

ABSTRACT.

The thesis seeks to deal only with a limited aspect of Engels' thesis on the relationship between drunkenness and industrialisation during the early 19th century - with the organisation , sources of support and leadership of the three liquor restrictionist campaigns before 1869 - the anti-spirits, teetotal, and prohibitionist movements.

The attempt to solve the drink problem through the association of abstainers did not begun until the appearance of the anti-spirits movement in Britain in 1828-9. Although for centuries there had been individual abstainers, and even public campaigns against drunkenness, nobody had thought of founding a temperance society . Three recent social changes prepared the way for the early anti-spirits movement. Firstly, the gradual abandonment of drunkenness by fashionable society at least by the end of the 18th century , and the appearance of a sober labour aristocracy by the 1820s. Secondly, the sophistication after the late 18th century of techniques of public agitation; and thirdly the desire evinced by certain sections of society , partially provincial manufacturers and nonconformists, allied with labour aristocrats, for certain radical changes in the political and social system.

The idea of anti-spirits association originated in America in the 1820s and soon reached Britain via the Anglo-

American philanthropic network. Originating simultaneously in Glasgow with John Dunlop and in Belfast with Dr. John Edgar, the new movement soon spread to the North of England. By 1831 the British and Foreign Temperance Society had been established at Exeter Hall. In individual instances, religious zeal was the motivating force, but other factors seem to have made British society in the late 1820s receptive to temperance agitation. The suspicion that religious factors are not the only influences at work is suggested by two considerations: temperance was ardently recommended both by religious and irreligious opinion-formers, and the temperance movement appeared at the same time as many other pressures on working people to conserve their resources.

Relevant factors seem to be the following. Taxation changes in the 1820s had prompted fears that a second "gin age" might be imminent; difficulties with the textile industries in the North seem to have increased the attractiveness of a movement which promised to extend the home market and discipline the work force. Manufacturers in the Northern cities showed some enthusiasm for the early anti-spirits movement. Thirdly, the cheapening and improved accessibility of non-intoxicating drinks made organised abstinence from intoxicants more feasible than at any earlier date.

The first parliamentary inquiry into drunkenness was held in 1834, and although its recommendations were in many ways far-sighted, it was ridiculed by parliament and the

press largely for two reasons: because of the unpopularity of its chairman , the radical J.S.Buckingham and of his associates on the committee - the Evangelicals. And secondly because the committee's long-term suggestions - notably prohibition - were mistaken for immediate recommendations. Provincial society in the Northern industrial towns was more favourable than London opinion towards the committee and to its report.

Hostility to the Evangelicals certainly inspired Francis Place's vigorous attack on the committee. Though well aware of the need to promote temperance, Place felt that the Evangelicals , with their anti-spirits societies and their proposals for restrictive legislation had lighted upon the wrong remedy . Firstly , he thought that temperance could only effectively be promoted through training working men in the exercise of their reason , and through the increasing of their self-confidence. Secondly , Place felt that the committee's attack on working-class drunkenness would make impossible that union of middle and working classes which he so desired to bring about; it would certainly make those in authority less likely to concede political influence to the working people.

Thirdly, Place resented all upper class attacks on the habits of the class from which he had sprung , and was probably piqued when the Committee ignored his own evidence

and suggestions for further investigation. Hence, after failing to influence the committee's report through his personal contacts at Westminster, he wrote his Defence of the People, attacking the thesis that drunkenness was spreading among the "lower orders".

The statistics used by both sides in this discussion are unreliable and inconclusive, but on closer inspection it is clear that Place and the Committee disagreed less radically than they supposed. Place's claim that since 1800 a labour aristocracy had crystallised out from the London working classes is not irreconcilable with the evidence on which the committee based its case.

Nevertheless the committee, like most contemporary parliamentary inquiries, displayed bias and its evidence should be accepted by social historians only with great caution. From the viewpoint of the liquor restrictionist campaigns, however, it constituted a most valuable collection of supporting evidence.

While the committee was sitting, the anti-spirits movement was rapidly being captured in the North of England by the labour aristocracy. The British and Foreign Temperance Society depended for support on Anglicans and aristocrats in alliance with nonconformists and the Evangelical public.

It soon proved unsatisfactory for several reasons. It was provoking criticism even before the appearance of the teetotal movement , and never attracted the support enjoyed by other Evangelical charities. Teetotalers complained that by barring spirits without barring wine and beer, the B.F.T.S. was proscribing the drink of the poor while leaving the rich with their wine. Again , it did nothing towards curing the drunkard , especially in beer-drinking areas , whose facilities had recently been reinforced by the Beer Act of 1830.

The teetotal movement , as an organised campaign , originated at Preston with a group of Liberal/Radical non-conformist working men led by the Scotch Baptist, moral reformer and cheesemonger, Joseph Livesey . He composed the Malt Lecture, which attacked the widespread faith in the nourishing qualities of beer. Preston not only developed the doctrine and practice of teetotalism. It also provided the new movement with techniques of agitation and with itinerant orators who spread the new Gospel throughout the nation.

