

Our Contributors.

A CONVENTION THAT THERE IS ROOM AND NEED FOR.

BY KNOWNIAN

Conventions are sometimes held to assert rights and defend privileges. We may imagine a number of people in a lucid interval holding a convention to ascertain the reason why so many Canadians do not exercise the rights they have or use the privileges they enjoy. A report of the proceedings would perhaps run something like this:—

The chairman opened the proceedings with a brief and pointed address. He said a large number of people are continually wrangling about their rights as citizens and their rights as members of the various religious denominations, and it struck him as something peculiar that people should make so much noise about rights that some of them seldom or never exercise. For the life of him he could not see why a man should want to fight somebody about rights he never thought it worth while to use. Perhaps his early training had been a little old-fashioned, but he had always thought that if many Canadians said less about their rights and attended more punctually to their duties, their country and their Church would gain something by the innovation. He did not blame people for being sensitive about their rights. These rights cost their fathers blood and treasure, but he thought we could show our appreciation of these rights better by intelligently and conscientiously using them than by merely talking about them. We might be wrong, and perhaps his ideas were a little antiquated, but he laid them before the convention in good faith. Possibly the right course in this young country is to shout about rights and neglect duties. Perhaps the proper thing for a Christian to do is to scalp imaginary foes that are attacking his privileges in an imaginary way, and let the privileges go unused. He hoped members of the convention would not be offended if he said that privileges are given us to be used, not merely to be fought about. These were his views, and he would now give way to members of the convention, who would no doubt throw some light on the subject.

Mr. Patritic Solon said he wished to speak about unused civil rights. You Canadians, said Mr. Solon, enjoy the rights of freemen to a fuller extent than any people under the sun. Rightly or wrongly, your fathers thought you could govern yourselves. Sometimes I am tempted to think that the good old men overestimated their future progeny. They thought the stock would improve, but in too many cases it deteriorated. It took our fathers centuries to wring the right of voting from unwilling tyrants, and after the right has been secured some of you voters are so abominably lazy and careless that you won't go across the street to exercise the highest privileges of a British freeman. Some of you have to be canvassed and coaxed to come out and mark your ballot. Your fathers bled on many a hard-fought field to secure for you the rights of free men, but you must have a carriage sent for you to bring you to the polls to exercise these rights. But that is not the worst. Some of you are degraded enough to sell the highest rights of a British freeman for a dollar or barter them for a bottle of whiskey. The Indians you drove out of the soil could not do worse than that. If the Government were to cut down the number of voters and disfranchise a lot of you, a howl would be raised from Cape Breton to Vancouver that might be almost heard over in China. You would swear by everything above you and below you—especially below you—that the Government must be destroyed. Deprive me of my rights, you would say with burning indignation, as you struck a fighting attitude. Well, why don't you exercise these rights if they are so valuable? It would be far less trouble for you to go across the street or over to the next concession and vote than it would be to annihilate the Government that interfered with your right of voting.

Let us come down to particulars. Some of you complain of dangerous sidewalks, muddy streets, poor light, impure water, inefficient police protection and high taxes. In fact everybody complains of high taxes. On the first Monday in January the ratepayers of Ontario have the privilege of electing the men who manage all such local business. Do you all come out and vote for the best men? You do nothing of the kind. Many of you have to be canvassed and coaxed and button-holed and sent for. In many municipalities—in almost any—the most miserable scalawag can beat the best citizen if the scalawag canvasses and the best citizens does not. If the Government were to deprive you of the right of managing your local affairs there would be a howl that would almost make the bones of Robert Baldwin rattle in the grave. You would call upon somebody to rise up and be a second Baldwin and restore to you the right of local self-government. Why don't you exercise these rights when you have them? Why do you compel busy men—the very men you need most to manage your local affairs—why do you compel them to go around for weeks asking for votes? Don't you know that it is a man's duty to vote in a self-governed country? You would raise a big fight any time about the right of voting, but the duty of voting you treat with neglect if not contempt. The old story. Shout and storm about your rights and neglect your duties.

