

# THE CANADA CITIZEN

AND TEMPERANCE HERALD

Freedom for the Right Means Suppression of the Wrong.

VOL. 5.

TORONTO, FRIDAY, JULY 4th, 1884.

NO. 1.

## The Canada Citizen

AND TEMPERANCE HERALD.

A Journal devoted to the advocacy of Prohibition, and the promotion of social progress and moral Reform.

Published every Friday by the

CITIZEN PUBLISHING COMPANY,

OFFICE, 8 KING STREET EAST, TORONTO.

Subscription, ONE DOLLAR A YEAR, strictly in advance.

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TORONTO, FRIDAY, JULY 4TH, 1884.

This number is sent to many friends whose names are not yet on our subscription list. Will they kindly aid our enterprise by forwarding their dollars and addresses? It is desirable to subscribe early, as we propose making every number well worth preserving for future reference and use.

## SEMI-CENTENNIAL REVIEW.

RISE AND PROGRESS OF THE TEMPERANCE CAUSE IN TORONTO  
—EARLY ADVOCATES, ETC.

The history of the temperance cause in the early days of Toronto is necessarily involved in considerable obscurity. No authentic records of the 'Work' attempted or accomplished in those early times have—so far as the writer is aware—been preserved. The memory of the oldest inhabitant is often, nay, proverbially uncertain, and sometimes conflicting. In the record herein attempted, this element of uncertainty, especially in regard to dates or particular circumstances, must be borne in mind. We do not profess to give a connected history in detail of the rise and progress of the 'cause,' but rather a feeble effort to revivify some of the scenes of those bygone days, and to bring again into loving remembrance some of those early pioneers in the temperance movement who, having "served their generations according to the will of God, have fallen in sleep."

Then, as now, the men who were foremost in the ranks, leaders of the small band—which like the 120 who met in the upper room at Jerusalem, were the pioneers of a new principle, destined to disturb and overthrow practices and callings then thought to be highly respectable; like Christians of the Apostolic era, they have been charged with "turning the world upside down" with their peculiar ideas; these men, firm in their conviction of the righteousness of their cause, held bravely on in spite of opposition, of frowns, and sneers, and social isolations; until now the age of ridicule is past, the little one has become a thousand; and the 'irrepressible conflict' will never be ended until Alcoholism, the destroying scourge of civilization is trodden under foot by the superior power of an enlightened Christian sentiment; crystallized into law enforced by faithful men, who will fill out Paul's conception of a magistrate as being a "terror to evil doers and a praise to them that do well." May God speed the day.

We append here a brief 'Roll of Honor' of men who, in their varied spheres of life did good service, and therefore ought to be held in loving remem-

brance by their successors in the work:—Bishop Richardson, Judge Sullivan, the second Mayor of Toronto, and Dr. Morrison, who succeeded him in that honorable office; Revs. James Harris, Dr. Burns, Mr. Mercyfield, John Roaf, Egerton Ryerson, Adam Lillie, William McClure, and Dr. Fyfe; Messrs. Dr. John Rolph, Jesse Ketchum, T. C. Scott, Samuel Aloor, Robert Wightman, James Wickson, John W. Woodfall, John Wightman, Malcolm McLennan, John Nasmyth, Wm. P. Patrick, Peter Frelaud, James Leslie, Joseph Leslie, Thos. Evans, Robert Walker, James Withrow, Alexander Christie, John McBean, E. M. Morphy, Edward Lawson, Edward Bickett, John McNab, County Crown Attorney, Joseph Rowell, Andrew T. McCord, James Dobson, Isaac White, Wm. Sharpe, and Joseph H. Lawrence.

Doubtless this list might be extended indefinitely, yet these few names given will be recognized by many as active workers in the early days of the temperance movement. Chief amongst the powerful agencies on the side of temperance must be named the *Christian Guardian*, representing the religious press; whilst in the secular press are the *Examiner*, James Leslie proprietor; the *Globe* has been a life-long and consistent advocate of the temperance reform.

