

NEW YORK INDEPENDENT.

Towards the close of the last century the New England churches sent out their missionaries into the new States. Men were sent, not only into New York, but into the West and the South. The Presbyterians were in the field, and a plan of union was formed between the Congregationalists and Presbyterians, by which the ministers of each should occupy the same field and the same churches. The Presbyterians were very tenacious of their form of government, and this tenacity increased till it nearly swallowed up all there was of Congregationalism. About forty years ago the pressure made by the Presbyterians on the Congregationalists induced them to withdraw from the union and form small Congregational churches and associations of the same form of government. The Old School Presbyterians cut off the New School and the Congregationalists from their presbyteries. This led to the formation of Congregational churches throughout the West. A company of young men went into Iowa, and were known as the Andover Band, from the theological seminary which they had left. They were able men, and through their labors new congregations were founded and new associations reared in most of the Western States.

The Congregationalists had no organ out of New England. The *Evangelist*, till 1837, was a Congregational paper. It then became Presbyterian. A new glory was dawning on the Congregational Church. Rev. Joseph P. Thompson and Dr. Cheever were in New York. Rev. R. S. Storrs and Henry Ward Beecher were in Brooklyn. They were men of talent and power. Their churches were large, wealthy, and influential. A newspaper through which these men could speak to the world seemed a necessity. Rev. Dr. Joshua Leavitt became the nucleus around which earnest and talented men gathered, who proposed to start a religious paper that should be second to none in the land.

There were in New York several young Christian merchants of wealth, who proposed to found a paper upon a financial basis that should secure its publication for five years, whether the paper was a success or not, whether it had a subscriber or not. It was to be a catholic, liberal, Christian sheet, which should not only discuss religious topics, and be the organ of Congregationalism, but also be the champion of freedom, and a decided opponent of slavery. Three clerical gentlemen were selected as editors—Rev. Drs.