In 1835-7 a series of schisms followed within the anti-spirits societies of the North of England. Their wealthier members objected to the crudeness of the manner in which working men recommended teetotalism at temperance meetings; they feared the radical directions the movement seemed to be taking. When anti-spirits societies broke up , the "moderat-

ionists" tended to come from a higher social grade than the teetotalers. The aim of teetotalers to reclaim the drunkard caused them to adopt quite different forms of organisation and activity . National teetotal societies were soon formed , but the attachment of the lower social grades to extremist causes reappears in the further schism which occurred in 1838-42 between long- and short-pledge wings of the teetotal movement..

Despite these schisms within the teetotal movement , the anti-spirits societies under the B.F.T.S. gradually decayed . By 1848 the anti-spirits movement was virtually dead. During its declining years, the B.F.T.S. tried to weaken its teetotal rival by attempting to link it in the public mind with infidelity . While there is some truth in this accusation , the religious views held by many teetotalers which appeared unorthodox in the 1840s had by the late-Victorian period become quite acceptable. Furthermore, despite the existence of large numbers of teetotal atheists, notably in the Teetotal Chartist movement , the official teetotal movement had always been a religious movement, even though it did not attract more than a small minority of nonconformist ministers..

Teetotalers were largely recruited from those who had received religious training in youth and from nonconformist tradesmen and working men in urban areas, though some of its

members may have been seeking to restore certain qualities of pre-industrial society which they recalled from childhood. In general , however, the temperance and prohibitionist movements were managed by individuals who displayed great enthusiasm for industrial society and for the political changes it was helping to bring about. Among the leaders of the teetotal movement , religious conversion experiences and fears of Divine Wrath seem to have been a very important influence.

The next important development occurring within the temperance movement did not take place till 1853 , with the formation of the United Kingdom Alliance, with the objective of prohibiting the trade in intoxicants. There were several reasons for the transition to this most drastic form of state intervention by individuals who in other spheres were usually ardent free-traders and opponents of state control. Firstly , the failure of the moral suasionist movement to solve the problem of drunkenness attracted many teetotalers into the Alliance. Secondly , the decentralising and democratic aspects of the Permissive Bill attracted the support of many Liberal politicians who had hitherto remained aloof from the temperance movement. Thirdly , the peculiar nature of the drink problem virtually demanded state intervention. The Alliance demonstrated this through its refutation of J.S.Mill's attack on the Maine Law . And its supporters, F.W.Newman , T.H.Green , and Cardinal Manning argued that

the requirements of sobriety were incompatible with an amoral state which idealised a negative concept of liberty, and which too easily neglected the freedom of wife and child in favour of the liberty of the husband.

While at first sight this transition among opponents of state intervention into factory hours and education towards support for state prohibition of the liquor traffic seems remarkable, but on close inspection it becomes less so. The Permissive Bill proposed no system of central supervision or inspection. Furthermore, the Alliance, the voluntarist agitation against state control of education, and the opposition to the Factory Acts from nonconformist free-traders, were all different ways of opposing Anglican and aristocratic ascendancy. And whereas state intervention into factory hours threatened to reduce manufacturing profits, prohibition could only increase them.

The Alliance made its Permissive Bill into a political issue through skilfully applying the techniques developed by the Anti-Corn Law League. Its support came primarily from classes outside parliament - from certain groups of nonconformist manufacturers, from a minority of nonconformist ministers, from a large number of labour aristocrats particularly in the North of England, and probably also from women. Few aristocrats supported it, and few Anglicans until the 1860s. Regionally, its support came primarily from the North, and

especially from Manchester and Lancashire. London was relatively apathetic and support came from industrial rather than from rural areas. Among the predominantly rural areas, however, there were some variations: the West of England, and the North Western rural areas were far more ready to give money to the Alliance than the rural areas of the South-East.

The Alliance publicly displayed its strength conspicuously ; it paraded its numerical strength through the public meeting , the congress and the bazaar. It conspicuously displayed the urgency of its reform through the petition, the parliamentary question , the deputation and the letter to the M.P. It conspicuously displayed its money-power through the guarantee-fund and the published subscription list.

Quakers and factory owners were prominent among the leading donors , and total receipts rose dramatically after 1865 . Donations came primarily from the relatively rich , though not from the really wealthy individuals whose resources had been tapped in the 1840s by the Anti-Corn Law League. The money seems to have been efficiently spent, primarily on public meetings, petitions and printed propaganda, especially the weekly Alliance News. The Alliance also attracted support by displaying the wealth of argument in support of its case, and was skilful in bringing arguments to the attention of influential individuals - M.P.s , philanthropists and religious leaders.

The Alliance gradually evolved techniques for influencing parliamentary elections , and though it nominally remained politically neutral and condemned both political parties for their failure to offer social reform programmes, in reality its supporters were almost invariably nonconformist radicals and its political alignment and fortunes closely parallel those of the Liberation Society.

The Alliance rapidly attracted public attention , particularly through the violence organised by its opponents at its meetings in 1855. The Hyde Park riots , though nominally designed to frustrate sabbatarian legislation in reality showed parliament that the enactment of any restrictive legislation might provoke working people into dangerous urban uprisings. By the late 1850s Alliance efforts at the hustings had secured the support of a small minority of M.P.s., mostly Liberals , for the Permissive Bill.