As respects the churches who early responded and boldly advocated the temperance cause, the palm of priority must be awarded to the Methodist body, the Congregationalists ranking second only because a little later in entering the field.

There were Temperance Societies on the 'moderation' principle before Toronto assumed the dignity of a city, but as to their success in reclaiming drunkards as the term of their existence this deponent testifieth not. Chief, if not the only, of these was a Young Men's Temperance Society, which, for a time, bore everything before it. It was blessed with an enthusiast in the person of Joseph H. Lawrence, who, for that time accomplished wonders. Joe, as he was familiarly called, was a little fond of show and parade, and although (so it was said) entirely innocent of any musical talent himself yet had a genius for 'organizing,' and the fruit of his labors was seen in a 'band,' familiarly known as "Joe's band" of some 20 pieces. The band was neatly uniformed, and decorated with a "Ribbon of Blue." It was one of the sights of those days to see Joe's band heading a Grand Temperance procession which 'foregathered' in Jesse Ketchum's orchard, (near where the present Temperance Hall stands on Temperance St.) and proceeded—headed by Joe as drum major, and proudly manipulating a massive silver-headed cane—to the Methodist church on Adelaide St., then newly erected. We learn from 'one who was there' that the first York Temperance Society was organized about 1829 in the Methodist meeting-house on King St., and that Egerton Ryerson and Dr. Morrison were amongst the most active promoters.

In those early days, as indeed very often since, temperance meetings were principally held in the churches, and as already intimated, the Methodist and Congregational churches went hand in hand in this work. It was at one of these meetings that Jesse Ketchum was moved to 'donate' the piece of land on which is now Temperance St., to the Temperance Society, for the purpose of erecting a hall thereon, which would ever after be the "home" of the temperance element of the city. Such at least was the intention of the donor.

About the fall or winter of 1834, or the spring of 1835, the first "total abstinence" temperance society was formed. Rev. Mr. Mercyfield, of Zion's Congregational church, the ministers of the Methodist church, Dr. John Rolph, and others, taking a prominent part.

From this time forth for some years there is nothing of particular interest to chronicle. The 'Secret' Societies so called, began to make their appearance. The "Rehabites" were the first in the field, and attained considerable proportions, but about 1843 or 1849 from various causes came to a rather inglorious ending. Somewhere along about 1845 the Temperance Reformation Society of Toronto was formed to build the Temperance Hall. This was quite a heavy responsibility in those days, and speaks volumes for the pluck and spirit of the devoted men who took the matter in charge—as some who had the honor of being directors knew to their cost before all liabilities of construction were discharged. The Temperance Hall built as before remarked on the site donated by Jesse Ketchum, was erected by subscriptions raised among the citizens. We are informed that a choice of lots was offered to the Committee, viz., the site which they selected, and a site at the corner of Yonge and Elm St.; the latter site was then in the woods—but we cannot help thinking that were the choice to be made now the northern site would be selected. Be this as it may, it is a noteworthy fact as illustrating the early history of the Province, that our 'now' noble Normal School was 'cradled' to speak in the Temperance Hall; that is, its meetings were held in the Temperance Hall until their present buildings were ready for them. In 1849, the Ontario Division No. 25, Sons of Temperance was organized in the Temperance Hall, where they continued to meet until about two years ago when they moved to an uptown meeting-place. In 1859 in order to encourage the growth of the "Sons," the National Division held its annual session in Toronto. Their meeting was a red letter era in the temperance circles at that time. A monster temperance demonstration was held which not only eclipsed all former efforts in that direction, but has never yet been equalled by any similar effort since. The Sons of Temperance have ever wielded a very considerable influence not only on the social habits of the community but also on the Temperance Legislation—especially in the Provincial Parliament of Ontario. About 1854 or 1855, the I.O.G.T. entered the field and has commanded especially amongst the young a large share of popular favor. About 1859 the late Hon. Geo. W. Brown succeeded in obtaining a Committee of the House to inquire into all matters connected with the liquor traffic. The prohibi-