

# Canada Temperance Advocate.

Devoted to Temperance, Agriculture, and Education.

No. 7.

MONTREAL, NOVEMBER, 1841.

VOL. VII.

## ST. LOUIS CRIMINAL COURT.

*State vs. Augustus V. Jones.*

### INDICTMENT FOR PASSING COUNTERFEIT MONEY.

The defendant in this case was, probably, twenty-eight years of age, but wore the appearance of at least thirty-five. He had evidently once been a fine looking man; in stature he was something over six feet, and his strongly marked features and prominent forehead gave evidence of more than ordinary intellect. But you could clearly discover that he had become a prey to the monster intemperance—the mark of the beast was stamped upon his countenance, which gave it a vivid and unnatural glare. He was placed in the box, with others who were to be arraigned upon the indictments preferred against them. All the others had plead not guilty, (as is usual) and a day was set for their trial. The defendant was told to stand up, and the clerk read to him the indictment, which charged him with having, on the 10th day of August, passed to one Patriek Oneal a counterfeit Bill, purporting to be issued by the 2nd Municipality of the city of New Orleans, for the sum of *three dollars*; and upon being asked the question, guilty or not guilty? he replied “*guilty—guilty!*” Then, turning to the court, he remarked that, as this was the last time he ever expected to appear in court, he would be glad if he could be allowed to make a few remarks. The judge told him to proceed. After a pause, in which he was evidently endeavouring to calm his feelings, he proceeded, as follows:

“*May it please the Court:* In the remarks I shall make, I will not attempt to extenuate my crime, or ask at your hands any sympathy in passing sentence upon me. I know that I have violated the laws of my country, and justly deserve punishment; nor would I recall the past, or dwell upon the bitter present, for my own sake. A wish to do good for others is my only motive.

“I shall, with the indulgence of the court, give a brief narrative of my life, with a hope that those young men around me may take warning by it, and avoid the rock upon which I have split. I was born of respectable parents, in the State of New Jersey, and during my childhood received every attention that fond parents could bestow upon an only son. It was early discovered that I had a fondness for books, and my father, although in limited circumstances, determined to give me a liberal education. I was sent to a high school in the neighbourhood, and such was my progress, that at twelve years of age, my preceptor declared me qualified for college, and I accordingly entered one of the oldest universities of the country. Here I so distinguished myself that, at sixteen, I graduated with the second honours of the institution, and returned home flushed with the brilliant prospect of success that lay before me. I soon after commenced the study of law, and when only in my twentieth year, I obtained a licence to practice. Acting upon the advice of friends, I determined to try my fortunes in the west. I accordingly arranged my affairs for departure early in the fall of 1833. I will not detain you with an account of my separation from those I held most dear—~~suffice~~ **suffice** to say, that I received the blessings of my parents, and

in return, promised faithfully and *honestly* to avoid all bad company, as well as their vices. Had I kept my promise, I should have been saved this shame, and been free from the load of guilt that hangs around me continually, like a fiendish vulture, threatening to drag me to justice, for crimes as yet unrevealed. But, to return, I left my early home, where all had been sunshine, and where my pathway had been strewn with flowers, to try my fortune among strangers, and to try my strength in buffeting the storms and tempests of the world. With a light heart I looked forward to the future; and taking the usual route, I soon reached Wheeling, where I took passage on a boat for Louisville. On the boat a game of cards was proposed for *amusement*; and although I had promised faithfully to avoid such things, still I argued to myself that there was no harm in playing a game for amusement. Accordingly I joined the party, and we kept up the *amusement* most of the way down. After we left Cincinnati, it was proposed to bet a “*bit*,” a game merely, as it was said, to make it *interesting*. My first impression was to leave the table, but I was told that it was only a “*bit*”—that I could not lose more than one or two dollars. This argument prevailed, for I lacked moral courage to do what was right. I feared my companions would say I was stingy of a little money. Influenced by these feelings, I played, and as the fates would have it, I won. Before we reached Louisville, we had twice doubled the stake, and I found my luck enabled me to pay my passage out of my winnings. It was the first time ever I had bet money, and my success ruined me. Again I played, and was again successful; and, in short, I continued to play *for amusement*, until I had acquired a thirst for gaming. I settled in a thriving village in Tennessee, and commenced the practice of my profession under flattering auspices, and my first appearance in a criminal court was highly complimented, and I soon became known throughout the circuit. Things went on thus for more than a year; and I believed myself fairly on the road to fame and fortune. I occasionally played cards; but I consoled myself with the idea that I only played with *gentlemen for amusement*.

“One night I accompanied some young men to a gaming shop, and for the first time in my life, I saw a *Faro Bank*. My companions commenced betting, and I was induced to join them, although I did not understand the game. Again I played with success; and when we left the house, I was more than two hundred dollars winner. None of my companions had been fortunate, and it was insisted that I was the lucky man, and that I must treat. We accordingly repaired to my room, where I ordered wine, and before we broke up we were all deeply intoxicated. With me it was the first time, and the next day I resolved that I would never play cards again. I adhered to this determination for nearly three months, when I again yielded to the entreaties of my dissipated associates.

“I now played with varied success, and in all cases found an excuse for resorting to the wine-bottle. If I lost, I drank to drown sorrow; if I won, I treated my good fortune. Thus I progressed upon my downward course, until drinking and gambling became my chief employments. All my