In its opposition to Gladstone's wine licensing legislation of 1860 , the Alliance displayed that many Lancashire nonconformists were prepared to impose strict moral limits on the application of laissez faire principle. During the agitation of 1860 , drinksellers and liquor restrictionists found that their interests temporarily coincided. Together they fought the free-trade policies of a Liberal Chancellor of the Exchequer, and there were even premonitions of the subsequent tendency for drinksellers and drink manufacturers to align themselves with the Tory party.

The Alliance gained considerably from its activities in 1860 and strengthened itself by appointing J.H.Raper as its parliamentary agent and the Cobdenite radical Wilfrid Lawson as its parliamentary spokesman. Its Permissive Bill was first fully discussed in parliament in 1864 and attracted 35 supporters ,mostly Liberals from the Celtic seats and from the North of England and Cornwall. Alliance leaders took an active part in promoting franchise extension in 1865-7, and felt that they could only gain from the enfranchisement of the labour aristocracy , and from the political attitude which Robert Lowe voiced in his famous declaration "we must teach our future masters to learn their letters".

By 1869 , despite its failure to get Samuel Pope, its secretary , into parliament , and its failure to win parliamentary elections through its own efforts , the Alliance had mobilised a forceful section of public opinion which desired the government to take some action on the licensing question. The pattern of support in the Permissive Bill division of 1869 resembles that of the 1864 division , but the Bill now attracted 87 supporters as opposed to 35.

Although temperance legislation of the policing type could as well have come from the Conservative party as from the Liberals, there were both traditional and ideological reasons why prohibitionists should look primarily to the Liberal party for support. Although prohibition did not harmonise completely with Liberal attitudes, Liberals and Radic-

als, always eager to attack monopolistic trading conditions, and always hostile to indirect taxation, had also long been identified with the campaign for electoral purity and for removing corrupting influences from politics. The fact that Alliance supporters had from the first been ardent radicals, and that support for the Permissive Bill was attracted primarily from Liberal M.P.s., even in the 1850s , suggests that the subsequent identification between Liberalism and temperance stems from an affinity more deeply rooted than the traditional marriage of convenience between nonconformity and the Liberal party.

Insofar as the Alliance was a puritanical body , however, pursuing exclusively nonconformist sectarian objectives, it embarrassed many Liberals . Regarded purely as a campaign to eliminate the drink evil , the Alliance crusade certainly did arouse a great deal of unnecessary opposition, and alienated many potential friends. Not only did its electoral and parliamentary pressure embarrass many M.P.s. - its refusal to compromise , its insistence on holding to the "straight road", its virtual delight in stirring up opposition and in eschewing conventional political and gradualist tactics, its indifference to the practicality of its measures, its tendency to erect drink into an all-embracing, all-explaining evil , and its blind faith in its remedy , unsupported by research - all seem in retrospect well calculated to hinder the task of temperance reform. The Alliance did not secure the passage of its Permissive Bill , nor did it assist in

passing other forms of temperance legislation.

Yet this does not justify the accusation that the Alliance crusade was a failure. On the contrary , it performed very useful functions for its nonconformist supporters, and many of its apparently inept tactics become intelligible when seen against the background of 19th century nonconformist social deprivation. Alliance supporters wished to evade complicity in a flagrant evil without increasing the power or resources of a central government which in the past had seriously threatened their beliefs, their pockets and their pride.

In conclusion , it seems likely that the first thirty years of liquor restrictionist agitation had little influence on the problem of drunkenness. Consumption statistics, statistics on the relative number of drinksellers in particular localities, and figures showing the small proportion of the total population adhering to temperance organisations, and the small proportion of reformed drunkards within them, all support this conclusion. Such improvements as did occur in the period in popular sobriety had either begun before the movement began , or can be attributed to social and technological changes - to the appearance of the railway and to innovations in brewing techniques, for instance - which occurred quite independently of the liquor restrictionist

movement.

Furthermore the liquor restrictionists actually diverted attention away from more effective remedies for the drink evil , and used their resources inefficiently in dealing with the problem in hand. From the first, sectarianism was a danger within the movement , and the substantial accession of religious support during the 1860s and 1870s increased its tendency to pursue purely religious and denominational objectives. Fears of disestablishment , of infidelity and of Christian disunity seem to lie behind the Anglican change of heart towards the temperance movement during the 1860s. And once the Anglicans had embarked on the temperance crusade, those nonconformists who had previously refused to join the agitation , could hold back no longer. The change seems to have been pioneered by a small group of Evangelical Anglicans in the late 1850s, and was soon taken up , partly for denominational reasons, by Cardinal Manning. By the 1870s , the Church of England Temperance Society had become one of the leading and most successful of temperance organisations.

