many an inferior, broken-winded, and foundered animal has been thought too well of, because decked out in a

fine set of harness, while a noble animal, sound in wind and limb, has been despised, because found in a cart and poorly caparisoned.

Our ministers cannot do either themselves or their systems justice, if compelled to labour through the week for "the meat that perisheth." I have no objection to Paul's example being quoted, if Paul's circumstances be quoted too. He waived his right and privilege to "lead about a sister—a wife," and told his brethren it was "good for the present distress," that they should do the same. But were he living now, I believe that both his example and precept would be different. We live in altered times; times, in which it is not good for the *minister*, any more than for the *man* to be alone; and the cause of vital godliness must suffer in these days under any system that compels ministers to be celibates, or pinches them with the iron fingers of want if they marry. In view, therefore, of the poverty and feebleness of our Churches, the embarrassed state of the Colonial Missionary Society, and the erroneous ideas as to our ability to be independent that have become current, we are approaching a most important crisis. That Society has just closed its financial year nearly £1500 sterling in debt, and though during the year its condition was well and widely known, a *thousand British Congregational Churches* refused to touch the burden with one of their fingers, and did not contribute toward its relief or ours a single penny! It is doubtful if our brethren at home have ever with the help of a sober and correct arithmetic, counted the cost of Congregationalizing Canada. Most assuredly, the failure of their aid occurs at a very unopportune time for us. "The children are come to the birth, and there is not strength to bring forth." Our Churches can do but little more for Missions than they have been doing. Shall we then aid a few stations, and cut the rest adrift? Shall we abandon the field "*en masse*," as too expensive and difficult, and look for more promising ground whereupon to work? Shall our ministers become amphibious, and try the experiment of living in two elements, the secular and the spiritual? Or, under the plea of "enduring hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ," shall we doggedly stand out the siege, and "grow small by degrees, and beautifully less," under the combined influence of death, famine, and desertion?

Our friends in England may form large notions of our wealth and ability, from the quantity of grain which Canada exports, and from the tidings they hear of her railroad and other public enterprises, but adopting a similar mode of judgment, what are we, the juveniles, to think of the capabilities of "the old folks at home," when we see them pouring out such an infinity of treasure to fight the wars of Turkey, and at the termination of the struggle, only just waking up to feel how rich and strong they are?

If the Colonial Missionary Society *must* leave Canadian Congregationalism to shift for itself ere long, of course nothing remains but to submit and make the best of it, but without marvellous interpositions of Divine Providence, such as we have no warrant to look for, the certain result will be, a long struggle for dear life, if not speedy and utter failure.

I come now to speak of the obstacles to progress which exist, in *ourselves*. By far the most formidable of these, is *a want of spirituality*. Ours is a spiritual system, and can only be efficiently wrought by spiritual men. "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal," nor can they be wielded with vigour by carnal hands. The piety of apostolic men is alone fitted to work the polity of apostolic times. Our preaching will take its time and its results very much from the character of our personal religion. In the conversion of men, God gives the truth efficiency, but very much depends on the human instrument. Eminent usefulness has ever been found in conjunction with eminent piety. A

