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TERMS.—The New-York Evangelist will be furnished sigle subscribers for \$2.50 per annum, in advance, or \$3.00 a contrainer of the new York. minutely into the history of all these united operations, we shall find that men who are mainly Congregational in principles, have had an important influe expiration of six months. ence over them

the expiration of six months.

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NEW-YORK EVANGELIST.

From the Christian Spectator, for September, 1831. CONGREGATIONALISM.

We shall be pardoned, if we now make a few re marks upon the influence which Congregational principles have had upon the condition of the world.— The second of the lectures before us, is partly devoted to an exhibition of the influence of these principles in forming the character of our own community; ples in forming the character of our own community; in establishing the spirit of liberty, in diffusing intelligence, in promoting good morals, and extending evangelical religion in New-England. We wish to turn our thoughts to a wider sphere. And we wish a bring to view the truth on this subject, because the truth is alike honorable to the character of our fathers, and to the grace of God, which raised them up

1. The puritan Congregationalists have been the means under God, of nearly all the civil and religious liberty in the world. The Puritans who came to this country were, for more than one hundred and fif-y years, the only community, which acted upon the principle that all power originates with the people and this principle they derived from their church or jer. Their church order recognized the inherent right of all members to an equal voice, in deciding every question that concerns the common welfare. The civil constitution which was formed on board the Mayflower, before the first pilgrims landed on Plymouth rock, was based upon the principle that all men are naturally free and equal. Those colonies which first formed a republican government at the revolution, only adopted the principles which had already been in practice, for more than 150 years, among the Puritans. Mr. Hume repeatedly declares, that the English owe the whole freedom of their constitution to the Puritans. And if he had not been constrained by the force of evidence to admit so unwelcome a truth, it were an easy matter to prove the same thing now, to the satisfaction of any candid mind.*

We need not ask where there are to be found free institutions on earth, which are not derived from those of England and the United States. In the eloquent language of the Edinburgh Review, concerning the Puritan struggle for liberty under the English com-

"The destinies of the human face were staked on the same cast with those of the English people.— Then were first proclaimed those mighty principles, which have since worked their way into the depths which have since worked their way into the depths of the American forests, which have roused Greece from the slavery and degradation of 2000 years, and which, from one end of Europe to the other, have kindled an unquenchable fire in the hearts of the oppressed, and loosed the knees of the oppressors with a strange and unwonted fear."—Ed. Rev., August,

In regard to religious liberty, we find the true principles of Christian toleration first developed in the writings of Milton and other Puritans, in the time of the commonwealth. And though there were things done by the early governments of New-England, which none at the present day approve or justify; yet we desire it to be borne in mind, that they were done by the civil power, not by the churches; and that the object was the preservation of the public peace, no the enforcement of uniformity in religion by civil law. We are persuaded, indeed, that the more any candid person enters into the spirit and design of the pilgrims, and the more fully he realises the difficulties of their situation, the more forbearing will be his censure of their conduct towards the Quakers and Bar tists.

At any rate, such measures are proved to have been contrary to the genius of the people, for they were very soon repealed. We ask for another instance in that age, where intolerant laws were repealed by the genius of the people. And we present these colonies and states as the only instance on record, where the great body of the people have repealed ecclesias-tical burdens from a very small minority. In Virginia, a very large body of Presbyterians were pelled to pay for the support of the church of England, up to the time of the revolution. The same is true of New-York. In Connecticut, Episcopalians were exempted from taxation in the year 1721, when there were only three Episcopal congregations in the

colony.
2. The rule of church fellowship, which Congregationalism imposes, requires the acknowledgment of all as Christians, who give credible evidence of piety: it recognizes the church state and regulation, in all which give credible evidence that they are formed for the objects of the gospel. The Old South Church in Boston, at its formation, expressly covenanted "to hold, maintain and promote fellowship and communion with all the churches of saints."-This is the true principle of Congregationalism. If Congregationalists become sectarian, they depart from principles. They are bound to recognize the right of other churches, to regulate their own internal polity according to their several views of right. And we can lawfully use no other weapons than reason and argument, against those methods of church procedure which we consider either unscriptural or inju-

Our doctrine of the equality of all churches, pledg es as to extend fellowship to all bodies, large or small, which affor lus reason to believe that Jesus Christ recognizes them as Christian churches. In strict conformity to this principle, we believe the common form of invitation to visiting brethren, at the Lord's supper, is to invite all members, in regular standing in Christian churches, to unite in this act of communion. The extent or intimacy of this fellowship with other churches, corresponds, of course, with the more or less perfect accordance of doctrine and discipline. Thus we see that the Congregationalists are so much united with Presbyterians, as to be habitually confounded with them. In England, where the Con gregationalists and Baptists stand on the same foot ing, the degree of intimacy is very close. It is not unusual for ministers and churches to act together, as cordially as if there were no difference at all. Often they worship in the same meeting-house. Sometimes feeble churches of the two denominations, unite in opporting the same minister. There are many cases

re Baptist churches employ Congregational pasnd Congregational churches Baptist pastors .stinctive principles," therefore, which hold so argument of so much weight in favor of in his aloof from other sects, never ought to opeto the minds of Congregationalists at all. Con-sequently, there is no ground on which the churches against Christian brethren, of any name, so