Yet bearing in mind all these criticisms of the liquor restrictionists before 1869, and despite the marked contrast between the 19th century temperance crusade and what would now be considered the most efficient type of temperance campaign , the temperance movement should not

be lightly dismissed as an absurdity , or as a mere diversion from more important remedies for contemporary social ills. Not only would it have been impossible to mount a 19th century campaign for temperance on lines which would now seem desirable ; it should also be remembered that temperance reformers were among the most progressive men of their generation , supporting the Anti-Corn Law League, financial and political reform , and promoting the alignment of religious activity with social amelioration.

Temperance reformers were precocious in many of their attitudes - in their attack on the assumption that poverty was inevitable , for instance. They recognised the importance of socialising demand , emphasised the importance of securing a balanced diet , insisted on dietary freedom and on the need to adjust consumption patterns in the face of continuous prosperity. Above all , they vigorously attacked an unrestricted application of laissez faire principles. The 19th century temperance movement promoted social harmony and helped to interest the religious and philanthropic public in social amelioration. As such , its importance and significance in the history of 19th century England should not be underestimated.

THE TEMPERANCE QUESTION IN ENGLAND

1829-1869

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to prolixity in thesis-writing must be resisted, but of all sections in my thesis , this is the section I would be most reluctant to curtail.

INTRODUCTION.

"Until a little over ten years ago, it really had begun to look as if drunkenness in this country was on the way out". This comment, by a recent writer in a popular weekly,¹ shows that the temperance question can still arouse contemporary interest. Indeed, in the sphere of road accidents, we are proving ourselves as capable as the mid-Victorians of adopting stringent liquor regulations. Nevertheless, this is not my reason for studying the temperance question in the 19th century. Remedies which the 19th century found relevant in tackling the drink problem are not necessarily applicable in the transformed social conditions of today.

The 19th century temperance movement is worth studying for its own sake. While the drink problem does not seem to me to be one of the most interesting or important problems in modern society, in the 19th century it was undoubtedly at the centre of political, religious and social debate. A study of the attack on drunkenness is therefore likely to shed some light on the nature of 19th century society as a whole, and this is my reason for studying it.

There are signs that the importance of drink in 19th century English history has begun to attract attention from

1. New Society, 21 Mar 1963, p.16.

the historians - notably from W.L.Burn in his Age of Equipoise, and from Dr. Kitson Clark in his Making of Victorian England. Furthermore, the debate between economic historians on the early 19th century standard of living has clearly reached a stage at which it would profit considerably from discussing those social consequences of industrialisation which are less susceptible to statistical treatment. Many "qualitative" changes which occurred in the life of the early 19th century working man have not yet received their historians. The debate must be enriched by research into crime and disease, recreation and unemployment, housing and popular culture, prostitution and drunkenness.

The ideal thesis on the temperance question between 1828 and 1869 would test against available statistics the widely-accepted notion that industrialisation greatly increased the temptations to drunkenness, and that the temperance movement appeared as a natural response to this. The second half of the latter interpretation has to face the awkward facts that the temperance movement appeared only in the 1830s - after industrialisation had been proceeding apace for two generations. Furthermore, with the drink question as with factory hours, humanitarian agitation began at a time when the evil had already begun to diminish.¹ Thirdly, the attitude

1. See below, pp. 29ff., 118; and cf. N. Smelser, Social Change in the Industrial Revolution, 1959, p. 284.

of temperance reformers themselves to their agitation deserves some consideration.

For ~~them~~, the campaign for liquor restriction was not an attempt to defend a rural and harmonious society against the demoralising effects of industrialisation. In their early stages, the teetotal and prohibitionist movements did not gain support from those classes who had wielded authority in pre-industrial England - from the squire, the landowner, the parson and the magistrate. Unlike Engels, Cobbett and Oastler, temperance reformers welcomed the liberating effects of industrialisation, and waged their reforming campaign as part of a general attack on ignorance, feudalism and rusticity.¹ Their movement spread out from the towns like the Anti-Corn Law League, as a crusade against rooted customs and outworn attitudes. Though many temperance reformers fully recognised the miseries of the urban slum², few of them would have exchanged 19th century industrial society, with all its drawbacks, for any 18th century Arcadia.

There is more substance, however, in the belief that there was some link between industrialisation and increased intemperance. This thesis stems largely from Engels' Condition of the Working Class in England: "in view of the general

1. See below, pp. 58ff., 167, 228ff., 511, and appendix, tables 12, 23, 24, 30A; and diagrams 16-22.

2. See below, p. 229.

environment of the industrial workers, drunkenness ceases to be a vice for which the drunkard must accept responsibility. It becomes a phenomenon which must be accepted as the inevitable consequence of bringing certain influences to bear upon workers , who in this matter cannot be expected to have sufficient will-power to enable them to act otherwise. The responsibility lies with those who turned the factory hand into a soulless factor of production and have thus deprived him of his humanity".¹

Engels also claimed that the working people were "deprived of all pleasures except sexual indulgence and intoxicating liquors. Every day they have to work until they are physically and mentally exhausted. This forces them to excessive indulgence in the only two pleasures remaining to them".² Although much contemporary evidence can be adduced in support of the Engels thesis ,³ it should not be uncritically accepted.