Let me give you another illustration. Our school system is one of the best things—perhaps the very best thing—we have. Did you ever notice a man running about the streets

on a certain Wednesday in January? After running up and down he collars two men and takes them away to a building near by. Was he a policeman? No, he was a returning officer hunting a mover and seconder for a school trustee election. The law is changed now, and probably the fear that the returning officer might not always be able to find anybody was one reason why the change was made. If the Government should propose to take the management of the schools out of the hands of the people there would be a storm equal in violence to a Dakota blizzard. The Government would think it had been struck by a cyclone. The old story again. The right of managing the schools is something to fight about—the duty of managing them something to be neglected.

Mr. Solon wound up his speech with an eloquent peroration, in which he urged the convention to stop shouting about their rights and give more attention to their duties.

The Rev. Calvin Commonsense then delivered a rousing speech on unused ecclesiastical rights and neglected religious privileges. He sent the red-hot shot in every direction, and made a profound impression. His speech and the remainder of the report will appear in our next issue.

SHOULD CHRISTIANS DANCE?

MR. EDITOR, - Having just read the article in your much valued paper, "Should Christians Dance?" will you grant me a small space to reply as a Christian who has danced, and never for one moment felt it a sin to do so.

My mother was a devoted Christian woman, and taught me the love of Christ from my earliest years. I can never remember when I did not love my Saviour, and have looked to a merciful heavenly Father for all things, pleasures included.

When twelve years old I was sent with my brothers to a private class, conducted by ladies highly respected, to learn dancing, was never told it was a sin, but enjoyed it in the innocence of my heart. In after years I went frequently to dancing parties given by Christian ladies, enjoying every dance, and never did I receive the smallest liberty or insult from the young men with whom I danced; and I am sure there are hundreds of Christian girls who enter into this amusement with the same pure innocent enjoyment.

Such evenings never prevented me offering my prayers, nor did I feel I was approaching an offended God; and my Christian mother would listen with delight to my description of such enjoyment.

I have been with young people who would not dance, and have seen such amusements introduced that made me blush with shame, and will say now, as I did then, give me a pleasant dance far before such amusements as these.

There is not a doubt it may be carried to excess, but so can everything else be made a sin, some sin, taking apparently an innocent walk to and from church. I need not enlarge on this subject, but will sign myself

A CHRISTIAN WHO DANCES.

January 19, 1891.

SOCIETY OF CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOUR.

In order to remove wrong impressions concerning this movement the following brief address is issued by the Committee of Trustees of the United Society of Christian Endeavour:—

Some mistaken and prejudicial statements having been made in certain papers concerning the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavour, will you allow us to set forth the facts in a few words? The Society of Christian Endeavour is the Church at work for the young, and the young people at work for the Church. The societies are found in specific Churches, doing the work of those Churches as best they can. They are pastor's aid societies, *suave*, under his control and direction. There is no board of control or authority outside of the local Church. The sole mission of the United Society is to furnish information and to arrange for an annual convention. It exerts no authority, asks for no money and claims no allegiance. The societies are doing equally good work in all evangelical denominations and in all parts of the world. Every denomination can control its own societies in any way that it chooses. It can call them together, prescribe lines of work, courses of study, etc., and can form denominational Christian Endeavour unions or brotherhoods if it chooses. Since it is in no way possible for the interdenominational features to interfere with or weaken denominational loyalty, we regard these interdenominational features of vast advantage. The young Christians are thus brought together for fellowship and inspiration at the interdenominational, local and State conferences and at the annual International Convention, and go home with a broader outlook and a deeper purpose to work for their own Churches.

As representatives of different denominations we heartily and emphatically unite in saying that we see no evil tendency, but only good resulting from this fellowship. The Society is, and has been from the beginning, on a strictly evangelical basis.

While we rejoice in every other movement that has for its purpose the training of the young for Christian service, we most earnestly commend this particular society, which God has so greatly blessed, until now its numbers within its ranks nearly one million young people in all parts of the world; and

ask our brethren who doubt its efficacy to look candidly into its methods, its purpose and its history.

The prayer meeting pledge and the consecration meeting, combined with certain lines of committee work for the Church, are the distinguishing features of the Society, and these, in common fairness, we believe, should go with the name Christian Endeavour, and the name with the features when adopted, though any denominational name can be combined with the Christian Endeavour name to distinguish the societies, as the Methodists of Canada recommend that their societies be called by the name "Epworth Christian Endeavour."