fects of discipline in the churches. The proper end of christian discipline, is the maintenance of a system not as they appear worthy of the name. has regationalism, therefore, recognizing the equalof moral influence over members of the church, by the execution of Christ's laws. Merely to relieve the execution of Christ's laws. Merely to relieve the church from unworthy members, is only a secondary object, or rather, it is one way in which discipline seeks its end. We should not say that the end of surgery is to cut off diseased linbs. The excision is, in fact, the opprobrium of the art, and is used only because the resources of the practitioner are exhausted without removing the disease. The efficacy of disciplines are total in pregrad to individual cases by the on. It naturally leads its votaries to unite ill other Christians, in any measures for the ad-

The great body of Baptist churches, in this country, are consulting alists, i. e. they act upon the principle that all church exists are to be determined by the brotherhood, and that the credes are related and bound to sach other, but that no ecclesical ordy has power over a church. All the influence, therefore, that government, in favor of liberty, is the influence of congressional between the communication of the communicat

Mr. Editor—The following circumstances, which occurred in the of Virginia, relative to Mr. Jefferson, were detailed to Christ, in the conscientiousness of the people, in the prevailing conviction that the rules of Christ's house

Christ, in the conscientiousness of the people, in the Burry of Virginia, relative to Mr. Jefferson, were detailed to Bufer Andrew Tribble, about six years ago, who since died warman ty-two or three years old. The facts may interest some died warman ty-two or three years old. The facts may interest some died warman ty-two or three years old. The facts may interest some fixed a special sold of the facts and interest some of the more of the facts and the sold of the facts and the facts and the sold of the sold

NEW-YORK, SATURDAY, AUGUST 15, 1835.

thus unite, we give up nothing, we compromise no let him be unto thee as a heathen man, and a publi-principle, we hazard no interest. And if we inquire can." Let whoever will administer discipline, they

must speak the voice of the church, or they speak to the winds. Now a minister, or a consistory, or ses-sion does not in fact, speak the voice of the church, unless they speak just as the church thinks. And however easy it may be for the church to delegate to their virtual representatives the power to act for them, we apprehend it is difficult in this country, to persuade the people at large to let their ecclesiastical rulers

We instance the London missionary

and tract societies, the American Bible and tract so-

cieties, the American Board of Missions, etc. In fact, every truly Congregational institution for the ad-

shall unite with perfect catholicism in promoting the

kingdom of Christ, they will of necessity unite on pure Congregational ground; i. e. the equality of churches, and their right of self-government. And

we venture to predict, moreover, that such a union

will be mainly produced by the operation of another Congregational principle; viz: that which gives to

the people, in contradistinction to ecclesiastical rulers, the right of deciding how church affairs shall be con-

gin; i. c. it came from the hearts of men, who were mainly Congregationalists in principle.

doxy, but the Bible. Said Mr. Robinson to his church, when they left Holland to come to America, "'Tisan article of your covenant, that you be ready to receive

whatever truth shall be made known to you from the

written word of God. 'Tis not possible the Christian

world should come so lately out of anti-Christian darkness, and that perfection of knowledge should

break forth at once." Congregationalists have always felt themselves at full liberty, and indeed required, to employ their minds in scarching the scriptures to form opinions of their own, original and independent, con-

cerning the truths there taught us. In the admission

of church members, and the recognition of ministers

the practice has always been, first to ascertain their

views by examination, and then to judge in each case by itself, whether the person holds truth enough to be

received. In admitting members into churches, there

is indeed, usually, a consent to a confession of faith. But in the great body of the churches, these confes-

sions are designedly so brief and general, as not to exclude any person, who, with the Bible in his hand, believes enough of it to save his soul.

In later days, it is true, that many of our indi-vidual churches have undertaken to make their con-

fession of faith so explicit us to be a barrier against heterodoxy. But it is questionable whether such attempts are likely to prove effectual, and they are always liable to be so made as to hinder some Chris-

tians from their just privileges, or to prove a snare to weak consciences. The idea that a man is to be

deemed sound, increly because he assents to an ortho-dox confession of faith, has certainly no warrant in

the Bible. And abundant experience proves, that any one who is unsound, can, by some mental evasion,

shape his conscience to adopt an orthodox creed, when it suits his convenience. The true rule is, to make

it suits his convenience. The true rule is, to make a confession so general, that, while it serves as a pledge of union, it will not embarrass any true Chris-

whether he believes enough to be entitled to fellow

ship, and there is little room for deception or imposi

real security against the reception of heterodox be

The Westminster and Savoy confessions, and the

thirty-nine articles of the Church of England, have been repeatedly approved by our synods and councils as containing a system of doctrine, in general, agreeable to the word of God. But the churches have

or orthodox, if found there, or denounced as erroneou simply because it contradicted the confession.

This is a point on which Congregationalists have

reneral accordance in sentiment, can form a bond of

pleasure, reserving, of course, to other churches the

right of withdrawing fellowship from them, if they

alter so as to renounce the essentials of the gospel.