man of sincere and real, but not deep-toned and fervent spirituality, may be honored in occasionally bringing a soul to Christ, and so great is the vitality of Divine truth, that God has sometimes blessed it to the conversion of a sinner, when it has coldly fallen from the lips of a man without any piety at all; but can an instance of extensive usefulness be cited, in which the instrument was not distinguished for glowing zeal, strong faith, deep humility, and earnest prayer? The truth's mightiest champions, the church's brightest ornaments—her Pauls, Luthers, Knoxs, Whitfields, Wesleys, Paysons, and other precious men of God, whose names gem the pages of christian and ministerial biography, where all peculiarly holy, devoted men. It were easy to show, did time permit, how an intimate, daily walk with God, and a large supply of the spirit of Jesus Christ, connect themselves with the efficiency of a man's ministry, and enable him to lay hold of the springs of thought and feeling in the human soul; how when the face is radiant and the eye glistens with interest in Divine things, others catch the spirit which is breathed warm and fresh upon them; how faith lays hold of an unseen but almighty hand, which unlocks the avenues to the impenitent heart; how a deep, prostrating humility makes it safe for God to bless us; and how a whole-souled consecration to the Divine glory challenges not in vain the fulfilment of the promise, "Them that honour me, I will honour." But there is no need for an array of proof, or for ample enlargement on a point in reference to which all the true servants of Christ are agreed. The great matter is, to bring home to ourselves in a practical way, what we acknowledge as truth. Permit me then to ask my brethren, and myself, is our piety of such a stamp as to render it a source of surprise, that the conversions under our ministry are few and far between? Is it reasonable to expect an increase of usefulness, without that augmentation of moral power, which comes in the train of eminent holiness? Have we such realizing views of the value of the soul, and the weight of eternal things, as make us thoroughly earnest men, and render our preaching impressive as a message from God? Have we that yearning desire for the conversion of our hearers which has been truthfully called, "a passion for souls?" Have we confidence in the truths we preach, so as to expect and watch for results? Do we consecrate ourselves with an undivided continuity of attention and purpose to our momentous work, so as to be able to say with the great Apostle, "One thing I do?" Have we by faith established our dwelling-place, so high above the world; have we reached such an eminence on the rock Christ, as to be able to look down with an untroubled mind upon lower and meaner things? Or are we perplexed with anxiety about personal difficulties—harassed with the trials that grow out of the waywardness, unreasonableness, and inconstancy of our people—weighed down with the solitudes and cares incident to a scanty, pecuniary support, so that our hands are not free to labour with unshackled freedom for God? Perhaps we have been disposed to reflect upon those to whom we are warranted to look for warm and faithful co-operation, and while conscious of the imperfection of our piety, and the many defects of our ministry, to blame Christians for a want of affectionate sympathy and zealous effort. We have perhaps attributed to *this* source, much of our weakness, and want of success. But have we taken a right view of the subject? "What is the Christian Church," to use the language of another, "but the material which the plastic power of a ministry, uttering the truth and pervaded by the Spirit of God, is to mould into the purest and noblest forms?" The truth is, we greatly need *more faith*. We look at our work, and under a sense of its magnitude and numerous discouragements, our hearts sink, and our courage droops. When challenged by our blessed Master, "Believe ye

that I am able to do this?" we scarce dare to say, "Yea, Lord!" And as in the days of His flesh, our Almighty Saviour cannot do many mighty works for us, because of our unbelief. Oh! brethren, let us look at this subject until our very souls are agonized at the thought of the debilitating influence our unbelief is exerting, and let it be our daily prayer, "Lord, increase our faith!"

Next to a want of spirituality, I would specify among the obstacles to progress, a *want of denominationalism*. I know that many regard high spirituality and zealous denominationalism as incompatible with each other. There are those amongst us who are but slightly denominational, if not in reality, anti-denominational, and they take pains to have this state of feeling considered as proof of *pre-eminent spirituality*, as evidence that they at least have learned how worthless are the chaff and husks of mere outward forms. As a body, our catholicity is one of our crowning glories, but to be catholic, it is not necessary to be ashamed of our Church-polity, or indifferent to its promotion. Receiving it as we profess to do from the hands of Christ and his Apostles, the most hearty enthusiasm in regard to it would be far more becoming, than the mawkish dread of saying a word on its behalf, which has become so common. The unhappy effects of this want of denominationalism, are everywhere apparent. It impairs our vigour, hinders our unity, diverts much money, labour, and influence into other channels, encourages our members, not to say our ministers, to join other bodies in slight prettexts, and in various ways induce a contempt for principles, worthy of all reverence and love, because Divine.

