

no 181

FIRST

ANNUAL REPORT,

OF THE

Temperance Society;

OF HIS MAJESTY'S

TWENTY-FOURTH

REGIMENT OF FOOT.



APRIL 23d, 1833.

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R E P O R T, &c.

THE TEMPERANCE SOCIETY of the 24th REGIMENT, having now been established Twelve Months, the Committee feel anxious to render an account of their Stewardship, and in doing so, feel themselves called upon to express, in the strongest manner, their warmest thanks and acknowledgments to Lieutenant-Colonel FLEMING, and those Gentlemen whose bounteous goodness and liberality have enabled the Committee to proceed in this work of philanthropy, far beyond their most sanguine expectations. But before entering into the particulars of the year that has just closed, it may not be uninteresting to the reader to know, in what way and manner this Society had its origin.

In January, 1832, Drunkenness was observed to be very much on the increase, and the commanding Officer was devising various coercive measures for suppressing it; still, it was too visible, that the forbearance of Lieutenant-Col. FLEMING, in not resorting to a more rigorous mode of punishment, was not felt and appreciated in the manner it deserved. At this period it was, that two Serjeants of the Regiment, observing with pain and sorrow that the measures adopted by their indulgent Commanding Officer were slighted, resolved to establish some system of co-operation, and having consulted one or two other serjeants, determined on the formation of a Temperance

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Society. They, accordingly, under the auspices of Lieutenant-Col. Fleming, formed themselves into a Committee, and commenced their labours, by framing an Address to their fellow Soldiers, and drawing up Rules, &c. for the management and guidance of the intended Society. These were embodied, printed and circulated in the month of March, 1832, and on the 23d April following, the Committee held its first meeting, and, finally, established a *Temperance Society!*

Having given a short narration of the origin and formation of the Society, the Committee now proceed to give a detailed account of the Society's proceedings for the past year; and in the first place, would beg to refer to the admission of Members. The total number that have joined our ranks since the formation of the Society in April, 1832, is 100; of whom, from a variety of causes, 49 have been discontinued, leaving our present number only 51. It may be remarked, that out of the number who have left the Society, 6 have been discharged, 2 have been transferred to the Depôt, 3 have paid the debt of nature and are gone to render an account of their Stewardship; the remaining 38, from their vitiated habits and want of resolution, have returned to their former practices of intemperance, "like the sow, to her wallowing in the mire." And here it may not be amiss to inform the reader, that it is the unanimous opinion of the Committee, that had their constitution been based on the principle of a *moderate use of Spirits*, instead of *total abstinence*, their numbers would have been *triple* what they now are; but so fully were the Committee convinced of the fallacy of such a principle, that they determined on striking at the root of the evil, and, that no one should be ignorant of that principle, the Committee, at their meetings, on the 21st of each month, (except when that day may happen to fall on a Sunday,) held for the purpose of receiving the names of applicants for admission, or enrolling such candidates as may have completed their period of probation, — the Declaration and Rules are invariably read to every member joining the Society.

It is not, however, so much the number, as the character and station of the Persons in whom this change of opinion has been wrought, which gives importance to the good already achieved; for, until lately, the various distilled Spirits were considered, by all classes in the Regiment, to be, moderately used, a wholesome and necessary beverage, to support them when on a march, or to revive and refresh them when weary and fatigued;—but experience has taught many of us a different lesson: it has convinced us beyond all doubt, that every kind of spirits are not only unnecessary, but that they are dangerous, pernicious and destructive, both to body and soul.

But in regard to the *probationary* Membership alluded to above, it may be asked where is the necessity for such a measure? to this the Committee would answer, that it appeared essentially necessary, for two reasons;—first to guard the Society from imposition, by those who may be inclined, from the impulse of the moment, to make rash promises, without possessing the fortitude of refraining entirely from the use of Spirituous liquors. Second, to give such as may have been accustomed to Ardent Spirits, and who are really desirous of joining the Society, an opportunity of effectually weaning themselves from it. It is true, such a measure is not necessary in every case, but, as it was considered indispensably necessary in some, it has been rigidly adhered to, and has been productive of much good, as, in no one instance, has a violation of the Rules been allowed with impunity, where the fact has been substantiated.