And all that synods and councils were ever empower-

ed to do, was to set forth to the world the then preva-

at the time that all the churches and all the members

were agreed in the whole confession. But they were

agreed in recognizing it, as in the main conformable

Being at perfect liberty to investigate for themselves

our ministers and members have not employed their

best strength in defending received doctrines and modes of expression, but have carried their inquiries

orward into the boundless field of inspired truth.—

We believe that nearly all the advance which has

ocen made in two hundred years, in regard to the

Edwards for their advance in knowledge. If smaller

men disown the obligation, it proves nothing as to the

present case. Indeed there are no churches but the

Congregational, in which a man can examine every

subject of religion, and yet have no fear that he shall

forfeit his standing, as long as he does not make ship-

wreck by putting away faith and a good conscience

ble to support systems; but we see not how they can

ever come to the proper study of theology, unless they adopt the essential principles of Congregationalism,

requiring that every man should adopt opinions of his own. Let us ask, what have other churches done

own times, Stuart, Gibbs, and Robinson have done more to promote the profitable study of the word of

God, than all the divines of the English and Scotch

lid to Edwards and Bellamy, in doctrinal discrimi

4. We cannot but regard the Congregational sys-tem as the only one which can secure the proper ef-

pline is tested, in regard to individual cases, by the skill and faithfulness with which the private and

preliminary measures are used to reclaim the offender.

Its efficiency in regard to its great end, is found in

the influence which it imparts to the laws of Jesus

owards carrying forward the reformation?

indeed study systems, and may study the Bi

lent belief of the churches. It was not even pret

ailed us on th

o the word of God.

Men may

nations.

Those who come will then have formed onin

vancement of Christianity is, by its very nature, a union institution, open to the influence, and under the control, of all bodies of Christians, just in proportion as they contribute to its support. And if the time shall ever come, when all Christians and all churches Our congregational system of discipline arrives by n direct road, at the point which other modes reach circuitously, and by implication. It speaks the voice of the church, and always speaks just as the church thinks. It is an expression of the sentiments and convictions of the whole body. As such, it has a force in honoring Christ's laws, and in rousing the conscience of an offender, which other modes have vainly essayed to obtain by imposing forms, solemn warnings, and dreadful denunciations. If any proof is required, we appeal to the puritans. Without vaunting, we may appeal likewise to our own churchducted. The people are always in favor of union and fellowship; and they will carry it into effect just as far and as fast as their power is felt in the management of affairs. In fact, we may appeal to history, that every proposal for Christian union, that was perfectly equal in its operation, is of Congrational origin; is it come from the hearts of men who were es of the present day, and we are willing they should be compared with any other body of professing Christians of equal extent, and equally exposed to worldly influences. And we are persuaded that the solemn forms and denunciations, with which other churches have accompanied excommunication, have weakened the power of discipline, as well as destroyed its strictness, just as capital punishment for petty offen-3. Congregationalism is friendly to unrestrained theological inquiry and research. These churches have never recognized any standard or test of orthoses, destroys the authority of the laws. It is plain, that such discipline must be effectual, where there is in the church sufficient religious principle and intelligence to secure its execution. Any other mode of discipline then, just purports to be a substitute for religious principle and intelligence in the church. Other communities may admit, if they please, their incompetency to govern themselves. We hope the sons of the puritans, with their sound doctrines, their able ministry, their universal education, and their re-

> it is less satisfactory.
>
> And what is the difficulty of maintaining discipline And what is the difficulty of maintaining discipline in the simple congregational way, pointed out by our Lord in Matt. xviii. 15—17? There is none, certainly, where the church are friendly to strict discipline. And in any case, it is only the difficulty of convincing the people that the offender deserves censure, or that it is their duty to execute the laws of Jesus Christ. Until this is done, discipline under any sys-

vivals of religion, will never see a necessity for engaging ecclesiastical courts of any kind to relieve

them from the burden of self-government. Indeed, we are strongly disposed to question the utility of the modern improvement of a standing committee of dis-

cipline. It may render church business easier. In

like manner, dispensing with trial by jury, would render civil business easier. But in all difficult cases