In discussing drunkenness, Engels was misled by statistics which apparently showed an increase in spirits consumption but which really reflected their diversion from illegal to legal outlets.⁴ It might be argued that he could hardly have been misled by his own personal observations in

1. F. Engels, The Condition of the Working Class in England, (Tr. & Ed. W.O. Henderson & W.H. Chaloner, Oxford, 1958), p. 116.

2. ibid., p. 111.

3. e.g. from Oastler, quo. in N. Smelser, op.cit., p. 284.

4. F. Engels, op.cit., p. 142, n. 2.

Manchester on Saturday nights. There certainly was an appalling degree of brutish drunkenness in the Manchester of the 1840s. Yet many of the drunkards whom Engels watched had recently arrived from the agricultural and pre-industrial society of Ireland. Historians and anthropologists are now well aware that drunkenness can be as widespread in a primitive society as in any industrial society : that it stems as much from cultural tradition as from social organisation.

Again , Engels' idyllic view of the 18th century domestic out-worker would not now be widely accepted. These men, he wrote, "in the absence of temptations to immorality...lived God-fearing decent lives. There were no low public-houses or brothels in the neighbourhood. The innkeepers whose houses they did occasionally patronise were also respectable men, generally substantial tenant farmers , providing good beer and insisting on orderly behaviour and early closing"¹ A glance at some 12th century homilies or some 17th century temperance tracts suggests, however, that complaints of the dishonesty of the drinkseller and of the drunkenness of his customers are as perennial as complaints that the workers have grown idle. Such complaints are certainly not confined to the 1840s.²

In his attitude to the prevalence of drunkenness, Engels had much in common with the Evangelicals on the 1834

1. F. Engels, op.cit., p.11.

2. See below, pp.9ff.

committee, though he would have felt little respect for their general social outlook; they too contrasted the prevailing insobriety with an idyllic and sober 18th century, though they sought no explanation for the change beyond the assertion that moral standards had declined in the interval.¹ We now know that even in the most equitable of social orders drunkenness does not entirely disappear. Many strains and sources of misery still survive to prompt the desire to escape through intoxication. Modern Russians are still taught to follow Engels in blaming alcoholism on a faulty social organisation, yet the evil still survives in their own society.² The misery resulting from the social structure prevailing in the 1840s was so great that Engels was tempted to attribute every human discontent to social injustice.

Engels' interpretation of the relation between drunkenness and industrialisation thus requires several qualifications. But any reader who expects comprehensive discussion of the problem here will be disappointed. Two considerations have weighed with me. Firstly, for various reasons discussed below,³ the historian lacks reliable statistics, not only for the relative incidence of drunkenness at particular times, but even for the level of drink consumption. Furthermore, the social determinants of the rate of drink consumption are so

1. See below, p. 118.

2. M.G. Field, 'Alcoholism, Crime & Delinquency in Soviet Society' (in S.M. Lipset & N.J. Smelser, Eds., Sociology. The Progress of a Decade, New Jersey, 1961.), p. 577.

3. See below, pp. 116ff., 608ff.

complex and numerous that an adequate discussion of the problem would involve rewriting the social history of Britain since the 18th century.

My purpose here has therefore been far more limited. I have sought only to discuss the movements campaigning to curb the incidence of drunkenness; only if my own research were complemented by investigation of the contemporary drink industry and by detailed local studies of drink facilities, would a more comprehensive discussion of the Engels thesis become feasible. Here, my focus of attention has been "temperance" rather than "drunkenness"; nor is temperance zeal necessarily related directly to the incidence of the evil it attacks.¹

Discussion of this limited area of the problem does suggest that the Engels thesis should be qualified in several respects. Firstly, it modifies the general view of class relationships with which Engels approached the problem of drunkenness in the 1840s. Engels maintained that "the workers differ from the middle classes in speech, in thought and ideas, in customs, morals, politics and religion. They are two quite different nations, as unlike as if they were differentiated by race".²

If this had been true, it would be difficult to see how 19th century England retained its social cohesion and succeeded in avoiding revolution. In fact, study of the

1. See below, pp. 32, 498.

2. F. Engels, op.cit., p. 139.

temperance movement between 1828 and 1869 emphasises that although the extremes of society might contrast in the 1840s as vividly as Engels asserted - there was nevertheless no such clear division between rich and poor as he claimed. By the 1850s , the forces making for social harmony had already begun to prevail over the fragmenting forces so obtrusive in the 1840s.

Research into the 19th century attack on drunkenness sets in the foreground the political and social importance of the antagonism between Anglican and nonconformist - a contest which cut across the antagonism between rich and poor. This antagonism enabled many employers to share a common social outlook with their employees in their hostility to aristocratic and Anglican rule from Westminster. Again, despite the dramatic nature of the contrast between rich and poor in Early Victorian society, the desire for independence and "respectability" constituted a "social cement" which caused many working people to look to the middle classes and to their employers for guidance in personal conduct and political attitudes. This helped to prevent the appearance of any distinctive and lasting working-class ideology.

