

THE ROUNDERS' CONVENTION.

By Knoxonian.

Our readers are aware that there is a growing class of people in most cities and towns called Rounders. They derive their name from their habit of going round to the different churches. They connect themselves with no particular church and help to support none. Their presence occasionally is their only support. For this support many of them think the people who pay the money and do the work should be profoundly thankful. A convention of these excellent people was lately held in Toronto in somebody's mind. There was a good attendance and no collection. Rounders don't believe in collections.

The Hon. Itching Ears, president of the convention, took the chair and opened the proceedings with an address—not with devotional exercises. He said he was glad to see so many present and hoped they would have an enjoyable meeting. He congratulated them on the return of the season which always brought meetings of various kinds that one could attend without paying any money. He was happy to know that several new ministers had lately come to the city. It would be their duty to patronize all the new men as soon as possible. He had no doubt that there would be a number of distinguished strangers in some of the pulpits during the winter. He need not say that it would be the duty of the Rounders present to go and hear all the strangers. He hoped the pastors of the different congregations would exert themselves and secure the services of distinguished men who had a good record in the newspapers and were able to draw. There was no use in bringing ordinary gospel preachers to the city. Such preachers could not meet the wants of Rounders. He could not say that the chances were for some heretical preaching this winter; but he did hope some of the city pastors would get up a sensation by preaching a little heresy. There was a splendid opening for that kind of work. The daily newspapers could always be relied on to advertise a preacher that did his duty in that way. He would pledge his word of honor that if any of the prominent pastors of the city would get up a heresy sensation he would have the support of every Rounder in the city. (This last remark brought out hundreds of applause.)

Mr. Ananias Loose-Tongue then spoke. He said he esteemed it a very high privilege to live in a city like Toronto. A church-going man like himself could attend a different church every Sabbath, besides taking in all the special meetings. Then it was so nice to meet a few choice spirits in a corner grocery on Monday and talk about the preachers and choirs, and organs and congregations. He always did like spiritual conversation. He believed he knew every bit of gossip about every minister and congregation in the city. It was utterly impossible for a man to keep himself in that high spiritual condition if he attended one church only. He urged members of the convention to avoid the humdrum practices of these church every Sabbath. They should

improve their privileges and go around among the churches.

Brother Skinflint then addressed the convention. He said there was one aspect of the question that had not been touched. He need scarcely say he meant the financial aspect. One could save money by being a Rounder. If a man went to one church regularly the managers were sure to ask him for money sooner or later. Church managers were nearly all worldly-minded men. Some of them even went the length of asking people for a certain amount each Sabbath. He was opposed to all such practices. Let those old-fashioned people who attend one place of worship build the churches, pay the minister, find the music and provide the light and fuel. The beauty of being a Rounder was that you got all these things for nothing and had the opportunity of finding fault with everybody and everything besides. Who would not be a Rounder and save money!

Mr. Empty-Head said there was another advantage in being a Rounder which he would mention. If a man went to one church every Sabbath, few people took any notice of him. If he went to a different church every day he was likely to be treated as a distinguished stranger. The ushers made a fuss over him, showed him to a good seat and perhaps the minister waited on him on Monday and asked him to "join us." If the church officers did not show considerable attention and put one in the best seat then there was a chance to write to the newspapers and accuse the officers of want of courtesy to strangers. He was happy to say the daily papers were always willing to publish letters of that kind. It gave a flavour of piety—a kind of evangelical air—to a newspaper to publish letters scolding church people for not giving their best seats to the Rounders. He urged the members of the convention in writing to the press always to call themselves strangers—not Rounders. Strangers sounded better and reflected more on the churches. He had been a Rounder for a good many years and he believed he received far more attention than people who went to one church. Some of the church officers were beginning to look rather doubtfully at him at times; but when that occurred he always struck out for a new church or a sensation of some kind.

Mr. Itching-Ears, Jr., closed the discussion. He said the Toronto ministers were sadly behind the times; with two or three exceptions they never announced the subjects on which they intended to preach as did the advanced preachers in New York, Chicago and other American cities. As an illustration of what he meant he said that a preacher in San Francisco some years ago, announced that he would preach on the words "How is that for High!" That was the kind of subject he liked to hear discussed. He doubted very much if there was more than one preacher in Toronto who would announce that topic; and yet a subject like that, if properly advertised, would draw every healthy Rounder in Toronto and bring in a large number from the country. He thought they should bring their influence to bear on the Toronto pulpit in regard to this matter. By united energetic action they might bring about a reform.

The following resolutions were then unanimously passed and the convention adjourned:

1. Resolved that the deacons, managers and other office-bearers of the different churches in the city be informed, and are hereby informed, that they are expected to provide comfortable sitting accommodation for all the Rounders in the city free of all expense.

2. That the pastors of the city be instructed to secure the services during the present winter of as many preachers out of the ordinary line as possible, and especially of "Sam Jones," who is at present making a sensation in the

South. The expenses incurred by such services to be paid by the people who attend one church only.

3. That the pastors of the city be requested to announce in the daily papers the subjects on which they intend to preach, and to give special attention to such titles of sermons as are to be seen in some of the daily journals in New York, Chicago and other American cities.

4. That this convention desires to express its deep regret that the Christian people of the city do not see it to be their duty to provide several kinds of sensational entertainment every Sabbath for the Rounders of the day.

Rev. Professor Jordan, D.D., of Queen's University, will preach next Sunday in Brampton. On the following Wednesday evening he will be present and speak at a banquet given by the Queen's Western Alumni Association, in London, and then, on Sunday, 3rd. November, he will be the preacher in the First Presbyterian Church, in the same city. It is very gratifying to Dr. Jordan's many friends throughout the church, to learn that his health is now so completely restored as to permit him undertaking so much outside work.

The Churches Commission, having found the Frees and the United Frees dissatisfied with the allocation of Church property between the disputants, have addressed a letter gravely concerning both. They write:—"But this much they must add as their deliberate judgment that—even taking for granted the irrevocable necessity for a division in things temporal between the two branches of what has been one Church—there have been opportunities, not once, or twice, but frequently, during the course of these proceedings when some reasonable concession on one side or the other might have prevented overlapping and the consequent waste of money and human energy." It is saddening to see this deplorable dourness and divisiveness in Christian men, till recently brethren in one Church, and who must know the harm that is done thereby to the cause of Religion and the Presbyterian Communion in Scotland.

WINNIPEG AND WEST.

Rev. Dr. and Mrs. Pflabado are leaving Winnipeg to spend the winter among the orange groves of Southern California.

The Condie Presbyterian church was opened with appropriate services, conducted by Rev. S. McLean, of Moose Jaw.

On the 13th inst. our church at Fort Saskatchewan, Sask., celebrated its 13th anniversary. Rev. Mr. Gourlay, of Sturgeon, was the preacher on the interesting occasion.

At a recent meeting of the members of Knox church, Saskatoon, it was decided to build a new edifice on the west of the C. N. R. track. This has been rendered necessary by the rapid increase in the numbers of the denomination in Saskatoon.

Rev. Dr. Sinclair, acting pastor of St. Andrew's church, Winnipeg, was given a hearty welcome at a social held last week. Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Sinclair said humorously that he anticipated some difficulty in filling Mr. Macmillan's gown and he feared he would be quite unable to fill his shoes.