



Canada Temperance Advocate.

Temperance is the moderate use of things beneficial, and abstinence from things hurtful.

No. 5.

MONTREAL, SEPTEMBER, 1839.

Vol. V.

EXTRACT

From an Address at the Annual Meeting of the St. Andrew's Total Abstinence Society, 21st March, 1839.

We give an abridgement of the excellent Address, because we think it ought to be delivered to all the Societies to which we have access. We omit some parts of it in which the speaker has noticed this periodical in very flattering terms.

That the *Advocate* is an interesting and useful paper, must be evident to all that peruse its pages. The fact of its having reached the fifth volume, notwithstanding the fears of some, and the wishes of others, that it would fall, is decisive evidence of its character. To it, I consider, we are indebted, under Providence, for the present favourable prospects of temperance in this country.

The grand invention of printing, discovered in the fifteenth century, has supplied a most powerful agent in the dissemination of knowledge, and when employed in the cause of truth, and enlisted on the side of philanthropy, it becomes a blessing not easily estimated. How could the benevolent objects of the founders and supporters of the British and Foreign Bible Society—of the Religious Tract Society—or of the various Missionary and other benevolent Societies, be accomplished without the aid of the press. With what prospect of success could the advocates of emancipation in the West Indies, have engaged in their arduous labours without the assistance of printing. Among these worthies, whose names will descend to posterity, adorned with the glory of their own great actions, were some whose eloquence awakened the sympathy of thousands; and tens of thousands more felt the force of the same eloquence, by its being conveyed, by the pens of ready writers, to the press; and, passing from one press to another, it entered every house, and appeared before every individual of the reading population. Thus it was that the general feeling of the nation became enlisted on behalf of justice, mercy, and liberty.

By the help of the same art, the friends of Temperance have been able to spread the knowledge of a simple, but infallible remedy for an evil, terrible as it was universal—Intemperance. I need refer to no other proof of this, than a fact which occurred once in our own neighbourhood. A single tract, published in the United States, sowed the seeds of temperance here. Of the benefit, comfort, and satisfaction that have followed, many present can testify. Of the amount of misery and wretchedness that have been prevented, none can pretend to judge. May the seed that was thus sown increase, and bear seed, until it spread on both sides of our river, and all the inhabitants on its banks become decided friends of our cause. With this wish I am certain very many join; but wishing will not effect our point. We must act; and next to consistency in our own practice, perhaps in no better way can we forward the work, than by supporting and circulating the *Canada Temperance Advocate*.

This leads me to notice the second idea expressed in the motion, namely, the obligation of the friends of temperance to do so. "Freely ye have received, freely give," is an injunction from the highest authority. Are we not indebted to the liberality and labour of others for the light and information we enjoy on the subject? Then let us refund this debt, by imparting to others the means of similar blessings. The *Advocate* is the only paper, devoted to temperance, in the Canadas. Without its friendly visits to our homes, there is reason to fear we would be still more indifferent than we are. It is not improbable that, but for the stirring matter contained in its pages recently, the present meeting would not have been held; and no doubt many have been aroused besides ourselves.

The Committee in Montreal desire only to do good; and, in seeking to do this, they tax the pockets of their fellow-workmen as

little as possible. Notice, for instance, the reductions that have been made in the price of the *Advocate*: from six shillings and upwards per single copy, it has been gradually brought down to one shilling and eightpence; and farther reductions are made when taken in quantities. Over 10, and up to 100 only one shilling and sixpence—which comes to but three halfpennies per month! and few indeed will honestly consider themselves so poor as to be unable to reach this. How cheaply can the adherents of temperance support their system, compared with those who continue to take a drop! Two half pints of ardent spirits will drain the purse, as much as a year's subscription to the temperance paper; but did the evil rest here, the darkest shades of the picture would vanish. What a vast difference in the result! In the one instance you obtain a rational enjoyment for months; in the other, an animal gratification for a day. In the one case you are turning your back on destruction; in the other, going directly into it.

This is no imaginary statement—to multiply proofs would be endless: suffice it to remind you of one fact that occurred but a few months ago, and but a short distance from this place. Some present will readily call to mind their feelings, when on a dreary afternoon, last fall, they heard the cries of distress from an individual stretched on the bottom of an upset canoe, in the middle of the river, benumbed and insensible;—they will further recollect the increased agitation of their feelings, when they learned that there had been two persons in the canoe; but one had sunk, a drunkard, and drunk! Unhappy fate! fearful conclusion of life! and yet of how frequent occurrence. Very many will ally that the above quoted case was one of self-murder, as the inebriated condition of the unfortunate men was the cause of the upsetting of the canoe; and perhaps the respectable tavern keeper, who sold the man the means of his destruction, will say so too. "Out of their own mouths will they be judged." Fearful is the responsibility of such men; and not much less is the responsibility of him, who uses intoxicating liquors in moderation, as it termed. Although his crime is not equal in degree with that of the vander, it is of the same nature. He lends his countenance to the worst of evils; and counteracts, as far as his influence goes, the measures in progress for its removal.

There is every thing against using intoxicating drinks, and every thing in favour of abstaining from them. Few present, that have reached manhood, can clear themselves from the charge of guilt, in having less or more encouraged intemperance; an additional and powerful reason why all should now zealously advance the cause of reform; and let such as have not yet tried the new way be persuaded to make the experiment. The old road has been travelled long enough, and the more it is used, the more muddy it becomes; be persuaded to set foot on the temperance troika. There are no sloughs in it, but firm footing; only turn not aside to the right hand or the left. And if you wish to be entirely safe, keep no company either with Mr. Beer or Mr. Cider. I cannot pretend to say but the latter gentleman may be innocent in himself, but the evil is, he sometimes introduces strangers to the company, of the ardent spirit family; and all the world knows, or should know, that they ought to have been hung a century ago. They have been tried and condemned a thousand times of late years; but, by paying annually to Government a tempting bribe, judgment is perverted, and their unworthy lives prolonged, to be a scourge to the land, and a most deadly destroyer of the lives of men. Therefore, avoid their company, and the company of all that associate with them: Acquaint yourselves with Mr. Coldwater; he is a man of refined mind—of regular habits—frequent the best company;—is as old as creation, and yet as vigorous as when first made. His society was courted by the ancients, and his services a knowledge of