There is nothing like this in our denominations. A recent writer has well observed that there is no parallel to it, except that furnished by the way, in which Englishmen take leave to speak of their native land. The Authoress of "The Englishwoman in America," speaking of the hearty enthusiasm with which Americans always speak of their country, very justly observes, "This *esprit-du-pays*, although it is sometimes carried to a ridiculous extent, is GREATLY TO BE PREFERRED TO THE ABUSIVE MANNER TO WHICH AN ENGLISHMAN ACCUSTOMS HIMSELF TO SPEAK OF THE GLORIOUS COUNTRY IN WHICH HE APPEARS TO FEEL IT A DISGRACE TO BELONG. It does one good to hear an American discourse on America, his panegyric usually concluding with the words, "WE'RE THE GREATEST PEOPLE ON THE FACE OF THE EARTH." "The analogy in matters ecclesiastical is close and strong." In Methodism and Independency, you have a very similar contrast to that just presented in the case of America and England. He is not a sound Methodist who does not regard and proclaim Methodism as "the perfection of wisdom, the glory of Christendom, the masterpiece of ecclesiastical machinery, and the wonder of the world." On the other hand, he is not a thorough Congregationalist, who has not learned to run down and berate Congregationalism, or at any rate to speak of it so apologetically and shame-facedly, that the modesty of real worth is almost sure to be mistaken for the consciousness of innate unworthiness and meanness. "Surely the opposite of vain boasting is not self-abuse! The opposite of flattery is not calumny! If generous, often to excess, to other bodies, let us at least be just to ourselves." To quote the forcible language of the Rev. John Angell James; "The light in which I wish to hold up Congregationalism, and in which I am anxious it should be contemplated, is that of an integral part of our religion, and a part which should be held, professed, propagated, and defended, as truly and entirely in the religious spirit, as the doctrines of the Gospel. It is not merely the cause of civil and religious liberty; but of spiritual religion; and though freedom may be and is of vast moment to the exercise and diffusion of it, yet it is not identical with it. We must ever consider it as a matter which apostles

taught, which the New Testament contains; which is to be transacted between the enlightened conscience and God; and which is to be received into the renewed heart, in the same exercise of faith, and at the same time, as the doctrines of salvation and the precepts of holiness. It is part of that teaching which we received from Christ as our Divine Prophet; and of that surrender which we make to him as the King of Zion; and without which we should feel that we have not received a whole Christ. This is Congregationalism, a matter of the conscience and of the closet; which we should meditate upon, and pray over, as we do other parts of our religion; which we should cherish with the fervor of a saint and hold with the grasp of a martyr."

Has there not been also a want of consistency? We have not always been true to our avowed and cherished principles. It is a time-honored custom among us, to denounce all creeds, and to maintain that the Bible is our only and sufficient standard of faith. Nevertheless, it is only to *written* creeds that we practically object, for we both have, and use, a *traditional* one. It is pretty well understood, both within and without our pale, that no minister will be very welcome or acceptable among us, unless he be, at least, a moderate Calvinist. He may possess unquestioned piety, hold evangelical sentiments, and withal be deeply enamoured of the Congregational polity; but if he cleave to the doctrinal system of John Wesley, let him not expect to find himself a home in our midst. Yet we boast largely of the freedom of thought, the liberty of discussion, and the agreement to differ, which prevail among us, while it may safely be questioned whether we have in reality more of these things than some other bodies between whom and ourselves we are fond at times of instituting invidious comparisons. Neither our Presbyterian nor our Methodist brethren, require conformity to their doctrinal standards of candidates for their fellowship, it is only of ministers that this is demanded. And, if we virtually require the endorsement of the Calvinistic system by those who become members of this Union, "what do we more than others?" The matter of doctrinal soundness could not well be left more vaguely than it is by the present constitution of our Union. "Approved character" is the only prerequisite distinctly laid down, and although "a statement of doctrinal and ecclesiastical sentiments" is expected, there is nothing indicative of what such a "statement" must be, in order to prove satisfactory.

Now, consistency demands of us one of two things; either, that we explicitly declare to the world, that we unite on the Congregational plan of polity, irrespective of doctrinal agreement, requiring only real piety and a firm holding of those fundamental truths which all evangelical bodies agree in regarding as precious; in a word, that as in the local Church, so in our Union, it is a fundamental principle with us to impose no test which may not be complied with by all sincere Christians; or else that we may lay aside our morbid aversion to creeds, and distinctly specify *how far* we regard doctrinal agreement as necessary to denominational unity.

