

Our Contributors.

THE POLITICAL RIDERS OF THE PROTESTANT HORSE IN CONVENTION ASSEMBLED.

BY ANONIMOUS

As the Protestant horse is being exercised a good deal at the present time, nothing was more natural than that the political riders of the animal should hold a convention. There was a large attendance of riders, and considerable enthusiasm characterized the proceedings. Both political parties were represented. Some uneasiness was caused by the presence of a few true Protestants—men who are known to read their Bibles, pray, attend church, have worship in their families, and give of their means to send the Protestant religion to the heathen. Among these true Protestants was John Knox, jun., whose entrance created a sensation.

The chair was taken by the Hon. Pilate Doubleface. He thanked the convention most heartily for the honour conferred upon him in asking him to pre side over such a large, intelligent and patriotic gathering of his fellow-citizens. It had been his duty as a loyal and patriotic citizen to ride the Protestant horse for many years. He thought he might say that he had achieved some success as a rider. He had not confined his performances exclusively to the Protestant horse. The exigencies of the situation sometimes required him to ride the Catholic horse. There was nothing narrow or bigoted about him. He gloried in the fact that he could ride any kind of an ecclesiastical horse. The best party riders were men who could ride the Catholic or Protestant horse as the exigencies of the party might require. Due regard should always be paid to the course over which one was asked to ride. In the Province of Quebec it generally paid best to ride the Catholic horse. Exception might be made in regard to the Eastern Townships, but as a rule it was good policy to ride the Catholic horse in Quebec. In Ontario the Protestant horse was the animal chiefly to be depended on. Of course there were sections of Ontario where it was not prudent to ride the Protestant horse too fast or make much display. Some constituencies were hard to manage. One needed to ride the Protestant horse in one part of the constituency and the Catholic horse in another. This constant mounting and dismounting was troublesome, but as patriotic and religious men they must put up with it. The very perfection of riding was to be able to ride both horses at the same time. Thanking them again for the honour conferred upon him, he wished them all manner of success and could assure them that so long as a vote was to be gained he was ready to ride any kind of a horse the occasion might require (cheers).

Mr. Blowhard Nofaith was the next speaker. He said he stood before them as the champion of civil and religious liberty. He was ready to fight, or die, or take office in the interests of Protestantism. When votes were to be secured by defending the Protestant religion against Romish aggression he was ready to go to the front for a small fee and fight the foe. In the language of one of the fathers he was willing to sacrifice all his wife's able-bodied relations for Protestantism. He was—

A voice—Do you ever pray?

Pray! What has praying to do with it? A man can ride the Protestant horse without prayer. Prayer was all very well for people who believed in it, but for his part he could see no necessity for prayer in such matters. It was his business to ride the horse during election contests and at such other times as party exigencies might require his services. He could assure them that he would stand by the Bible until—

A voice—Do you ever read the Bible?

Read the Bible? That is a different question. Why should a man read the Bible? He could ride the Protestant horse at full gallop in the hardest election contest that ever took place without opening a Bible. He had ridden in many a contest and never found any use for a Bible. In fact, he believed it would be a hindrance. If those true Protestants who were interrupting the proceedings could show him how one more vote could be made by praying and reading the Bible, much as he disliked such exercises, he would pray and read.

A voice—Have you worship in your family?

He never heard such a thing. The family was no

place for worship. People who believe in what is called worship go to church for that purpose. Such questions showed how ignorant those who put them were. The church is the place for worship, and those ignorant intruders thought people should worship at home. That showed how much they knew about Protestantism. He would not be interrupted by such people.

A voice. How much do you give to send the Protestant religion to the heathen?

Why should they send it to the heathen? The heathen had no votes. This person who interrupted him thought that the Franchise Act extended to Asia and Africa. It did nothing of the kind. It let in some Indians, but as the heathen had no votes he took no interest in them. He would pay no money for missionary purposes.

A voice. What church do you belong to?

He belonged to no church. He did not believe in ministers and churches. Sometimes when riding the Protestant horse in different parts of the country he had gone to church two or three times a day and sat in a front seat, but he was a member of no church, and he never intended to be. His wife attended church. He wished to say once for all that he would answer no more such questions. Parties calling themselves true Protestants and Christians had obtruded themselves upon the convention and disturbed the harmony of the proceedings. He would not be questioned by such men. He assured his friends that, notwithstanding the treatment he had received, he was willing to ride the Protestant horse as long as a vote could be had or a dollar made (cheers).

Mr. Officeseeker Hightone was the next speaker. He said he wished to give them a point in regard to localities in which they were to ride the hardest. Out of all sight the best places were settlements of Scotch and Irish Presbyterians. The ancestors of these people had suffered a great deal some centuries ago from Roman Catholics and others and the present race of Presbyterians were sensitive. Personally, he had never liked Presbyterians. They were a narrow, church-going, Bible-reading, psalm-singing lot of bigots (cheers). He could never endure them. He was careful not to mix with them socially nor allow his family to do so, but they had thousands of votes and we must ride among them. It was a matter of regret that he and other people of quality who adhered to a church noted for its style should be compelled to ride in front of such vulgar people, but so long as such people were allowed to vote there was no help for it. He urged the riders present to ride at the hottest possible pace through all Presbyterian settlements.