Hoping and praying for the sympathy and co-operation of all Christian people in this effort to advance the kingdom of God among the young people of the world, we are, yours fraternally,

TEUNIS S. HAMLIN, Pastor Church of the Covenant (Presbyterian), Washington, D.C.

JOHN H. BARROWS, Pastor First Presbyterian Church, Chicago, Ill.

WILLIAM R. HARPER, Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut.

WAYLAND HOYT, Pastor First Baptist Church, Minneapolis, Minn.

J. T. BECKLEY, Pastor Beth-Eden Baptist Church, Philadelphia, Pa.

HOWARD B. GROSE, President So., Dakota University.

H. C. FARRAR, Pastor Trinity Methodist Episcopal Church, Albany, N. Y.

GILBY C. KELLY, Pastor Methodist Episcopal Church South, Louisville, Ky.

W. W. ANDREWS, Methodist Church of Canada, Sackville, N. B.

SAMUEL FALLOWS, Bishop Reformed Episcopal Church, Chicago, Ill.

W. H. MCMILLAN, Pastor United Presbyterian Church, Alleghany, Penn.

W. J. DARBY, Cumberland Presbyterian, Nashville, Tenn.

R. L. SWAIN, Pastor United Brethren Church, Westerville, Ohio.

M. RHODES, Pastor First Lutheran Church, St. Louis, Mo.

C. A. DICKINSON, Pastor Berkeley Temple (Congregational), Boston.

Committee of Trustees of the United Society of Christian Endeavour.

OUR FIRST CHARGE.

BY MRS. J. JUNIOR.

Fueltown was considered a place of some importance, and when Mr. Junior was invited to become the minister of the Presbyterian Church there his friends assured him he had been very fortunate. It was his first charge, and he was ordained by the Presbytery, in which the college is, not long after the college session was over. There had been some trouble and much division during the pastorate of his predecessor, of which we were in complete ignorance until we arrived. That gentleman had a few staunch friends and many opponents, and when he saw it to be right to accept another parish the former became irreconcilably offended with the latter, whose conduct had led to the step. When we arrived, all unconscious of such a state of affairs, the vials of their wrath were poured upon our head. For, thought they, if there had been some difficulty in getting a minister the opposition might have been made to suffer for their conduct; but our coming had spoiled all that and was looked upon as a sort of injury to them.

We arrived in the city (for in those days it was pretension rather than size that gave a right to the title) late one Friday evening. That afternoon we saw a copy of the *Fueltown Press* in which it was announced that Mr. Junior would preach at both diets on the Sunday following. We had only been married a month and had been travelling all the time. The experiences of friends in other places had filled my mind with beautiful pictures of a happy welcome, a warm reception at landing, and a right hearty "homely tea" on arrival. And the further announcement in the paper that we were expected this particular evening brought all these pictures fresh to mind. My husband had opened a conversation with one or two people round the table in the cabin of the steamer, and one of them, who was a person of some importance in the church, advised us to go to the Pioneer Hotel for that night. Of course we could not say, "No," if the reception was to be there rather than at the manse. And to the Pioneer Hotel we went, our friend kindly carrying a gripsack in each hand. But here we were evidently not expected, and it was only after a good deal of talk that we could obtain a bedroom for the night. Anything in the form of coffee or tea was out of the question, for "the fires were all out and only liquors were served after eight o'clock." My visions of kind friends and a hearty reception all vanished in thin air! My beautiful picture, upset at one blow.

Next morning after breakfast we sallied forth to look for the church and to try and find out those who had invited us. By dint of much enquiry we hunted up the Session Clerk at his place of business, who had the keys of the manse in his pocket, and with him we went to see our new home, my mind all the while full of strange forebodings and my husband doing his best to put Mr. Davison in good humour. I had literally to hold on by Mr. Junior's arm to prevent me making myself ridiculous once we had been shown in. The parlor was empty save for the straw, paper and dust left by the packing of our predecessors, and the unpacking of certain little