Some say the local church is the best judge and guardian of orthodoxy, but admitting this, which, I confess I am scarcely prepared to do—admitting this for argument's sake, if a local church with its usual admixture of intelligence and ignorance, be even a *good* judge and guardian of orthodoxy, surely a body of intelligent ministers and delegates, might venture to frame some sort of judgment, and erect some sort of bulwark too. Moreover, we do not as a matter of fact, treat the local Church as reliable in this respect, for without having a definite creed, we revise its opinions and decisions, and form our own, based on "the traditions of the elders."

It is impossible for us fully to evade the charge of inconsistency in

our treatment of the creed question, which is made against us by our brethren of other denominations. Moreover, there are those connected with other bodies, who prefer our polity above all others, but are deterred from essaying to unite with us, from the uncertainty they feel as to what would be regarded as doctrinal soundness on their part. For myself, I should greatly prefer our present vague attitude, the adoption of a plan similar to that pursued by our New England brethren. If neither the Saybrook nor the Cambridge platforms please us, let us construct one of our own, and let it be known what doctrinal points we regard as essential to the union of ministers in such an ecclesiastical body as the Congregational Union of Canada. I believe that there is a legitimate use of creeds. They are mischievous when they are minute; but when they simply specify what is fundamental to brotherly confidence and co-operation, I cannot see what reasonable exception can be taken against them.

Again, we are very hostile to ecclesiastical authority, except that which is wielded by the local church, and we urge against its exercise, that there is no necessity for it, since right principle will lead to right action. "The law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient." In other bodies, provision is made for the supervision of pastoral changes, so that all things may be "decently and in order." We urge that this is an unnecessary and cumbrous arrangement, and that it puts into needless and serious jeopardy, the rights of ministers and churches. But, practically, it is too frequently the case, that "every man does what is right in his own eyes." Pastoral relations are hastily formed, and abruptly dissevered. Not satisfied with the rejection of ecclesiastical authority, we abjure fraternal counsel. The interests and rights of churches are held too cheaply. At this moment there are Congregational Churches that have been suddenly forsaken by their pastors, and in their bewilderment and desolateness they are asking is there not need of some provision against such occurrences, and they are casting wistful glances toward Presbyterianism as a system that forbids such abrupt Sunderings of the pastoral tie. What has come of the consciences of some brethren if they do not sometimes reproachingly suggest the query: "With whom hast thou left these few sheep in the wilderness?" These things bring us to shame in the eyes of other denominations, and even in the eyes of intelligent men of the world; they burlesque our principles and do us immense harm. The entire weight of our moral influence as a body ought to be directed against hasty settlements and removals, and along with our just dread of the *authoritative*, we ought to show at least a decent respect for the *advisory*.

Moreover, when churches are destitute of pastors, what is there to forbid the exercise of sympathy and concern for their welfare, by tendering them at least a partial supply? Granting that we cannot do this authoritatively, does not the very genius of our system demand that we do it fraternally? On a system permeated by love only, the members should have the same care for one another which is exhibited in connexion with systems that have in them the element of authority. It is essential to the well-being of a body, that if one member suffer, all the members suffer with it. Instead of vacant charges being left to their fate, help should be tendered them; our churches should be taught to exercise a little self-denial, to be willing to spare their pastors now and then to supply existing destitution, and not left to nurture a species of religious selfishness, which is as "rotteness to the bones." The course usually taken by us is like leaving a babe or sick person to endure a period of hardship and neglect, sufficient in *ordinary* circumstances to terminate life; but should the victim survive, it will prove itself worthy of some degree of ultimate care and attention. This mode of treating

the weak and the sick on the part of the Aborigines of our forests, is one of the most potent checks on their numerical increase, and a similar course on our part, is operating most disastrously upon Canadian Congregationalism.

Are we not inconsistent also in regard to our justly-cherished principle of purity of communion? Has there not been a want of caution and faithfulness in the organisation and composition of some of our churches? Has not our feyness and feebleness tempted us but too successfully in some instances to accept of nominal additions which have not been real accessions? Are we sufficiently earnest in insisting upon evidence of heart-renewal and peace with God in candidates for church-fellowship? Can we point confidently to the practical working of purity of communion among us, as compared with the lax course adopted by some other denominations? A spiritual increase is the only *true* increase. The elongation of a dead body is not a symptom of vitality.