At this reference to Presbyterians John Knox, jun., sprang to his feet and went upon the platform. Amidst constant interruptions and much excitement, he spoke as follows:

Go to, ye unprincipled jockeys. There is not a man among you that cares one straw for the Protestant religion. Some of you are Catholics; at least, if you are anything, you are practical infidels. All of you would kiss the Pope's toe for a small office. You talk about the Protestant religion. You have no religion. You talk about liberty of conscience. You have no conscience to bind. You prate about the Bible. You never read the Bible. There is not a man among you who could say the Lord's Prayer or repeat the ten commandments. How dare you drag the sacred name of religion in the dirt? Why don't you electioneer with the weapons of your own master? If the Protestant religion is to be defended, let men defend it who pray, and read the Bible, and attend church, and show by their lives that they have some religion. Who would ever take one of you for a religious man? Your religion consists in riding the Protestant horse at elections, and consigning the Pope to the bad place. Why don't you send him to some place where you will be less likely to meet him?

At this point the riders gathered around the platform, and showed their regard for Protestant freedom of speech by making such a noise that Mr. Knox could not be heard. The meeting then broke up in confusion. The next convention will be held in private.

TEN thousands of the greatest faults in our neighbours are of less consequence to us than one of the smallest in ourselves.

FROM THE FAR WEST.

NOTES BY MEMBERS OF THE PRESBYTERY OF REGINA.

MEDICINE HAT.

Under the able administration of Rev. Jas. Herald our cause has made noble progress in this important town and railway centre. The efficiency of the congregation was increased by the ordination on a recent Sabbath of a number of worthy and influential men to the office of elder. A vigorous session is a long-standing desideratum in several of our fields.

MOUNTAIN MISSION.

Several new points have been supplied by our missionaries to the mountains, with occasional services. Rev. D. McLeod preached recently at Glacier Hotel, to a congregation of nearly 200. Mr. McLeod leaves for the East in a few days. Large gangs of men will probably remain in the mountains all winter.

PRESBYTERIANISM IN GENERAL.

Presbyterianism has taken vigorous root in the North West. Our Church in fact has a commanding position and influence in many important towns, and all through the country our congregations, with few exceptions, have a good name for harmony and progress. To the Superintendent of Missions, whose energy and ability in the work are worthy of all praise, is due much of the credit in this respect. The missionaries too have been a self-sacrificing band. Upon the whole we should thank God and take courage, not forgetting meanwhile that the work is only entered upon, and that "there remaineth yet very much land to be possessed."

QUALIFICATIONS FOR EFFECTIVE WORK.

Friends in the East may be interested in the question, What qualifications are needed most prominently for successful mission work in the young and growing communities of the North-West? The missionaries with whom the writer has conversed agree substantially in their views upon this question—views emerging from their own actual practical experience in the work. There is first of all necessary a *pronounced personal spirituality*. Needed everywhere, this qualification is doubly essential here. For, to begin with, missionaries work in isolation. The nearest co-worker is in most cases long leagues away, and even Presbytery meetings are expensive luxuries. Of lay workers for the Master there are in infant settlements for the most part few; the missionary's library sees few additions, even of books of devotion; and worldliness and unsettled anxious social conditions abound. Hence the influences are severe and constant on the side of exhaustion; and woe to the worker who finds no joy in the work itself, and no inspiration in the Master's presence and promises. To keep close to the living Christ is the great condition of successful and happy work.

The missionary in the North-West will also feel ere long the need of *organizing ability*. Instead of finding church life ready organized to his hand, he is there to organize it. Out of diverse heterogeneous elements he has to build up a congregation, impress his own personality upon it, infuse an *esprit de corps* into all its members, secure site and subscriptions for a church, appoint committees and office-bearers, supervise all work, arrange all details. Very early in the history of most congregations the spirit of faction emerges; there is also, arising from the unsettled fluctuating conditions of life, a lack of cohesion and church spirit; amid such facts and difficulties the missionary has to perform his work. Great judgment, mingled with firmness, is needed; for umbrage is easier given than avoided by the best of tacticians, and a false step may inaugurate a series of mishaps.

Then the missionary needs *aptness in pastoral conversation*. There is much scepticism in the North-West, and of an outspoken kind. Objections to the miracles, to the divine origin of Christianity, to inspiration, to Moses and to Christ, are rife. Often these come up before the minister of the Gospel suddenly and unexpectedly; and while he is trying to recall the old-time arguments, or beginning a laboured defence of the truth assailed, the sceptic or inquirer, and with him a golden opportunity, has gone. What is needed in this connection is a readiness to meet the objections quickly and incisively—as did the Master with the Sadducees and those who would entrap Him in His words. Ponderous college argumentation