

# Is Teenage Drinking Chronic? Magistrates are Concerned . . . . .

How serious is the problem of drinking teenagers? Is it "chronic" as Magistrate Kenneth Langdon of Georgetown claimed this week or is it no worse than 20 years ago as other authorities and observers feel?

The facts themselves tell one story. Last week, for instance, police found a 16 year old boy unconscious at a county high school dance and 58 empty beer bottles scattered around the school premises.

Last week, too, Magistrate Langdon told the story of a 15 year old who admitted drinking a whole 26 ounce bottle of rum Juvenile Court alone heard

two such cases a week on the average, Magistrate Langdon claimed and "two would be lucky if we saw one per cent of the offenders".

Magistrate's court deals with a steady stream of drinking teens week after week.

In desperation, Magistrate Langdon has gone as far as to threaten youths in custody and threaten suspension of their driving licences to try and contain the problem.

Magistrate Langdon sees no easy way of reducing the problem. "There is alcohol in almost every home and most parents have no way of keeping it from their children," he said.

"Minors have no trouble finding associates who will buy liquor for them or who have identification cards saying they are 21," he added.

He said that fines for offenders no matter how heavy are of no use since parents usually pay them for their children.

Crown Attorney Peter McWilliams is in substantial agreement with the magistrates. He sees an increase in drinking offenses coupled with a corresponding decrease in the age of offenders.

He questions whether the policy of keeping alcohol away from youths under 21 years works any better than the prohibition of the 1920's.

where we have restrictions," he added. "Rights and limits are imposed upon all of us."

Both Magistrate Langdon and Magistrate Black felt that for many teenagers drinking represents a "status symbol."

Obviously with his views on the subject, Magistrate Langdon is very hesitant about changing the legal drinking age. He does feel however that there are many 19 year old university students who appear much more mature than others much older.

If it was the least bit practical he said, he might favor the idea of restricting alcohol to those that could prove they were adult.

Magistrate J.R. Black thinks that moderate fines usually succeed in making the teen drinker realize his mistake.

If it takes the offender seven or eight weeks to pay a \$50. fine, the magistrate claimed the stupidity of the whole thing will probably sink in. "We do not have too many repeaters in this court" he said.

Neither Magistrate Black or Magistrate Langdon are the least bit hesitant to jail those appearing before them a second time. Crown Attorney McWilliams singled out suppliers for jail terms.

Curbs Needed

Although Magistrate Langdon sees no really good means of curbing the problem, he does feel that the court strikes pay dirt once in a while when an alcoholic makes an appearance at the same time as the young offenders.

He favoured too the idea of taking teenage offenders on a tour of big city "skid rows".

Magistrate Langdon places the blame for the problem squarely on the shoulders of society in general.

"It is a result of a lessening of all agencies of control and the replacement of none," he said. "And we're going to pay for it."

"We need an orderly society

## Hallowe'en Collections \$632 Going to UNICEF

With Hallowe'en UNICEF collections reached a new high of \$634, the campaign went "way over the top", according to Mrs. Keith Barber, who has headed the drive over the past few years. The results were released this week.

The amount has climbed steadily each year from a total of \$160 the first year to \$507 last year, to the new high of \$634 this year.

### BAYBERRY CANDLES POPULAR FAVORITE

The settlers of our country found that the bayberry gave off a wax that would make fine candles. Since animal fats were important as food and for other uses, it was the bayberry candle that was used as much as possible. It was usually the task of the children to gather the berries.

Candles have always been associated with Christmas and many legends give them a place in the observance of the holiday.

In Ireland, for instance, on Christmas eve a large candle was burned which could be snuffed out only by one named Mary.

An old verse repeats the tradition, that burning a bayberry candle on Christmas eve would insure one of a long and happy life.

To learn your luck for a year, they say,  
Burn a bayberry dip on Christmas day.  
If the flame burns bright and the light shines clear,  
Good-luck will be yours throughout the year.

### CHRISTMAS CLEAN UP

Cleaning up after opening Christmas packages can be quite a chore. Before it's time for opening packages have handy a couple of large shopping bags. Find a good size cardboard box. You'll have a place for ribbons and trim you want to keep, and a carton for throw away boxes.

Donations have arrived from all over, but it was mainly the efforts of the children, in public, high, and Sunday schools, which achieved the grand total.

The list of donors is as follows:

- Verdun Rebekah Lodge, \$25;
- Stewarttown Public School, \$41.35;
- Limchouse Public School, \$59.60;
- Georgetown Christian school, \$63.;
- St. John's United Sunday school, \$63.58;
- Knox Presbyterian Sunday school, \$67.03;
- St. Andrew's United Sunday school, \$56.75;
- Norval & Union Presbyterian Sunday school \$46.05;
- St. Paul's Anglican Sunday school Norval \$22.80;
- Countess of Strathmore, IODE \$10.;
- Georgetown & District High school \$79.95;
- Norval United Sunday school, \$4.;
- St. Alban's Anglican Glen Williams \$4.23;
- St. Paul's Baptist Sunday school \$10.;
- St. George's Anglican Sunday school \$76.73;
- Maple Avenue Baptist Sunday school \$33.15

This amount represents many children saved from starvation, hunger, and disease.

## Note Increasing Interest in Educational Research

An increasing interest in educational research on the part of classroom teachers is the most important conclusion to draw from the eighth annual conference of the Ontario Educational Research Council, according to its president.

Among those registered from Georgetown were Eric Balkind, Gary Dawkins, Ron Chatten, W.L. MacDonald, and D. F. Turner.

Magr. E.W. Harrigan, pastor of Holy Family Church in Hamilton, Ont., in addition to being OERC president, said the attendance at the two-day meetings held at the Royal York Hotel on Dec. 9 and 10 totalled 670, which is 63 per cent more than the attendance of 410 last year.

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