tem, is powerless. It is seriously objected against our mode of church discipline, that it makes no provision for re-examin-ing the decision of the church, and revising it, if it is wrong. But this is no more than is true in regard to every other mode. Where an appeal is allowed, it is only an appeal to what is held to be the *church* in a larger sense, presbyterial, or synodical, or diocesan, or the like. And then if the final tribunal decides wrong, there is no remedy. You may have as long a series of appeals as is allowed in the presbyterian church, first to presbytery, then to synod, and finally to general assembly; and still you are liable to a wrong decision; the more liable, the farther the judges are removed from the knowledge of the case. But our system has an advantage which is peculiar tian. Then give a faithful personal examination of every candidate, to see what he does believe, and It gives to the final tribunal, the church, the aid or advice, from the concurrent wisdom and piety of the neighboring churches. In all cases of difficulty, where the church feel at a loss, or where their decision does ions of their own. After all, faithful preaching and revivals of religion, furnish the church with the only not give general satisfaction, and where a single in-dividual feels grieved by their acts, it is usual to re-quest the advice and assistance of several neighbor-ing churches. These send their pastors and some ing charenes. These send their pastors and some judicious members, and they together form a council, who hear the whole case, and then, after prayerful consideration, give their opinion as to what ought to be done. With the aid of this advice, the case comes again before the church for final decision. And though never recognized them at all, as standards of doctrine, in such a sense, that a sentiment was to be held true, these councils claim no authority whatever, yet it rarely happens that a church acts contrary to the opinions of such a body of advisers. Though it is perfectly competent for them to reject the advice of council, yet in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, been extensively misunderstood and misrepresented. this "result" is final. The church may reject the result without any breach of fellowship; unless it is Methodist and Episcopal preachers have continually lone under circumstances which render it proof of a ery word of these confessions, and that when we disorderly spirit. In that case, the neighboring churches might individually feel bound to remonoreach any thing inconsistent with them, we contra-lict our own profession. They seem to have a diffistrate with the contumacious church, and even withulty in understanding how Christian esteem, and a hold fellowship, on the ground that their conduct ren-dered them unworthy of the name of a Christian union so strong as exists among the Congregationalists, and yet each church be at liberty to form, alter, church. But the mere act of rejecting a result of council, is not in itself, a ground of censure. Acor abolish its own creed at pleasure. But such is the fact. Our churches, individually, have always been cording to our view, a church has no right to bind itself before hand, to submit to the award of a counperfectly free to alter their formulas of doctrine at ill, right or wrong. The final responsibility rests on the church. And if they do what to their own minds

hield them from guilt. The solemn responsibility of self-government, thus esting upon each separate church, has in itself a pow rful tendency to produce that general stability character, seriousness, carefulness, independence of opinion, and intelligence on public affairs, which minently distinguish the people of New-England.— It has been observed by travelers, that the French people, since the revolution, are no longer distinguish ed by their levity of spirit. The solemn boon of self preservation and liberty, is fast forming the nation to a greater severity of character—thus, by another experment, unfolding to us the true cause of the sternness of our Puritan fathers. more rational enjoyment than freedom and intelligreat doctrines of religion, has been made by Congregationalists, or those who are essentially such. Fuller and Scott freely acknowledge their indebtedness to gence, will of course regret the change. The st persons may rail at the sternness of the Puritans.

s manifeatly wrong, the advice of a council will not

This acting together, this mutual responsibility and watchfulness, and care; this "bearing one another's burdens," forms the only effectual bond of union among the members of a church. Let the care of the members only be in fact—what it is in the theory of other forms—thrown upon the officers of the church, and there is nothing left to attach the individual members to each other. Our plan, on the other hand, lays the care upon the shoulders of every individual. Such responsibility creates a demand for the exercise of piety and intelligence; and this demand is the onmeans producing the supply. Spirituality, zeal the purity of the church, brotherly watchfulness, fidelity, and love, require exercise to make them grow. While other forms treat the people as children, incaable of self-government, they take the very course o keep them always children.

Whatever arguments are advanced against selfchurches together; and the English theologians of the present day, are going to school to American Con-gregationalists in biblical studies, just as their fathers government in the churches, the same may be urged, and with the same pertinency, against civil liberty. Indeed, every thing we have ever heard against Conregationalism, seems almost as if it had been taken word for word, from the writings of the enemies of

popular freedom and equal suffrage. 5. It has been a standing objection against Congregationalism, that it furnishes no barrier against the introduction of Unitarianism. In fact, those who can see only a single point of a subject, need only to be pointed to Boston and Massachusetts, to be filled with dread of Congregationalism. We do not doubt, that many good men among the Presbyterians, are truly alarmed at the tapid spread of what they call "Congregational predilections," in their body, as the sure precursor of a relapse into Unitarianism. The Episcopalians are still louder in their boasts, that the liturgy forms the only sure barrier against heresy. And the Jesuits point to us all, amidst our multiplied divis-And ions, and call upon us to return to the holy mothe church as our only security.

The fact is admitted, that about one hundred and fifty congregations in Massachusetts have become Unitarian, and employed Unitarian ministers. But we say, in the first place, that Congregationalism is not the only form of government which has left the doors open for error to creep in. What will Episcopalians say to Dr. Scott's account of the prevalence of Unitarianism among the English clergy, at the time when he commenced his ministry? In the year 1772, a petition was presented to the British par ment, signed by about two hundred and fifty clergy men of the Episcopal church, who held Unitarian sentiments, praying for relief from subscription to the thirty-nine articles. And when the petition was re jected, these Unitarians neither left the church, nor ment of the church. To this our Savior himself refers it, when he says, "If he will not hear the church, ing, subscribing the articles, and reading the liturgy,

and employing their ecclesiastical immunities, as before, notwithstanding their public declaration of Unitarianism. Is Episcopacy or a liturgy, then, a preservative against Unitarianism?

At the restoration of Charles II., the Presbyterians in England lost the civil ascendency, which they had usurped over their Congregational brethren, and were reduced to the same lovel as discourse. Both forms

reduced to the same level as dissenters. Both forms stood on equal grounds. Since that time one hundred and seventy-eight orthodox Congregations have become Unitarian, of which from six to ten were Con-gregational, a few were Episcopal and Methodist, but the great body were Presbyterian. Perhaps this is the only case in which the two forms have had a trial on the same territory, and on equal terms, and we see the result.

