

way of warming yourself is to take a glass of this burning liquid. And if you are under the scorching rays of a vertical sun, you should not forget to quench your thirst by the fiery liquid that Bacchus has mingled. But if you succeed in showing them the absurdity of such arguments as these, they will immediately shift their position, and found their arguments, as they suppose, on a more firm basis. They will tell you, that, although it may be that there is no great utility in the common use of ardent spirits, still there is one thing of which they are very certain, and that is, that there can be no great harm in taking a glass or two occasionally for company's sake; and although it may not do them much good, still it cannot possibly do them much harm.

This kind of negative position is of all others the most dangerous. By it the man is led on unconsciously from less to more, until he finds that his argument, "It will do no harm," has brought him to the brink of a drunkard's grave. This is the mode of argument adopted by those who frequent balls, gambling, and all such amusements. If a person were asked, when on his way to the ball-room, if, before he left home, he entered into his closet, and there asked God's blessing on what he was about to do, the most hardened sinner would be shocked at the idea. What! ask God to bless the communion, intercourse, and exercises of a ball-room! ask God to bless me, while persevering in the wilful service of Satan! Such an idea would never enter into the mind of any one. And yet how do they justify themselves in going to such places? To this question they have no difficulty to find an answer. They immediately refer you to this negative but dangerous argument—"It will do no harm." This is precisely the case with those who indulge in the use of ardent spirits. It must appear evident to them that it cannot be their duty to go into the bar-room, and there spend hours of precious time in drinking, and encouraging the drunkard in that which is to terminate in his destruction. But although he cannot endure this positive way of stating the question, still he always finds a sure asylum in the short but delusive argument, "It will do me no harm."

But is there not a word to be said in favour of this new and bright idea, "It will do me no harm." Is all this most acute and profound reasoning to go for nothing? Is this new discovery in morals to be spurned from society, and not to take a high place in the philosophical writings of the day? In all the hasty strides which the "march of intellect" is making at the present day, shall we lend a deaf ear to the profound reasoning of Bacchanalian philosophers! But what is the discovery? Nothing less than the great principle that a thing may at the same time be neither good nor bad, true nor false, right nor wrong! To be drunk, to encourage the drunkard in all his unholy practices, or even to drink moderately, they feel bound to acknowledge is not their duty, nor could they think of asking God to bless them in such exercises. But although this is the case, still they feel equally assured that it is no great harm. Surely such a discovery should not be permitted to fall to the ground unnoticed in this day of light and knowledge! By no means.

Let the friends of philosophy and profound reasoning have it written on the palms of their hands, yea, and in letters of gold, that it may be transmitted to future generations!

J. SMITH.

Toronto, January 30, 1849.

PUBLIC MEETINGS.

We would direct attention to the reports of public meetings in this city which this number contains. All these meetings were large and important; the Anniversary Meeting was the largest of all the meetings held in Zion Church on that week; and though, as usual, the alarm of fire was given to disperse the meeting, yet the trick is now so well understood, like the cry of the wolf in the fable, that it passed off without effect, and the house continued crowded almost to the close. No fewer than four members of the House of Assembly were engaged to speak on the occasion. Three of these were prevented from doing so, as stated at the commencement of the Report; but the Hon. Malcolm Cameron, notwithstanding the pressing business before the House, came to our Anniversary, in his great anxiety to serve the cause of Temperance, and pleaded it with his usual eloquence and effect. We mention these things, because we may congratulate our readers and the country upon them. They furnish additional evidence of the progress which our principles are making in the higher ranks of society. Ministers of Religion, Physicians, Lawyers, Advocates, Honourable Judges on the Bench, Members of Parliament, and Honourable Members of the Provincial Ministry, are to be found amongst our ranks, and are willing to advocate our principles before the public, and employ their influence in extending them throughout the community. This augurs well for the future prosperity of Canada. If men of influence and talent will unite in promoting the rule of abstinence from all intoxicating drinks, and continue doing so till it is generally adopted, it will not be necessary for any one to go to California for gold; we will find plenty at home.

RECHABITE MEETINGS.

Very important meetings have been held in this city this winter under the auspices of the tents of the above Order. In our last we gave an account of one which was held in the United Presbyterian Church; another has since been held in Gosford Street Church, an excellent report of which we have transferred into our pages from the *Montreal Transcript*. Another meeting was held in the Methodist Church, Griffintown, on Tuesday evening, January 23rd, at which the Rev. Messrs. DeWolf, Taylor and Girdwood, and A. O. Kimpton, Esq., delivered appropriate addresses. The meeting was a crowded one, and a large number of signatures was obtained to the pledge.

The Fourth Annual Celebration of Rechabites was held on the evening of Tuesday, the 6th current. In consequence of the crowded state of our columns, we content ourselves with the following extract of a very full Report of it in the *Montreal Herald*:—