Again, we are accustomed to boast of the elasticity of our system, and its capability of adopting modifications and improvements from other systems. It is excessive conservatism, ignoble prejudice, or overweening self-complacency, that makes us so chary of *doing* anything of the kind? Can we learn nothing from the exhibitions of practical common sense made by our brethren of other denominations? Beyond a disposition on the part of some among us to imitate the Episcopalians in their use of a Liturgy, we appear extremely reluctant to copy from our neighbours. Should we begin to think of manufacturing crutches if we were not growing lame? Is it certain that progress of this kind does not resemble that said to be made at times by the crab? May not a keen-eyed, right-minded observer detect in this Liturgical tendency, a movement even *worse* than that of the crab? "*Latium tendimus*"! Can we borrow nothing good of Presbytery,—of Methodism? Is the best we can do, "to marry immortality to death?" In the name of all the living members of the Congregational family, I venture meekly, yet firmly, to forbid the ban!s!

The last obstacle to progress, existing in ourselves, which I shall detain you to mention, is *want of union*. There is a great lack of this, first and foremost, in the local church. I do not refer to the existence of actual strife. Happily, there is very little of *that*. But union is not the mere absence of contention and division, it is the existence of positive and cordial Christian love. Is the prevalence of this obvious, and abounding in our midst? Or, though existing in a degree, is it latent, microscopic and homeopathic?

We could hardly expect it to be otherwise in the almost entire absence of any specific means of cultivating a warm-hearted Christian fellowship. Few of our churches have any stated meeting in which there is freedom of conversational intercourse enjoyed by the members, or an opportunity of forming and fostering a *religious* acquaintance with one another. Our prayer-meetings are too stiff and formal, and altogether there is a sad lack of the "communion of saints" among us. It is astonishing and mournful how little fellow-members of the same church (and it by no means a large one) will be found on enquiry to know of each other *as Christians*. Week after week they meet in the same sanctuary,—month after month they sit down together at the same communion-table and yet remain total strangers to each other's religious experience and history. They visit each other now and then, but talk almost wholly on secular topics, and it is well if the religious portion of the conversation be not mere tattling—if not evil-speaking. Brethren, the spiritual members of our churches are pining and languishing in religious solitude, for want of some meeting in reference to which the attendants may say,—

"Forgotten be each worldly theme,
When Christians meet together thus;
We only wish to speak of Him
Who lived, and died, and reigns for us."

Has not God in his providence taught us a lesson on this subject of late which we may not allow to pass by unheeded? The merciful and blessed work which has recently gladdened our Brantford brethren, began with a fellowship meeting. Many hearts were pressed with a burden of anxiety for a revived state of personal piety. A word of confession and desire from one and another, awakened a general response. It was like dropping a spark upon a prairie in autumn. The fire kindled—blazed—spread—and glowed; consuming the stubble of ungodliness, and leaving a clean soil for a harvest of righteousness.

We want among us something worthy of being called *Christian fellowship*. We want a knowledge of each other's hearts. Little do we or our people know, the sympathy, the fellow-feeling, the life, the warmth, the glow of high and holy friendships that might be awakened, if what the world, the flesh and the devil have succeeded in making dormant, were roused to activity and to speech by the Spirit of the living God. There's a fund of hallowed emotion among our flocks, never circulated; and the result is an appearance of spiritual poverty which does us injustice, and what is far worse, does injustice to the gracious work of God upon our hearts. We are deemed cold, and our fellowship is shunned by not a few choice spirits, who will tolerate a form of godliness which they do not approve, for the sake of the living soul that is in it, while they will turn away from another form, which, though it has lineaments of beauty, and symmetry of shape, has no glistening eye, no loving tongue, no cordial grasp, no beating heart.