Secondly, a study of the liquor restrictionists casts doubt upon the assumption made by Marx and Engels that capitalist society and popular sobriety were incompatible. While

a capitalist employer, Richard Cobden, admitted that drunkenness lowered the wages of labour by lowering their requirements of life, his immediate response was not to sit back contented at the situation: on the contrary, he was one of the few public figures to defend the temperance movement in parliament.¹ The eagerness of businessmen to support liquor restriction and even prohibition in the 19th century² lends little support to Marx's claim that the ginshops were "symbolic embodiments of private property....(and) ... therefore rightly the only Sunday pleasures of the people, dealt with at least mildly by the English police".³ Manufacturers were in fact among the most eager supporters of attempts to put an end to drunken fairs and to curtail Sunday drinking hours, whereas some sections of the working classes were most eager to keep the public houses open.

Considerations of time and space have unfortunately compelled me to limit my coverage of this problem still further; by theme, by region, and by chronological coverage. I have omitted all discussion of the peculiar qualities characterising the Irish, Scottish and Welsh temperance movements. And I have confined my attention only to a limited section of those who attacked the drink problem in 19th century England. Before 1914, English society saw no less than seven distinct remedies propounded for the drink problem.

1. 3 Hansard 120, c.25 (23 Mar 1852); 3 Hansard 123, c.1324-5 (13 Dec 1852); Freeholder, 1 Jan 1851, p.5.

2. See below, pp.184, 251, 511, & appendix, table 30.

3. K.Marx, Economic & Philosophic MSS of 1844, Moscow, 1959, p.122.

First, there were the three "liquor restrictionist" remedies - the anti-spirits, teetotal and prohibitionist campaigns. Second, there were the four "gradualist" remedies - the campaigns for nationalisation, municipalisation, counter-attractions, and free trade.

These campaigns were not always entirely distinct; free traders, whose faith lay in education and in the increased accessibility of the weaker intoxicants, often also favoured teetotalism. Similarly, many supporters of the Gothenburg scheme for municipalisation also favoured the provision of counter-attractions. Limitations of time have prevented me from carrying my investigations beyond 1869, and have thus prevented me from giving the Gothenburg and nationalisation schemes the attention they deserve. Limitations of space have prevented me from including my five chapters on the free-trade and counter-attractionist campaigns, on teetotal Chartistism, and on the functions of drink in British society before 1869. These chapters help to put the liquor restrictionist movement in its social context, emphasise the strength of the forces it attacked and also the extent to which this moulded attitudes and policies within it; I hope to publish them later.

We are thus left with the anti-spirits, teetotal and prohibitionist campaigns. These three movements are sufficiently closely related to be capable of separate study. Though

they appealed to somewhat different social groups , they contain many common supporters, and shared certain social attitudes; whereas the remedies which concentrated on altering the environment, the management of the drink trade, or the education of the drinker, appealed to many quite different sections of society.

The thesis begins at the year 1828 when the first important moves were taken towards beginning a liquor restrictionist movement; but the scene is set with a cursory survey of attitudes to drink in previous centuries. The terminal date of 1869 was fixed upon for two reasons. By that time, the liquor restrictionist remedy had been pushed to its logical conclusion - it could proceed no further than prohibition. Secondly , by the 1870s the movement was changing its character in several important respects.

Any modern writer on the theme of liquor restriction must see the movement from an angle very different from that of the late-Victorian "temperance histories". Even Henry Carter was writing in the 1930s from inside the temperance movement. This is the first study of the temperance movement written by an "outsider"; lest my personal habits have in any way distorted my interpretation, the reader should perhaps be warned that I am not a teetotaler, nor do I regard alcohol as necessarily a harmful substance.

But although my viewpoint demands that I reinterpret to some extent the significance of the 19th century temperance

movement , I have during my researches largely found myself charting hitherto unmapped territory. If only because the problems which concern me did not concern my predecessors Dawson Burns, P.T. Winskill and Henry Carter, this was bound to occur. In the preface to his book on the brewing industry, Peter Mathias outlined two types of historical study: "those whose purpose is to fill a gap in some unstudied area, and those which seek to reinterpret periods already mapped out by secondary scholarship"¹. My study, like his, falls more conveniently into the former category than the latter.

This thesis thus resolves itself primarily into a study of three related pressure groups , their sources of support, their social attitudes and their relationship with other movements. Lying behind my work , however, is an interest in "the reforming personality", if such a term can be meaningfully used. It may one day be possible to write a satisfactory comparative analysis of 19th century social reformers, and even of the 19th century pressure groups they promoted. If such a task is ever attempted, the temperance reformer will play an important part in the discussion; his movement and attitudes have much in common with those of other campaigns for social reform.

In the last analysis, however, the personality of the temperance reformer interests me for its own sake. What sort of person agitated against the drunkenness which prevailed

1. P. Mathias, The Brewing Industry in England, 1700-1830, Cambridge, 1959, p. xi.

in 19th century England, and why? How did his liquor restrictionist activity fit into the general pattern of his prejudices, ideas, personality and interests? A desire to tackle these difficult questions has led me into embarking on fairly full discussions of temperance reformers like Joseph Livesey , James Silk Buckingham, Wilfrid Lawson, J.B. Gough, and F.R. Lees.