The Committee would next advert to the Treasurer's Account, but previous to detailing the particulars of that branch of the Society, the Committee most humbly beg to tender their united thanks, and warmest expressions of gratitude, to those Gentlemen, whose very munificent donations have been received, in aid of the Funds of the Society; and, further, to assure them, it has ever been the study of the Committee, to unite firmness with economy, in the discharge of the important duty entrusted to them. The Committee,

however, feel justified in observing, that their means have been limited in consequence of the very few donations received, and of the low rate of subscription, namely Two-pence per month each Member, (as laid down in Article 4, of the Regulations of the Society,) which appeared to the Committee, at the commencement of their labours, to be a measure, not of choice, but of necessity; and subsequent experience has confirmed the opinion they then entertained—that without adopting a small Monthly Contribution, their Funds would soon be exhausted, and the Committee, in that case, obliged to abandon their object. But, notwithstanding the difficulties they have had to encounter, and the opposition they have had to contend with, the Committee feel much pleasure and satisfaction in being able to lay before the Reader, the following Account, furnished by the Treasurer, and beg to observe, that, after defraying the expence of Printing and circulating 900 Temperance Tracts, with a few other trifling charges, there now remains a balance in the hands of the Treasurer, of £1. 17s. 11½ in addition to which there is another sum of 13s. 10¼ due from the Members on Detachment, whose monthly subscriptions have not been paid since the period of their leaving Quebec, in October last.

TREASURER'S ACCOUNT.

DISBURSEMENTS.

200 Copies Temperance Monitor	£2	10	0
100 Do. Do. Advocate	1	5	0
200 Do. of an Address	1	12	6
200 Do. of the Evils of Drunkenness,	1	10	0
200 Do. Temperance Circulars	1	17	6
One Account Book		6	6
One Quire of Paper		1	6
Postage of a Letter			10
Carriage of Books to Montreal		2	6
Half a Quire Paper			7½
Balance in the Hands of the Treasurer		1 17	11½
		£11 4 11	

RECEIPTS.

Donation from Lt. Col. Fleming,	£1	0	0
Do. J. Skey, Esq. M. D.	1	0	0
Do. Captain Townshend,		10	0
Do. Captain Stoyte,		15	0
Do. Captain Doyle,		10	0
Do. Paymaster A. Tovey		10	0
Do. Surgeon W. Byrth,		10	0
Do. Ass. Surg. J. Crawford,		10	0
Do. Qr. Master J. Murray,		10	0
Do. T. Trigge, Esq. Bar. Mr.		5	0
Do. Serjt-Major J. Cox,		3	0
Do. Serjt. W. Merry,		5	0
Do. Serjt. J. Horne,		4	0
Do. Serjt. J. Carter,		5	3½
Do. Private J. Watson,		1	0
Amount of Monthly Subscriptions	4	6	7½
			£11 4 11

The Committee, in the next place, proceed to give a List of the Members at present belonging to the Society, as also of those who have been removed from it, by Death, discharge, or Transfer.

Members.

Serjt. Maj. Cox,	Drum. James Goodwin,
C. Serjt. John Butler,	<i>Privates.</i>
Serjt. Josh. Carter,	Samuel Carrier,
Wm. Delaney,	John Day,
Wm. Cronin,	William Ellis,
Thos. Gray,	Hetherington Foster,
C.— John Groves,	John Fields,
James Horn,	Samuel Gilmore,
Thos. Ireland,	William Gossage,
C.— John Nickinson,	John Harris,
John Potts,	John Harrison,
Drum Maj. Alex. Tague,	Joseph Hasley,
Serjt. Benj. Wilson,	Robert Lawrence,
William Merry,	Francis M'Cormick,
Corp. John Duggan,	Owen Mahon,
Wm. Dwyer,	Henry Mason,
Wm. Fest,	William Rogers,
Sam. Judge,	Thomas Rowe,
L.— Wm. Lambert,	Samuel Sandford,
Thos. M'Kee,	Joseph Sawyer,
L... Robert M'Vay,	Isaac Show,
Martin Mulroney,	George Sherbourne,
John Phelan,	John Sullivan,
Thos. Ryan,	John Veal,
John Watt,	James Watson,
L.— Thos. White, (2d)	Wellington Vauston.