It is but a short time since a large number of Presbyterian ministers in Ireland, who had acknowledged byterian ministers in Ireland, who had acknowledged the confession of faith, and the assembly's catechism, and were in as regular standing as any Presbyterian minister could be made according to "the standards," were inquired of by the synod, whether they believed in the doctrine of the trinity; they refused to answer, but withdrew. Not a single Congregational church in Ireland, we believe, has become Unitarian. There is no doubt, that a large body of Unitarians

are found in the Scotch national church. Men of like principles with Robertson the historian, and other advocates of lay theology, are still more numerous, and hold the power of that church; while Dr. Chalmers, himself a Presbyterian, says of the Scotch Congregationalists, that they form "the purest body of Christians in the United Kingdom."

If Congregationalism leads to Unitarianism, how

does it happen that Unitarianism has made so little progress in Connecticut, New-Hampshire, Vermont, and Maine? This of itself proves, that the origin of Unitarianism in Massachusetts, is to be sought in something else than the form of church government. We believe that all who know any thing on the sub-ject, agree in tracing that heresy to the unhappy mea-sure introduced by the synod of Boston in 1663.— This synod recognized all baptized persons as mem-bers of the church—a principle now laid down and contended for by most Presbyterian writers. Of course it was inferred, that all such might bring their children to be baptized, without making a personal profession of saving faith. This practice, we believe, is still prevalent in many parts of the Presbytcrian church, and we know has been given up in some with reluctance, through an influence from New-England. At the same time, the practice was adopted, of not constrain ing these members to come to the Lord's table, though they were acknowledged as members, and had thei children baptized. This too is a Presbyterian practice to this day. And this is the noted "half-way covenant," which wrought such mischief among the New-England churches, in the days of our fathers.— We must therefore trace the declension and heresy of Massachusetts, not to their mode of government, but to the introduction of some pure Presbyterian prin

iples and practices.

We go farther, and aver that it is Congregational ism alone, which has prevented the declension from spreading further, and is now rapidly restoring primitive truth and order. The whole history of the de-clension, shows that the seat of the mischief was in Boston. Its spread was by the influence of a wealthy and refined city upon the dependent country. Nothing shows this more satisfactorily than the cir cumstance of its being bounded by the lines of the state on every side. The manner in which Unitari anism has generally begun in the country towns through the influence of the merchants, lawyers, and representatives, who were in the habit of frequenting Boston, is another proof that Unitarianism has been spread by the influence of the metropolis. It is a point now conceded, that the body of ministers and churches in and around Boston, became lax and even em-braced Unitarian sentiments, a considerable time before they avowed their departure from the ancient faith. Those who remember the course of thing from 1805 to 1815, know how exceedingly difficult i was to prove this defection, in regard to individuals. Indeed, we doubt whether a charge of heresy could have been fastened ecclesiastically upon a single min-ister, up to the time when the extracts from Belsham's history were re-published at Boston. How then would Presbyterian government have kept out the evil?

We go farther. Let us suppose that the churches of Massachusetts had been Presbyterian, with all that sameness of character which exists among her population; and that Boston had been to them, what Philadelphia has been to the General Assembly, the place of all meetings, the head-quarters of learning, and the residence of those who transacted the business of the church-the Beston Presbytery, standing in the Metropolitan relation, so long claimed for that of Philadel phia. This Presbytery, we see, would have become Unitarian without any possibility of detecting the er-ror, and would have dispersed its ministers and its principles industriously through every Presbytery, and and contentions crushed by authority. This is much would have gained an influence, through the forms of church polity, that nothing human could counteract. Geneva, at this moment, furnishes us with a living example of the effect of Presbyterianism, in establishing Unitarianism beyond the power of removal.— But in Massachusetts, happily, there are no difficulties in the way of reform, excepting those which grow ou of the native opposition of the heart. Only the gospel, and have revivals of religion, to both of which the church organization furnishes no barrier, and reform must triumph. We wonder it has neve occurred to politicians, both in church and state, to consider how every thing human naturally inclines to evil rather than good. The stronger then you make , the more powerful will it be against the good. The whole of this immense convulsion, which now agi tates the church and the world, is a struggle of light and liberty against human institutions, which were ormed to protect the people against themselves. In New-England, every kind of church reform is easy ecause whatever recuperative power may be brough into exercise, there is no organization to counteract it The recovery which is now so happily advancing i Massachusetts, might have cost imprisonment as in