To venture further, and to seek to seek to account for my interest in the social reformer would be to trespass dangerously near the autobiographical. Suffice it to say that radicals half-way between youth and middle age sometimes find themselves adopting an equivocal attitude towards social reformers once unreservedly admired. Half respectful, half sceptical, they approach these dynamic and often formidable figures with caution, certainly , but also with unfailing curiosity.

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CHAPTER ONE

THE ANTI-SPIRITS CAMPAIGN: THE ORIGINS OF THE TEMPERANCE MOVEMENT & THE ENEMY IDENTIFIED: 1828-1830¹

A valiant attempt has recently been made to set up a "model" which will isolate the essential stages in the elimination of 19th century social evils. The model begins at the point when society pronounces an evil to be "intolerable" - a trumpet cry which "no wall of either doctrine or interest could permanently withstand". The state intervenes, inefficiently at first, but with increasing success after it has appointed officials capable of providing it with accurate information. The whole process is almost self-generating, and owes more to empirical investigation than to theoretical considerations.²

The model does not illuminate the 19th century campaign against drunkenness for three reasons. Firstly, the inspectors

-
- 1 To avoid repetition of acknowledgements, I must note my general obligation to Mr. K.V. Thomas of St. John's College Oxford ~~and~~ for much generous help he gave me with this chapter. I owe many useful references and suggestions to him. I am also most grateful to Mr. Christopher Hill for rescuing me from several errors in the early part of this chapter.
 - 2 O. McDonagh, 'Nineteenth-Century Revolution in Government: A Reappraisal', Historical Journal, 1958, p. 58.

in this sphere were never appointed: the proposal in Bruce's 1871 Licensing Bill for creating public-house inspectors was never enacted. The pressure of other duties and the danger of bribery prevented J.P.s and police from filling the gap. Thus the liquor restrictionist campaign never gained access to detailed and informed opinion on the problem it was tackling.

Secondly, McDonagh's model caters only for social evils which society tackled through state intervention; early Victorian temperance reformers, like early Victorian housing reformers but unlike those who attacked evils in emigrant ships and factories, turned for twenty years to policies which depended on private rather than on public initiative. These involved either coupling moral suasion with voluntary association, or coupling free trade with popular education, or promoting a counter-attractive policy, or combining all three types of remedy. Not until the 1850s, did prominent liquor restrictionists revert to the demand for legislative compulsion; only during the 1860s did it become widely recognised that here was a sphere in which free-trade principles did not apply.

Thirdly, the model begins too late in time, because it does not reveal the process by which public opinion has become sensitised to the "intolerability" of an evil. Social evils are not always apparent to those who endure them; they must first be publicly denounced. George Orwell in the 1930s once asked a miner when the local housing shortage first became serious:

the reply? "when we were first told about it".¹ Oastler himself lived in the Bradford area for ten years before he realised how stunted were the lives of the factory children. Thomas Cooper had no conception of the poverty of the Leicestershire handloomweavers until, as a press reporter, he attended a Chartist meeting.² The task of the anti-spirits and teetotal movements was to force society to recognise drunkenness as a serious evil.

The model thus pays too little attention to the rôle played by individual protest and by pressure-group campaigning in altering public opinion and preparing it to receive a remedy. It gives too little prominence to the almost obsessive enthusiasm which early liquor restrictionists devoted to their cause. John Dunlop, in the months during which he was establishing the anti-spirits movement in Scotland, carried with him a vision of the frightful evils caused to the population by drunkenness: "the subject was eternally present to my mind; I continually reverted to it", he wrote; "if by chance my thoughts had been diverted a few minutes, they sprang back like the lock of a musket. I could as soon

1 G. Orwell, The Road to Wigan Pier, Penguin Edn. 1962, p. 57.

2 G.D.H. Cole, Chartist Portraits, 1941, pp. 84, 192.

have left a leg or arm upon the road as have divested myself of the ever-enduring image".¹ No impersonal "model" can give adequate attention to this white-heat of reforming emotion, almost resembling an act of artistic creation.

Nor can it account for the almost foolhardy courage of Joseph Livesey who in 1834, single-handed and undaunted by the size of London, placarded the Bank of England and other public buildings with announcements of a public meeting at which he would explain his teetotal refinement of the anti-spirits movement, hitherto wholly unknown outside Lancashire. "The fact is", he declared thirty years later, "I was so full of it, that I thought I was going to produce a revolution".²

Although the temperance movement may stem partly from an increased incidence of drunkenness, or from the increased inconvenience of its existing incidence, it also owes much to courageous protest and to energetic campaigning. How did English society become aware that a "drink problem" existed?³ And that the existing level of drunkenness was "intolerable"?

1 Weekly Record, 22 Mar. 1862, p. 98.

2 Quo. in W. Logan, The Early Heroes of the Temperance Reformation, Glasgow, 1873, pp. 94-5.

3 "Problems are relative to an ethos", C.W. Mills, 'Language, Logic & Culture, Amer. Sociological Rev. 1939, p. 675.

These questions must now be considered.

