

THE  
Canada Temperance Advocate

MONTREAL, DECEMBER, 1835.

CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR'S DAY.

These times of temptations are approaching, and call for watchfulness from the friends of temperance. They must be uncompromising, and reject any participation in the many occasions indirectly promoting intemperance. Although they may make moderate use of wine and similar beverages, we beg them not to couple them at this season with those expressions of rejoicing peculiar to it.

It is painful to see the wine bottle on the sideboard, and young and old pressed to take a glass, even at an early hour.—What need is there of such mistaken kindness? does it not countenance the working classes in their still more hurtful practices of going about with bottles of spirituous liquor, or treating their friends with it when they call?

If some vent to the heightened feelings of the heart be required, let it be opened to provide firewood, food and clothing for the poor and naked.

PUBLIC DINNERS.

The propriety and tendency of these occasions are now beginning to be strongly questioned. After examining the subject, we feel obliged to condemn them, as at present conducted, as injurious to society in many respects. It is not the province of this paper to notice the manner and degree they must be injurious to the constitution, destructive of order, temptations to vice and immorality, sources of profusion & expense, and pernicious to individual and social happiness.

We feel bound to notice them, because public dinners appear to us one of the props of intemperance; and until they and the whole system of drinking courtesies be abandoned, the cause of temperance will not prosper. If toasts and healths were not connected with drinking, the quantity of liquor drank would be trifling. It is the system of drinking courtesies that the lovers of liquor keep up as a blind under which to indulge their propensities for drinking.

In most cases, without being uncharitable, we must believe that the whole occasion is got up for the purpose of having a jollification, if we may use the expression. We beg, however, not to be understood as making a general conclusion. Many individuals who are friends to sobriety, may be found there from different causes,

but still, we repeat that the general disposition of those who are the greatest promoters of public dinners, forbids us to believe that their leading motive in getting up these occasions, is any other than to have a good dinner, and a carouse after it.

We do not say this in a censorious spirit. A recollection of our own views on these subjects at no distant date, forbids any other feeling than that of sorrow, at their being still in bondage to old and pernicious customs, with the earnest desire to see the same change in their as in our own mind.

To shew that our remarks are based on facts, as to public dinners being the props of intemperance, and that to prosper the temperance cause its friends must determinedly oppose them; we subjoin a note of the number of toasts drunk at the St. Andrew's dinner last year, in this city, as taken from the Montreal Gazette, which we recommend to the perusal of those who, with ourselves, grieve to see occasions of extravagance and intemperance formally panegyrised.

St. Andrews' Dinner at the Albion Hotel:—

Toasts from the Chair,	12
Volunteer toasts by Stewards, &c.	16
Do. by the Company, seven given as samples, say	12
	40

Ditto at Mr Murphy's:—

Enumerated toasts,	26
Besides others, say	6
	—32

Will the impartial reader say we are censorious, or have miscalled public dinners? Is it not understood that drinking a glass of wine follows every toast; and is it not generally done?

What else can we call occasions that sanction, and in common politeness, demand of every individual to drink two or three bottles of wine? Members of temperance societies are called slaves by the lovers of drinking; we return them the epithet in the words of Cowper:—

"He is the freeman whom the truth makes free,  
And all are slaves besides."

It is the intention of the Executive Committee to provide subscription lists to be taken round during this month, in aid of the funds of society.

Those members of the old society who have not yet joined the new, are requested to call at the office of the Secretary to sign the pledges.

PROGRESS OF  
The Temperance Reform.

LOWER CANADA.

MONTREAL.—The Montreal society for the promotion of temperance numbers at present 149 members, 112 of whom have signed the total abstinence pledge; and 37 that excluding from ardent spirits only. The number of members connected with the former societies must number at least 500, so that many have yet to come forward.

The subscriptions raised among a few individuals, amount already to £117 5s.—Two thousand Eighth Reports of the American Temperance Society, have been received from the New York State Society in addition to those formerly noticed by advertisement, most of which have been forwarded to the Eastern Townships.—The Executive Committee have sent an order for 10,000 copies of the same document, for the purpose of placing one in each family in the province speaking the English language.

*Extracts from the report of the Rev. Mr. McKilligan, Agent for the Canada Home Missionary Society, dated Nov. 17, 1835.*

In New Glasgow there is a Sabbath School, which is doing good, and a temperance society, the members of which abstain from all intoxicating drinks. They have found by a very unpleasant experience that no other plan would answer; for by means of wine (so called) and beer, Satan often succeeded in effecting a reconciliation between many and their old enemies rum, whiskey, &c. And this evil has not been confined to New Glasgow.—The society numbered about 70 when I left the place: they seem pleased with the plan, and will, I hope, prove steadfast, and be a blessing to the present generation, and in a greater degree to the next. There is also a temperance society in Paisley, but they have not yet excluded wine, although I think they do not drink it. The good people in Wesleyville are, as yet, in this respect, behind their methodist brethren; but I hope they will soon understand their duty in this matter. In Mascouch there is a society, or several there belong to one at Terrebonne. While I am on this subject I may mention, that I have succeeded in getting seven or eight Temperance Societies formed in various places, and in each of these places some promising attention to the Gospel appears; in most of them real good has been done in the conversion of sinners; and I do not know of any good being done in places where none joined this good cause.