

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—*Macnutt's Translation.*

PLEDGE OF THE MONTREAL TEMPERANCE SOCIETY.

WE, THE UNDERSIGNED, DO AGREE, THAT WE WILL NOT USE INTOXICATING LIQUORS AS A BEVERAGE, NOR TRAFFIC IN THEM; THAT WE WILL NOT PROVIDE THEM AS AN ARTICLE OF ENTERTAINMENT, NOR FOR PERSONS IN OUR EMPLOYMENT; AND THAT IN ALL SUITABLE WAYS WE WILL DISCOURTEGE THEIR USE THROUGHOUT THE COMMUNITY.

MONTREAL, DECEMBER 16, 1844.

NINTH REPORT

OF THE MONTREAL TEMPERANCE SOCIETY.

The last anniversary meeting of this Society was held considerably later in the season than usual, and this meeting, for important reasons, is held much earlier; so that the committee have to report upon a period of little more than eight months—embracing the business season and consequently a time of comparative inactivity in moral efforts. To make up for the deficiency of matter to constitute an ordinary report, it may not be uninteresting to give a brief sketch of the proceedings of the society from its formation in 1835 to the present time, when an important change in the organization of its committee is contemplated.

It does not fall within our present plan to detail the various phases through which the temperance cause has passed from the first temperance meeting convened by the lamented Mr. CHRISTMAS in 1828, to the formation of this society out of the Young Men's Temperance Society, founded by the excellent Mr. PETER CHRISTIE, also deceased; but it may be stated that the principle of total abstinence from all intoxicating drinks, although advocated and acted upon by a number of individuals, was not during that period formally recognized in any pledge, except in a small society connected with the American Presbyterian church.

In the fall of 1835, a few friends of the cause deeply lamenting the divided and almost extinct state of the different societies which had from time to time been formed, and convinced of the inefficiency of the "ardent spirit pledge" upon which they were all based, invited two of the most distinguished Temperance advocates of the United States to visit Montreal with the view of forming a society to combine all that was active in previous organizations.

These gentlemen, viz.: the Rev. JUSTIN EDWARDS and E. C. DELAVAN, Esq., (names justly dear to temperance men throughout the world, and which doubtless history will preserve to the latest generations) most kindly responded to the call, and assisted at a meeting held in the Methodist Chapel on the 22d October, 1835, at which the "Montreal Society for the Promotion of Temperance" was called into existence. The constitution of this society embraced both pledges; but it is to be remarked, that though very few subscribed the total abstinence pledge at first, yet nearly all accessions to the society afterwards were upon that pledge, which soon far outstripped the other in the number of its adherents and in popular favour.

It becomes us here gratefully to remember the efficient aid which this society received in its earlier stages, from devoted friends who are no longer amongst us—amongst whom the Rev. G. W. PERKINS takes a prominent place, on account of the zeal and ability with which he laboured to promote the Temperance Reformation. Mr. WM. GREIG was also an early and untiring labourer in this field of moral effort, so much so, that when the *Canada*

Temperance Advocate was commenced in May 1835, he was requested to become Editor—an office which he ably filled for about a year. To the liberality and influence of Dr. HOLMES also, the cause was much indebted in its earlier stages; and we may take advantage of the absence of Mr. JAMES COURT in Britain, to state that as the able and devoted Secretary of the society, he contrived and executed or superintended almost every plan of usefulness which we have to record.

The *Temperance Advocate* became the organ of the newly formed society, and in addition to it a large donation of temperance documents from the New York State temperance society, was distributed through the winter of 1835-6; during which also the celebrated public discussion between the Rev. Messrs. PERKINS and TAYLOR on the one hand, and Messrs. M'GINN and RUMBOLD on the other, attracted much attention: and we may here remark that in the month of May following, the Rev. Mr. TAYLOR was induced to assume the editorial charge of the *Advocate*, and became a powerful defender of the temperance cause, and as a consequence a prominent mark for the arrows of its enemies.

A Convention of the societies in Lower Canada, was held in February, 1836, at which the number of total abstinence members reported in the Lower province was only 715. In the period under review the first temperance soirée took place, being an attempt to supersede the absurd and mischievous fashion of holding public dinners. In this year, temperance grocery stores began to multiply, although Mr. WILLIAM ADDY had the high honour of establishing the first, some time previously. The first attempt to employ travelling agents was also made on a small scale, about this time.

A Temperance Convention was held in the month of July, 1837 at which the number of total abstinence members reported in the Lower Province was 1787; at this Convention, the propriety of retaining only one pledge, that of total abstinence, was discussed and affirmed, this decision being influenced probably to a considerable extent by the great Convention held at Saratoga in the previous year, at which the same question was most ably investigated. As a consequence, this society dropped the partial pledge in the month of September 1837. During this year, also, the influence of the triumphs of the temperance cause in Preston, Bristol, and other parts of England was sensibly felt here, especially in the labours of the excellent Capt. HUDSON, of the brig *Hartlepool*, which were much blessed in this city.

The political troubles which broke out in the close of this year, and continued through the whole of 1838, rendered this period a melancholy blank in the history of the temperance cause, unless we chronicle defections on all sides and a great increase of drinking occasioned by the excitement and war spirit, and the rations of liquor given to volunteers and soldiers. We may mention that at the annual meeting in 1838, the name was changed into that which the society now bears.

In the spring of 1839, the friends of the cause began again to lift up their heads and consider new plans of usefulness—and in this they were much cheered and encouraged by reports of the astonishing success of Father MATHEW's efforts in Ireland. In imitation of whom the Rev. P. PHILAN, of this city, and the Rev. Mr. CHENOUY, of Beaufort, followed by others, established temperance societies amongst the Irish and French Canadian population in this province, which soon enrolled many thousands and exerted an extraordinary influence in rendering drinking usages unpopular, and diminishing intemperance amongst the masses; whilst the celebrated Mr. BUCKINGHAM in his travels through this country, endeavoured to enlighten the higher classes upon the same subject.