

CANADA TEMPERANCE ADVOCATE.

"It is good neither to eat flesh, nor drink wine, nor do any thing by which thy brother is made to stumble, or to fall, or is weakened." ROM. xiv. 21.—*Macnight's Translation.*

MONTREAL, JANUARY, 1839.

DEATH OF TWO PERSONS BY INTOXICATION.—We beg to direct attention to the following melancholy facts, and offer a few comments on the conduct of the individuals concerned in them: and we do so, not for the purpose of holding up those individuals to censure, (for they are not more to blame than the public which permits and sanctions their deeds,) but with the desire to rouse the public if possible to a sense of its duty and interest.

On the 6th of December, MONTGOMERY, who was a volunteer, received his pay; and went to spend it in *drink*, in company with one DELANEY, and some others. In the course of the night, DELANEY became quite insensible, foamed at the mouth, and exhibited symptoms so alarming that it was thought necessary to send him to the hospital; where he died, three or four days after. Next morning, however, MONTGOMERY resumed the debauch, but did not carry it to very great excess. He was too sick to do so, and was prevented also by the remonstrances of his wife, who entreated him to permit her to make him some tea. At last he consented, but while she was preparing it, he laid hold of a bottle of whiskey, nearly full, which stood near him, and emptied it, or nearly so, at a draught. He then went to bed, and, about an hour after, his wife found him a *corpse*!

These are the facts. The alarm was immediately given, and Government, as in duty bound to protect the lives and liberties of the subjects, sent an officer to make inquiry. The coroner came, summoned a jury, and found, as usual, that the deceased "died of intoxication." And here the matter rests,—this is considered all that the Government can do, to avenge the death of one subject and protect others from suffering in a similar way!

We believe that the above verdict is the only one that the coroner could return, in the present state of the law. We do not find fault with that officer, but we must lift up our voice against the system under which he acts. His sentence, instead of being calculated to bring out the guilty cause of that man's death to view, and exposing it to punishment, is rather calculated to conceal it. It acts as a blind upon public curiosity, it hushes up inquiry, and thereby prevents the danger from being traced to its source, and removed.

If the Government had pursued the inquiry farther, it would have been found, that these two men (for although DELANEY did not die immediately, it is evident that both he and MONTGOMERY died by the same cause) died in consequence of using drink, which had been procured at THOMPSON'S grocery, in the neighbourhood, and perhaps THOMPSON had procured it at the distillery on the opposite side of the street. But, if either the distiller or the grocer had been challenged, they could have pleaded that they have a *licence* from Government itself to pursue their respective occupations, and, by that very fact, the consequences are more justly chargeable against the power which sanctions them than against themselves.

But although these men are not amenable to the laws of the country for having caused the death of two of the citizens, it will by no means follow that they are not amenable to the laws of God. And the following words inform us that he makes a more rigorous

inquisition after blood than human Governors: "Surely your blood of your lives will I require; at the hand of every beast will I require it, and at the hand of man; at the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man." In the prospect of such a scrutiny, we think, it will be no pleasant reflection to THOMPSON, the grocer, (the distiller we have not learned) to know that, at one and the same debauch, he has been the means of hurling two victims headlong into eternity! Their blood is now *crying unto God from the ground*, and although we would not take it upon us to name the particular individual or individuals against whom its accusation is presented, yet we would not, for the world, run such a fearful risk as that to which he is exposed. No evasion will serve before the Divine tribunal. An Omniscient God is able to trace effects to their causes, and he will bring due punishment upon the guilty.

The conduct of our Government, and we may say, of all human governments, without making any invidious distinctions, forms a striking contrast to the jealous care with which the Divine Government watches over the safety of human life. In the one case, a few formal inquiries are made, a conclusion is arrived at before the subject is searched to the bottom, and all farther concern is dismissed; but in the other case, the investigation is pursued till the guilty shedder of blood is discovered, and punished. Under the Israelitish Government, when a man was found murdered, the magistrates of the nearest city were taken strictly to task upon it, and were required to go through a solemn ceremonial before they were considered free from responsibility. It was an awful matter to have "*innocent blood*" lying on a land then,—it is now not so.

Our magistrates have just sounded an alarm about *mad dogs*; but what evil have they been doing? It is by no means improbable that this alarm may have arisen wholly from some groundless apprehension. But MONTGOMERY and DELANEY have lost their lives by intoxicating drink; and is there no alarm to be sounded about this danger? Oh, with what lamentable inconsistency do we act! The evil which the community has suffered from mad dogs does not weigh a feather when put in the balance with the enormous amount arising from intoxicating liquors, yet the former calls forth proclamations from the magistrates, and puts the whole system of police officers on the alert, to defend the city from the horrible calamity, while the latter is *protected and encouraged*!

Those prejudices must be strong indeed, which can prevent people from perceiving where the guilt of the blood lies, in this case. Mr. THOMPSON, the grocer already referred to, owns a number of small houses, or rather hovels, known by the descriptive name of THOMPSON'S *cellars*, they are situated just behind his own grocery. They are generally crowded with the victims of vice and poverty, and from these miserable haunts, the shouts of intemperance, and the brawls which it causes, are almost constantly resounding. Both DELANEY and MONTGOMERY inhabited these cellars. The St. Lawrence Distillery is on the opposite side of the street. Now, if we should find a mangled corpse lying in the neighbourhood of a tiger, or some ferocious beast of prey, we would have no doubts respecting the cause of the unfortunate being's death. And why should we have any greater doubts in this case, when the corpse is found in the parlours of a *grocery*, and within a few yards of a distillery.

Fellow citizens, the blame lies, notwithstanding, chiefly upon you. In looking at the fearful end of MONTGOMERY and DELANEY, you are ready to ascribe it only to their folly or sin. Far be it from us to exculpate them in this respect, but at the same time the sacred cause of truth renders it necessary to present and urge