

## Our Contributors.

### THE ROUNDERS CONVENTION.

BY KNOXIAN.

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 what 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 honour 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 thunders 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 stupid people who go to the same church every Sabbath. They should improve their privileges and go around among the churches.

Brother Skinsint 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? It was all very well for Paul to say that the labourer was worthy of his hire and that Christian people should give so much a week. He considered James Beaty, G.C., M.P. a higher authority than Paul, and he was happy to say Mr. Beaty agreed with him. Brother Skinsint then closed by reading a long extract from Mr. Beaty's book.

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 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 city.

### PRESBYTERIANISM IN ENGLAND.

FROM THE SIXTEENTH TO THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

Having spent the summer chiefly in England, in the character of an invalid, and mixing much with Presbyterians, my attention was naturally called to the early history of that form of church government in South Britain—a subject to which I had never before given much thought. Becoming greatly interested in Puritan times, I made copious notes from the books I read; and now that I am once more in the Switzers' land, and high above the din and bustle of towns and away from the incessant talk of tourists about "peaks and passes," I occupy a few hours of my forced inactivity in putting my notes into shape, with the hope that some of the readers of THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN may be induced, by my imperfect sketches, to study a subject which grows in interest the further it is prosecuted.

Traces of Presbyterianism were found in England almost as soon as the Reformation itself, for it was during the reign of

EDWARD VI. (1547-1553)

that John Knox, released from the French galleys, devoted five of his best years—four of them in Northumberland—to the service of the young King and his Council; introducing into two of the parish churches—Berwick and Newcastle—the same forms of worship and administration of the sacraments which he afterwards introduced into the National Church of Scotland. In his "History of the Reformation" Knox condenses this portion of his life into these few lines: "The said John was first appointed preacher to Berwick, then to Newcastle, last he was called to London and the south parts of England, where he remained till the death of King Edward VI." From other sources we learn that "a runagate Scot did take away from us the adoration of Christ in the Sacrament; so much prevailed that one man's authority at that time"; and now, under the same influence, bishops and presbyters were not considered two orders of ministry, but only two ranks or degrees of the same order, Presbyterian orders being freely recognized without any idea of re-ordination, which was not mooted till near the end of Elizabeth's reign. Professor Lorimer, in his monograph, "John Knox and the Church of England," shows that from 1549 to 1553, under Knox's influence, sitting was substituted for kneeling at the Lord's Supper in several of the leading parish churches. The authorized national liturgy was dispensed with and many Scottish distinctive forms and usages were introduced. During the succeeding reign of

MARY TUDOR (1553-1558)

many church reformers, to escape from the bitter persecution of the Queen, fled to Switzerland—Knox amongst the number—and found refuge in Geneva. And here it was that English Presbyterianism was first successfully organized under the moderatorship of Knox. The church session or "eldership" there included a host of distinguished men, such as Knox and his colleague Goodman, Coverdale, Bishop, Whittingham, Gilbey and Podley, who afterwards produced many important historical works, amongst the number being "The Book of Common Order," generally called Knox's Liturgy, and the Geneva version of the Bible long afterwards in use, and highly esteemed by Presbyterians both in England and Scotland. During the reign of

ELIZABETH (1558-1603)

Presbyterianism in England had a checkered history, its advocates being called Puritans, a name which, in its widest sense, included all who desired purity in church government and doctrine. The Puritans at first consisted of those who had been exiled during the Marian persecution, and who had returned to England. Under the strict action of Elizabeth they separated into Brownists, or Independents, and Presbyterians, the latter remaining in the Church.

During 1567-8 persecution in France and Holland drove thousands of Protestants, chiefly Presbyterians, into England; and in 1570 were published the earliest English expositions and vindications of Presbyterian principles. Amongst the advocates of these principles may be named Thomas Cartwright and Walter Travers—distinguished scholars and divines of the University of Cambridge—at that time the headquarters of Puritanism. These men were foremost in defence of Presbyterianism against the attacks of Whitgift and Hooker.

In 1571 an Act of Parliament was passed for the reform of disorder in the Church, which, omitting all mention of discipline, and sanctioning only the doctrinal articles, implicitly recognized ordination by presbyters without a bishop.

The action of the Commons in 1584 shows that Presbyterian principles were strong in the country. Still all proposals for establishing presbytery in the different parishes were met by the unyielding exercise of the Queen's prerogative; and the Puritans were even subjected to severe persecution.

The islands of Jersey and Guernsey, to which many Huguenots had fled after the massacre of St. Bartholomew, alone were Presbyterian by permission. Cartwright and Snape were pastors there from 1576 to 1625. A completely appointed Presbyterian Church existed, confirmed by Synods, held in the islands and authorized by the governor. As soon as Laud came into power, however, the Government attacked presbytery wherever it was found—Guernsey was com-