**NAMES OF PERSONS DISCONTINUED
FROM THE SOCIETY.**

John Duffy, Thomas Kenny, John Martin, John Marshal, Patrick M'Guire, Joshua Wigelsworth,	}	Discharged.
Thomas Atkins, Henry Choughton, James Fiatman,	}	Deceased.
Private Richard Cole, William Edwards,	}	Transferred to Depôt.
Drum. George Curley, Private Edward Bush, Alexander Carey, James Cosnett, James Halpin, James Keeffe, George Malluish, L. Cor. Richard Withers,	}	Withdrawn, at their own Request.

Having thus given a full and explanatory account of those persons, who, from the several causes assigned, have left the ranks of the Society, the Committee cannot, but with deep regret, advert to the vast numbers that have been dismissed for a violation of the Rules, several of whom are Non-commissioned Officers, whose indiscretion has done much injury to the cause, and whose example, had they remained steadfast, would, from the influence which Non-commissioned Officers ever possess over their weaker and infatuated brethren, have been productive of the greatest good.

The Committee, in the next place, are extremely desirous, that their comrades should be fully acquainted with the unanimous opinion of the Medical profession with respect to the dangerous tendency of Ardent

Spirits; and in submitting the following letter for their perusal, feel confident of the vast importance which must be attached to the name of the writer Doctor SKEY, Deputy Inspector General of Hospitals in Canada, one of the oldest Medical Officers in the British Army, and whose vast experience and extensive knowledge, not only give a momentous weight and consequence to his sentiments, but entitle him to the unbounded confidence of every Soldier in the Army. The Testimony therein given, may not, therefore, be considered as the opinion alone of DR. SKEY, but also that of his Colleagues and Subordinates throughout the Army Medical Department, and consequently must carry more conviction with it than any thing that can be possibly urged by the Committee of this Society. It is also an important fact which should be generally known, that Physicians have decided, that Alcohol is a powerful Poison; and how do they prove this?—Simply by comparing its effects with other poisons, particularly the Poisons derived, as Alcohol is, from Vegetables;—such as, Henbane, —Poison -Hemlock, —Prussic-Acid, —Thorn-Apples, —Deadly-night-shade—Fox-glove, —Poison-sumach—Oil-of-tobacco,—and the Essence of Opium.

DR. SKEY'S LETTER.

Quebec, Feb. 13th 1833.

“DR. SKEY, begs to return his thanks to Sergeant Major Cox, for his attention in sending to him the two last publications of the Temperance Society, 24th Regiment. He has read them with much pleasure, and thinks them highly creditable to the good sense and good feeling of their Authors. He Congratulates Sergeant Major Cox, and the Committee, on the success of their efforts to produce Temperate habits in the Corps. He would say to them, “*Go on and Prosper,*” and DR. SKEY, will always be glad to contribute to the objects of the Society by any means in his power; by any which the Sergeant Major and the Committee will point out; either by contributing to their funds, or in any other way; for he wishes the Committee to believe, that he is greatly interested in whatever will tend to further their most laudable object, and this desire is founded on the most friendly feelings to the Soldier. He knows well that this dreadful vice of Intemperance is the only defect in the character of the British Soldier, and it would, give him more pleasure than he can find

words to express, in knowing that the really noble character of the British Soldier was not tarnished by this vice, which, perhaps more than any other, lowers him below the Soldiers of other Countries, who are far inferior to him in every other good quality.

“Sergeant Major Cox is at full liberty to say for DR. SKEY, that he is now an old Officer of the Medical Staff, who has had much experience in the Service, in various parts of the world, and who has every where had reason to lament the sad consequences of Drunkenness. He has traced it again and again, from the Boy Recruit, who nauseated the first taste of Spirits, to the old Soldier, whose conformed habits of Drunkenness, rendered him not only unworthy of being a Soldier, but unfit to live, and, alas! more unfit to die. He has traced its effects in producing disease, wholly incurable, and premature Death; or, if not that, protracted Infirmary, before nature intended the man should become infirm.