In fact, the impotence of both the Episcopal and Presbyterian form of government, to keep out truth is fully proved. In regard to the latter, at least, we must be allowed to say, that in every instance abroad where it has been brought in contact with Unitarian ism, it has yielded to the infection. This is found true in Holland, Geneva, France, England, Scotland and Ireland. We have no instance of the power o either form to keep out error. And we are yet with out examples to prove the possibility of a reform in a Presbyterian body deeply infected with Unitarianism. But Congregationalism has limited the mischief, and blessing of Heaven, without any aid of now, by il human safeguards, is rolling back the waves of error,

and will probably soon be free from danger. 6. While urging the claims of Congregationalism to Christian respect, on the ground of the fruit it has produced, we ought not to overlook the spirit of ex- managing the cumbrous produces, we degin not to be before a spirit of ex-pansive benevolence, which has been cherished in these churches. The whole system of extended benevolence now in operation in this country, commenced in these churches, or with men whose characteristics system, and the principle funds which have been expended in this cause have been raised here. In regard to domestic missions, we can point our Presbytean brethren to four hundred of their own churches. planted and sustained by the benevolence of the Conwe see those who were educated in New-England, uniformly bearing a leading part in every operation of

We have been struck, too, with the different motives which prompt to contributions for religious pur poses. Congregationalists not being an exclusive organized body, have none of those principles which lay the foundation of an appeal to sectarian attach ments, as a motive to charity. The only appea

* Timothy Dwight Williams.

which can affect them, is, that souls are perishing for terians, Associate Reformed Presbyterians, besides want of the gospel. The object held out to their the Reformed Dutch, and the True Reformed Dutch view, is the extension of Christianity, the diffusion of when it is extension of contributing the extension of knowledge, the conversion of sinners, the establishment of Christian churches. Among all other classes, we hear men urged to contribute for the sake of establishing our church, or because other denominations of the contribution of t ations are occupying the field, or because it is a shame that our whole church does so little for its own extension, or because missions will do so much towards building us up at home. In all these cases, it would seem as if the idea of sectarian enlargement, if not the predominant consideration, was thought in-dispensable to the efficacy of other motives. Perhaps there is not a more happy evidence of the apostolical character of Congregationalism, than the fact thati t furnishes noground for such appeals to party spirit.— It has nothing to talk about but the simple work of Christ.

The same character of public spirit, and judicious zcal for the general good, has ever marked the children of the puritans, in their secular transactions.—Witness their school system. Witness their efficiency in the war of the revolution; and the influence they exerted in shaping the operations of the present government of the United States. Witness the fact, that politicians, either in church or state, who were bent on self-aggrandizement, or devoted to party purposes, or opposed to the too rapid progress of improve-ment, have always been compelled to vilify New-England; shewing by their earnestness how much they stand in awe of a handful of educated people, whose birthright it has ever been, that each individual is free to think and act for himself.

7. As another proof of the influence of our institutions, we may observe the want of a clannish or local spirit, among the emigrants from New-England.—
They have never exhibited any thing like a bigoted adherence to any one set of institutions. Every where they assimilate to the churches and people where they reside, and become amalgamated with those around them. In our large towns, for instance, all other nations have societies designed to cherish the patriotic attachments of the members. A "New-England Society" is always a dragging concern, without life, because without any thing in the habits of its members to cherish it. A New-England man, when he removes, carries his home with him. All others eave their homes behind.

We doubt not that this characteristic of our people is a leading reason why our Congregational institu-tions have not been extended by the multitude of our people who have emigrated to other parts of the country. Wherever New-England people have gone their influence is felt in favor of public improvement and good order. But it is a remarkable fact, that they have no where, to any considerable extent, estab lished those principles of Christian liberty, for which their fathers first braved the terrors of the wilderness. A primary reason, we take it, is, that in the settled parts of the country, they have always been ready to tall in with establishments already existing. In New-York, New-Jersey, Pennsylvania, Virginia, etc., they have always found Presbyterian churches differing so little from their own in regard to doctrine, spirit, and external powers, that they have overlooked the diversity in the principles of church government. Early in the history of western emigrations and western domestic missions, a plan was also adopted by the Pres-byterian General Assembly and the General Association of Connecticut, by which Presbyterians and Congregationalists were effectually amalgamated in the new settlements. This plan places the two classes on equal terms, in union churches, securing to each a mode of discipline corresponding to their principles, and receiving the delegates of Congregational churches, on the same terms as ruling elders, in all their ecclesiastical assemblies. When we onsider how feeble and scattered the Presbyterian churches were when this rule was adopted, and how nuch of their present growth and compactness has arisen from the operation of this compromise, we confess our amazement at the ground taken in the General Assembly, of refusing to admit committee men, as commissioners, and thus setting aside a sol-emn compact and heaping obloquy on the means of their own elevation.

Another reason why Congregationalists have been object of ministers is the acquisition of church power, state of declension, when evils arise in the churche and there is a want of zeal among the members, it is natural for good men to desire some arm of power, by which matters can be set right, errors exterminated easier than reformation, much more speedy in its operation than the slow process of argument and persuasion, which is needful to bring the whole body into a state of health sufficient for the maintenance of Christian purity. They forget, indeed, that by substituting authority for religious principle, they only cleanse the outside of the cup, making the church appear more holy than it is, and thus prevent it from showing, either to the pastor or to other churches how much it needs their counsels and their prayers.

We have sufficiently accounted for the fact, tha ministers, even in New-England, should be favorably nclined to Presbyterianism, and that the great num ber of those who have emigrated, should fall in with it and lead the churches to embrace it. Thus the Christian energies of New-England have been expended in planting the gospel, and have saved our western country from Popery; while the churches there, which are modeled after those of the pilgrims, are so few and scattered, that they have hardly name to live, and are never reckoned in the enumer tions of our religious census.