There is a like defect in our *ministerial fellowship*. It lacks *soul*. It needs an effusion of the love of Christ into it. It's a fellowship of *heart-work*, rather than that of *heart-work*. What do I know of my brother's spiritual joys and sorrows,—his inward trials, sharp temptations, bitter conflicts, blessed triumphs,—or rapturous delightings of the Lord? What does he know of mine? His soul may sink in the deep waters, where the felt companionship, even of one so weak and unworthy as I am, might help to re-assure him,—or he may be exalted to a third heaven of "joy unspeakable and full of glory," whither I would give an earthly kingdom, if I had it, to accompany him; but I am profoundly ignorant of both experiences. The telegraphic communication of a true fraternal fellowship is not established between us. We are isolated and insulated both as it respects the world and the church.

Let a simple illustration,—worthy of better treatment than it usually gets,—that of being laughed at,—help our thought. Most of us have wooed and won a kindred human heart for the closer fellowship of the varying experiences that chequer our earthly life. There were indications of reciprocal attachment ere they found a vehicle of expression in language. But how different the relations established by a mutual acknowledgment of affection. And, in the intercourse of domestic life, what a magic is there in the words, so seldom spoken, yet so often yearned after, "I love you!" What though it be known and believed without the intrusion of a single doubt? The confession of it never leaps from the heart's deep fountain spontaneously and ingenuously. Without sending a thrill of delight through every fibre of one's being. And, brethren, have you never felt an inexpressible longing after the unaffected assurance from the fellow-Christian or brother minister with whom you are one in Jesus. "My brother in the Lord, I love you?" Do you never feel as if you wanted more than looks, or hints, or reserved and fettered actings out of the love you hope and believe is cherished for you by your Christian brother?

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Union is a theme on which our lips often dwell, but, brethren, if our hearts get hold of it as an experience, it will be at the cross of Christ. There, where I learn to love my "elder brother," I learn to love the whole family, the "many brethren," among whom he is "first-born." There, where I bow my own sinful and unworthy head, confess my sins, obtain mercy, find grace to help, and learn to pour out my heart to the Saviour, "whom having not seen I love;" there, where I find my brother similarly exercised, shall we both instinctively feel that we are *one*. It will need no effort to join our souls in a compact of holy fellowship, or our hands in a co-operation of earnest labor; the love of Christ will be a sweet, yet irresistible restraint to both. Oh! might but our present gathering be thus a true "*Union meeting*," with what inward resuscitation and refreshment should we go back to our respective spheres of duty, and how plainly would our people see, that we had come to them "in the fullness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ!"

And now, ere I close, need I frame an apology for the style and tenor of this address? I might have chosen a topic of a more pleasing kind, but many things are good which are not pleasant, and I much question if I could have found a subject more fitted in our present circumstances to be useful. When the night is dark, and you have a journey to perform, pyrotechnics are not what you need; the starlight, though it only glimmers, is better. Eulogy of our principles, glowing statements as to our usefulness, bright pictures of our future, might have been more agreeable, and there might have been these without the unreal or the untrue; but we are confronted with serious difficulties and if we are ever to conquer them, we must first marshal and measure them. Without vanity or assumption, may I not say, I have earned some sort of right to speak freely in reference to the defects and necessities of Canadian Congregationalism, from the fact that I have been, somewhat prominently, its champion and defender? "Faithful are the wounds of a friend, but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful." I trust that I do not over-estimate our imperfections, nor underate our excellencies and our usefulness. We have not toiled in vain these weary years during which we have been contending with the impediments that have strewn our way. Our influence has done something to leaven other bodies. Through God's grace we have turned many to righteousness. A feeble despised, unnoticed agency, has often accomplished more than was indicated by outward appearance. And it is probable much good has been effected through our instrumentality, the knowledge of which is one of the joyful surprises reserved for us in the world of vision. "Now we see through a glass darkly," and in some respects, it is well that it is so. Our vision is weak and cannot bear the full blaze of day. But while we have a care not to depreciate God's good work, it is our duty to look even discouraging facts full in the face. And we shall certainly deceive ourselves, if we do not yield to the full persuasion, that it is essential to our success for us to be "men of understanding to know what Israel ought to do," and to "discern the signs of the times;" that we must have a revived spirituality, a truer denominationalism, a more manifest consistency, a deeper devotedness, and a heartier union.

"Consider what I say, and the Lord give you understanding in all things."