“It is most true what is said in the pamphlet, that Medicine cannot avail in curing the diseases of the Drunkard. The Medical Men, know it but too well and we give up the case in despair.

DR. SKEY has received some Pamphlets, from the Bishop of London, upon this subject, and he has selected some of each for the use of the Temperance Society of the 24th Regiment, and he hopes the Committee will find some useful Tracts among them.”

THE COMMITTEE, in bringing this Report to a close, conceive it right to observe, that they have confined themselves strictly to the proceedings of their own Society, without entering into any explanation, or of giving an account of what progress is making in the Temperance cause in other parts of the World; and, further beg to observe, that though their main object is, to remedy the evils at home—to stop that Monster, Drunkenness, who is marching with rapid strides through their ranks—and, if possible to banish Intemperance for ever from the Corps:—yet, the Committee are not unmindful of the success of the numerous Societies, not only in this Colony, but, also, in various parts of Europe, to all of which they most readily offer their right hand of fellowship, and heartily rejoice to find that the cause is flourishing, and that people, in general, begin to see the folly and danger attendant upon the use of Ardent Spirits, in almost every part of the civilized world.

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THE COMMITTEE, fully sensible of the inutility of directing individual force against such a powerful enemy as the one whose progress they are endeavouring to arrest, feel called upon to make another appeal to every class of their Fellow Soldiers, to lend their aid and assistance in crushing that Arch-Enemy of Mankind, that curse and bane of the British Army, which, in every other point of view, stand unrivalled and unequalled by any Troops in the world.

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**AN APPEAL,**

TO ALL CLASSES OF MEN IN THE  
 REGIMENT.

THE COMMITTEE having given a full, and, they trust, impartial account of their proceedings for the past year, would now beg to impress upon their Comrades in Arms, the necessity of their co-operation in this great undertaking. The Society having now been established Twelve Months, sufficient time has been given you to judge of our cause, whether it be good or not; if *good*, then for the Love of God, for the love you bear to yourselves, your wives and children, your aged parents, and all your near and dear relations, we beseech, nay we *implore* you to join us, and to give us the aid of your names and influence. You are as much in duty bound, by the Law of Nature, to join the Temperance Society, as you are, by the Law of the Land, to obey *its* injunctions; and, remember, we give you this plain, this solemn warning—That punishment due for the non-performance of so essential a trust, and of living regardless of the duty and love we owe to our neighbour, will not be of a *transient* nature;—no! it will follow you to the Eternal World, and close only with Eternity!!

But, if, after giving it a trial, you prove our cause to be chimerical, then cast us off for ever; you are, however, first bound, as Members of the Human Family, to make the Trial; and we defy you and the

World, to evince the Temperance Cause any other than one of complete Philanthropy.

But, as there are many who *do* not, and others who *wish* not, to understand, what is the basis of our Constitution, the Committee deem it right *again* to make known their Fundamental Principle;—which is —not merely to prevent the *abuse* of Ardent Spirits, but, *utterly*, to abolish the *use* of them.

Had the Society admitted of a moderate use of Spirits, instead of this principle of *Total Abstinence*, their numbers, as has been before observed, would have been much more numerous than they now are; but it was the unanimous opinion of the Committee, that while they could reclaim one confirmed Sot, on that principle, by inducing him to drink moderately, ten Drunkards would have sprung up from the ranks of the Society itself.

Again, the object of the Society is not confined solely to the reclaiming of *Drunkards*, although it is advanced by some, and urged by many, that such Societies are intended solely *for* Drunkards, who cannot reclaim themselves, not for those *who are not such*, they being already temperate, there is no need whatever for their joining a Temperance Society.— Alas! short-sighted Reasoners! what certainty have they, that they may not become the victims of Intemperance, and eventually, the worst of sots? And if they have no better security than their own strength, and drinking *moderately*, they most assuredly will. Though we do not *reject* Drunkards, but allow them to join the Society, (and heartily rejoice in every such instance of reformation,) yet that is not our main, our grand and principal object; if such was the case, it were a hopeless task indeed. No! our object is, to save men from *becoming* Drunkards, not to permit them to *become* such, and reclaim them afterwards. It is not, therefore, in the *abuse* alone, that the evil exists, but in the *use*; for as long as the use of Spirits is encouraged and permitted, the abuse will inevitably follow.