We do not doubt that the arrangements, by which all these churches have been thrown under the power Lausanne, perhaps bloodshed, if the churches had been under Presbyterial government.

In fact, the impotence of both the Episcopal and ty of the churches, and the enlargement of the Re leemer's kingdom. But, for ourselves, we canno doubt that they originated in an error of judgment. The compromise has never produced peace; for the time has never been, when New-England doctrine and New-England men were not subjected to obloquy and jealousy among rigid Presbyterians. It has do nothing towards preserving the purity of the We have seen that no church order whatever is avail able for this. Nor are we satisfied that it has facilitated, in any considerable degree, the establishment of Christian institutions in the newly settled parts of the country. On the contrary, a large share of that intellect and energy, which ought to have been employed in diffusing the gospel, has been used up in

machinery of church polity, or in contending for the first principles of Christia liberty. When we look at the embarrassments which our brethren have suffered from their ecclesiastica government, at the little they have consequently acters were formed here. Nine-tenths, at least, of all the money that has been raised in the United States for foreign missions, has been contributed in Newfor foreign missions, has been contributed in New-England; and a large share of the remainder by men educated here. The American Tract Society was transferred from New-England, and is indebted for the most of its efficiency to New-England men. The Sunday School Union was planned in New-Haven by a pious brother lately deceased.* The system of charitable assistance for pious indigent young men, who are studying for the ministry is a New-England our wish, that our fathers of the last generation had been more enlightened, and more firmly who are studying for the ministry is a New-England our wish, that our fathers of the last generation had been more enlightened, and more firmly who are studying for the ministry is a New-England our wish, that our fathers of the last generation had been more enlightened, and more firmly whole love the principles of our forefathers a large majoried to the principles of our forefathers, a large majori ty of the churches now Presbyterian, would have been formed on the puritan model. Assembly would have controlled only the affairs of a small sect. The janglings, and usurpations, gregationalists of Connecticut alone. And all over jealousies, which agitate the minds and exhaust the our country, and in all denominations of Christians, energies of all those ministers and churches two or three months every year, would be unknown. We are persuaded that the amount of moral power in the hurches would have been doubled. The threats of livision, also, would be unheard. For we believe he Congregational churches constitute the only body of churches, of equal extent, since the reformation, which have walked together for two centuries without division. We look at Presbyterianism to see what a division. is its power of securing union; and we find an enu-meration of sects, Presbyterians, Cumberland Presby-

terians, Reformed Presbyterians, Associate Presby-

the Reformed Dutch, and the True Reformed Dutch churches, all Calvinistic Presbyterian, in their general principles, and differing from each other, only as being organized into different and often bitterly hostile squadrons. Truly, if Congregationalism be a rope of sand, it is adamant compared with the substitute pro-

posed for our adoption.

If any should ask how the mistake of our fathers, in establishing Presbyterianism among their emigrating brethren, is to be remedied, we truly confess ourselves unable to answer. We have thrown out these remarks, for the purpose of inquiry, and courting investigation. We know that our people will never consent to place their civil rights at the disposal of others; and we can account for the inconsideration with which they surrender the management of church affairs into the hands of bishops, conferences, church affairs into the hands of bishops, conferences, church sessions, and presbyteries, only as showing the low value which is placed on Christian privileges, compared with civil rights, and the criminal remissness of ministers in understanding and teaching the true principles of ecclesiastical procedure. Let there be light thrown on the subject, and let the churches consider their rights and the representations to which there sider their rights and the usurpations to which they are subjected, and we cheerfully leave the designation of the remedy to the God of our fathers, who, in re-turn for the self-devotion and zeal of the pilgrims for church order, gave them here in the wild inestimable boon of Congregationalism.

ADDITIONAL REMARKS-1835. The concluding paragraphs of the Ussay are left as they

were written four years ago. Time has shed some addi-tional light upon the condition and prospects of those sons of New England who have united with the Presbyterian church. And perhaps it has helped towards answering the question proposed above, "What shall be done in the case."

