

THROWN IN

BY NEWTON MacTAVISH

THE TEMPERANCE LODGE

*The I. O.
G. T.*

THE Scott Act never reached our village, and local option, that spasmodic forerunner of the Ontario Temperance Act, had not yet come into fashion. Nevertheless we were fortified against the direst ravages of strong drink by a lodge of the Independent Order of Good Templars. We did not go the length, as some communities did, of building a temperance hall, for we were able to procure for a modest rental the township building, proper enough place, and large enough, especially as there was not in those days a preponderance of opinion in support of total abstinence.

Total abstinence, as a matter of fact, was the shoal on which the frail craft of temperance always stuck, for many men who were not out-and-out tipplers were, even so, not averse to a social glass on any occasion or a pull at the bottle on bitterly cold days. Cold itself was always a good reason for drinking whiskey, and in summer beer was tolerated by many an erstwhile squeamish soul. Therefore it was not without trepidation that the organizer of the lodge came into our midst. But he found immediate sympathy and support in most of the Methodists, while others, perhaps of more suspicious faith, said that they guessed it was the right thing to do, but they would rather wait and see how it turned out.

Out-and-out tipplers, those genial specimens of the genus homo who took delight in leaning against the bar, with full glasses in front and empty pockets beneath, laughed the project to scorn. They were of the kind that loaf around, waiting to be treated, and who have the serene type of mind that imagines they can take it or leave it alone. To leave it alone, however, was not their purpose, for to refuse a drink was the same as to lose five cents. And five cents in those days was the difference between being a pauper and being independent.

*Five cents
In those days*

The Order of Good Templars was, above all other things, independent. It provided its own regalia, had its own form