The Committee would now most earnestly call upon all well-disposed persons to lend their names, their aid and assistance, to this great undertaking. To those Gentlemen who are placed in authority over us, and are appointed Guardians to the Regiment, we humbly and respectfully look for countenance and patronage; and most earnestly beseech them, to shed their benign influence around their bewildered and besotted fellow-creatures. Non-commissioned Officers! we claim *your* assistance and example. Fathers and heads of Families, from you much is expected; banish the poisoned cup from your own lips, from the lips of your wives and children, and do not, by your indiscretion and folly, bring infirmity with an innumerable train of evils, upon yourselves and upon your families. To the Single, we would say "BEWARE!" lest you proceed too far in your mad career of drunkenness; be warned in time, ere your insatiable propensity for Ardent Spirits hurries you beyond the reach of hope, and you find yourselves overwhelmed in despair, and on the very brink of Eternity, with no better prospect before you than the Hell appointed (as the Scriptures inform us) for all Drunkards; for Ardent Spirits are slow in their progress, but not the less sure in their grasp; they seize, not only the natural but the moral man; they consign the body to the tomb, and the soul to everlasting torments!—While engaged in the pursuits of this world, the victim of Intemperance is as stupid as the Ass of the Field; as savage and ferocious as the wild Beast of the Forest; as polluted as the Swine, and as malevolent as a Fiend. A man may possess every grace and virtue; his mind may be endowed with all the knowledge necessary to qualify him for the command of an Army, or to sit as Supreme Governor of a Nation, but if he habituates himself to the use of Ardent Spirits, they will rob him of all his good qualities, and change him into a Demon. It surely cannot be necessary for the Committee to point out, how and in what way, or manner, the use of Spirits thus transforms the moral Man into a state of being far below

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the Brute Creation. But they may be asked "Have not Ardent Spirits, surely, some good qualities?"—We say "None!"—"Are they not good as a medicine?" *No!*—There is not a Physician at present in practice that needs their aid; and we are warranted in saying, that there is not a disease to which the human body is subject, that cannot be cured *better* without them. Their tendency is, to *shorten* life, not to *prolong* it. The following Extract from the Register of the Society of Friends, or Quakers, a Temperate class of people, will illustrate this point.

"As a consequence of their *Temperate Habits*, *one half* of those that are born, live to the age of *47 Years*; and an eminent Physician informs us, that, of the General Population of London, *half* that are born, live only *2½ Years!*—Among the Quakers, *one* in every *ten* arrive to *80 Years of Age*; the general population of London, only *one* in every *forty*,"

He might also mention, if further proof were necessary, to shew the predisposing nature of Ardent Spirits to disease; the fact, that of *14 Men* belonging to the Regiment, who were carried off by the late Epidemic, *Two* only were strictly Temperate persons; *Three* were moderate Drinkers, and the other *Nine*, Habitual Drunkards. Never were their more powerful arguments adduced in support of the practice of Temperance.

Hence, it appears that Ardent Spirits are not necessary, either as a Beverage or as a Medicine, but are deleterious in every sense of the word; they destroy the clearness, the flexibility, the serenity, the purity, the powers of reflection and the comprehension of the mind; they destroy the skill of the Physician, the judgment of the Lawyer, the ingenuity of the Mechanic;—they impair and undermine the strength and constitution of the Labourer, and render him unable to bear fatigue or cold. In a word, they derange and disorganize the *whole race of mankind*.

Now in the face of all that has been said, let no one say, I doubt the success of your experiment, and therefore will not join in it ;—You are bound by the laws, both human and divine, by every tie of nature, to make the trial ; by neglecting to do so, you wilfully abandon a most sacred duty ; rather than be accused of such a gross violation of duty, unite with us in this laudable object. Join hand and heart in this glorious cause ; and as we have sound reason on our side, let us never yield but to the force of reason ; let us defend it with our persons, our properties, and our little all !

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BULL, Printer, 19, St, Paul-Street