The fathers of the Presbyterian church acted on the principle, that the Presbyterians and Congregationalists of America are virtually one denomination. Dr. Miller, in his life of Dr. Rodgers, shows thatthe early Presbyterian churches were formed by a union of emigrants from New England, Old England, Scotland and Ireland, that many of the earliest ministers were from New England, and the churches from the beginning gladly received members and called ministers from New England, as freely as from Scotland. They all, or nearly all, became Presbyterians, or managed their church affairs in the Presbyterian mode. But when the emigrants from New England began to swarm, as they did about 40 years ago, and the Congregational churches of Connecticut took systematic measures for supplying the new settlements with the gospel, and the prospect was that Congregationalism would be established all over the west, the General Assembly begged that an arrangement might be made to continue this unity, and proposed a Plan of Accommodation, which would neet the views of those who preferred the Congregational mode. This was acceded to by Connecticut, and for nearly 30 years the whole energies of the Congregationalists, in and out of New England, were engaged in building up the Presbyterian church. This was done in perfect good faith, and at the solicitation of Presbyterians. The compact, or Plan of Union was entered into, on terms of perfect reciprocity, the two contracting parties standing on equal ground. But a few years ago, after the Presbyterian church had become large and strong, a claim was set up that these "Union" churches were not to be regarded as standing on equal ground with their sister churches, that their connection at all was a mere matter of sufferance for which they were indebted to the clemency of the Presbyterian church, and that the Presbyterian church always intended the arrangement should be temporary, and should last only until their foolish prejudices against Presbyterianism could be worn out or got round; and that at any rate, a bare tolerance was all they could expect to receive, and this to be accompanied with continuil sneers and reproaches because they were not regular Presbyterians. Step by step, the privilege of being represented in the ecclesiastical bodies with their pastors was denied to those churches. And the last General Assembly assumed, without even pretending to consult these churches, now become the principal parties to the compact, the right to disannul the Plan of Union, so far as reso entirely engaged in building up Presbyterianism, is found in the general predilection of ministers towards the Presbyterian form of government. We would not be understood to intimate, that the direct most vital and essential powers, that of self-extension and multiplication. This has brought the matter to a crisis .though we rationally suppose them to be not unsus. And the question for the Presbyterian church to settle at ceptible to the passions of other men. But it is very the next General Assembly is this: Shall the solemn covenatural that they should desire an easier mode of procedure than that of subjecting all questions directly to the decision of the whole church. In a tionalists as all one body of Christians, be annulled or not? The effort now making by a faction in the church to pro-

> Presbyterian, the leading organ of that party, in a late paper insists that it is less intimate. He says,—
>
> Besides, what peculiar claims have the New England Associations? Why should they be selected as so peculiarly deserving of the privileges implied in this intercourse? These churches have few points of similarity with the Presbyterian, they have indeed, from the first landing of the Pilgrim Fathers, been hostile to Presbyterian; they have virtually no creed; the very nature of their government, if they have any, has given rise to numerous heresies, they are averse to the obligations which a subscription to areeds imposes, and when circumstances demand a subscription, it is made with such reservations and explanations, as virtually cancel the obligation; in a word Congregationalism and Presbyterianism are two very different things. Why then, we ask, should Presbyterians seek, in their deliberative assemblies, the counsel of churches, which neither love their doctrine or government? We cannot tell. The Baptist church is much more nearly allied to the Presbyterian, in doctrine, and yet there have been no overtures for an interchange of delegates; and both the Baptist and Methodist churches have in all respects as strong claims upon our affectionate regard. If Christian charity therefore is pleaded for the union, that charity should extend further and emberce at 10 cur over or propring therefore is that it would have nsists that it is less intimate. He says,ed for the union, that charity should extend further and em-brace all. Our own opinion therefore is, that it would have been better if the principle of an interchange of delegates had been abandoned, and a correspondence by letter had been substituted; and we should certainly have no objection, if this written correspondence on the general concerns of reli-gion and benevolence, should be extended to Episcopalians, Mathodists and Fantists."

dethodists and Baptists."

luce a separation, is determined and untiring. In the face

of all history, in the face of all that General Assembly had

done in former days, in the face of all just principle, it is maintained now that the relation between the Congregation-

al churches of New England and the Presbyterian churches

of the other states, is not nearer than between the latter and

the Baptists or Episcopalians. Indeed the Editor of the

It is plain, therefore, that the present organization of the Presbyterian church is not sufficient to secure the equal rights of those churches, who prefer a greater or less approximation to Congregationalism in the administration of their ir_ ternal affairs. And unless some additional provisions can be made, a due regard to their Christian liberty seems to leave them no alternative but to withdraw. The recent steps of General Assembly, the movement in the Western Reserve, and the organization of the General Association of New-York, have brought matters to a crisis, where the friends of reason may pause and consider what is to be done.
The "Plan of Union" and other acts of fellowship which knit our fathers together as all one body, were not novelties. The basis of that union was laid so long ago as 1692 in England, by the adoption of certain " Heads of Agreement, assented to by the united ministers formerly called Presby-terian and Congregational." These articles may be found at length in the Saybrook Platform, as they form a part of the constitution of the Connecticut ecclesiustical organiza-

tion. They provide for the orderly management of affairs, the education of ministers, licensure and ordination, and the communion and mutual watch and accountability of churches, and regard to the judgment of councils. "And whereas divers are of opinion that there is also the office of Ruling Elders, who labor not in word and doctrine, and others think otherwise; we agree that this difference make no breach be-

ween us." Agreement, ch. v. These articles of agreement may suggest the plan by which the threatened separation may be prevented, and even the separation already existing may be healed. It does seem vastly desirable that this large body of Christians and churches, all of whom the enemy delights to stigmatize by the same odious title, "Presbyterians," should continue to act together. And we do confidently believe, that if the whole church shall be represented in the next General Assembly, and if brethren come together with a due respect for each other's opinions, principles, and rights, the calamity of a separation may be averted. And we hope our brethien of the west will delay their separate movements and try whether one effort more will not meet all their reasonable desires and protect them in all their just rights.