I

All reforming movements begin with the indignant individual who denounces a practice hitherto unchallenged; not least the temperance movement, which first had to demonstrate through personal experiment the feasibility of total abstinence from spirits, and later from all intoxicants. The 19th century temperance tree thus spreads some of its roots among the earliest water-drinkers and abstainers from spirits, however reluctant they were to urge their remedy upon others.

19th century temperance reformers boosted their self-confidence by unearthing predecessors in the remotest antiquity, but if the search is confined to Britain alone, water-drinkers existed long before the British temperance movement appeared in 1829. Thomas More in youth was virtually a water-drinker,¹ and there were several Puritan teetotalers in the 17th century.² One of these, Thomas Tryon, has a direct connexion with the 19th century teetotal movement, in that he influenced Benjamin Franklin, whose writings in turn

1 See Erasmus' comments, in Retrospective Review, V, p. 253.

2 e.g. Roger Crab, in J.E.C. Hill, Puritanism & Revolution (1962 Paperback Edn.), p. 319; Henry Welbey, in D.N.B. xix, p. 1201; like Tryon, both were vegetarians.

influenced the pioneer teetotal propagandist Joseph Livesey.¹ In the 1720s, Benjamin Franklin preached teetotalism to his London fellow-printers.² At least three teetotal MPs in 1834 had reached their principles quite independently of the temperance movement.³

There were even temperance preachers or missionaries before 1829⁴ and if the inquiry be broadened to include abstainers from spirits, the 19th century temperance movement possesses distinguished ancestry among the 18th century Quakers.⁵ But these early abstainers were either isolated, and often eccentric, individuals; or they were associated for purposes more important than abstinence. Crab, according to his epitaph, was "separate from the giddy crowd";⁶ Tryon was influenced by Behmen's mystical works, and neither he nor Welbey had many followers. No abstainer before 1829 urged his personal practice on all members of society as a cure for the drink problem, let alone for other social ills.

1 See below, p. 163

2 B. Franklin, Autobiography (New York paperback edn. 1962), p. 52.

3 See below, p. 85, & Dawson Burns, Temperance History (1880), I, pp. 12-14.

4 J. Thornton, Memoirs of Rev. John Thornton, 1843, p. 207; cf. W. Tallack, Thos. Shillitoe, 1867, p. 126.

5 P. Mathias, Brewing Industry,^{1059,} p. 299.

6 J.E.C. Hill, op. cit., p. 322.

The 19th century temperance tree spreads other roots among those who first campaigned publicly against intemperance, whatever their remedy, since the 19th century temperance movement joined public proselytism to private abstinence. Throughout English history, campaigns for moral reform have fluctuated in intensity for reasons which remain obscure.¹ Victorian liquor restrictionists regarded 17th century puritans as kindred spirits and reprinted several of their temperance tracts,² whereas their opponents like Lord Derby dwelt upon the reaction against puritanism which had occurred in 1660.

Lord Derby's objections had no influence on the prohibitionist F.R. Lees, who claimed that the objectives of 17th century puritanism were correct:³ the Puritans had failed only because English society was not ready for their policies. The 19th century could "endure restraints in morals.... that neither in Charles the Second's day nor in those of any of the Georges could have been borne, in the then lower and more depraved state of public opinion The fact is, we are in new times; the world has indeed moved upwards and is moving!"

1. E. Barker, National Character, 4th. Edn., 1948, p. 44; cf. C.N. Parkinson, in Liberal News, 28 Apr. 1962, p. 4.

2. B. Harrison, 'Drunkards & Reformers', History Today, Mar 1963, p. 181; cf. the reprint in British Temperance Advocate, 15 Feb 1841, p. 16; see also appendix, plate 14.

3. U.K.A. Lord Derby & the United Kingdom Alliance, p. 6.

For two reasons, this identification between the 19th century temperance reformer and the 17th century puritan distorts the true picture. It ignores the fact that puritans were only one group among many which attacked drunkenness before the 19th century, and it also ignores the important differences in the nature of the 17th and 19th century attacks on drunkenness.

To begin with the first point: drunkenness has been attacked in the 17th century and at all times, by all religious groups and by all classes. The English church has waged a campaign of fluctuating intensity against drunkenness at least since the Anglo-Saxon period, for the same reason that inspired Spanish missionaries when they attacked the drinking habits of the South American Indians - because it felt that drinking customs and paganism were closely linked.¹ Thus temperance campaigns have been waged by church leaders from Dunstan, who tried by fixing marks to drinking cups to prevent the drinking of more than a specified quantity: to Wulfstan drinking with his men-at-arms out of a tiny cup in an attempt to restrain their excesses: to Anselm struggling in the late 11th century to promote sobriety in the English royal family.²

1 Handbook of the South American Indians, II, p. 292.

2 R.V. French, Nineteen Centuries of Drink in England, 2nd edn. n.d., pp. 57, 36, 61.

12th century homilists described the drunkard's home-coming as luridly as any 17th century puritan or 19th century temperance reformer,¹ and most of the arguments used by 19th century temperance tracts appear in homilies delivered seven hundred years before. The tavern was branded by 12th century preachers as the deadly enemy of the church; drunkards were warned that they would never enter the kingdom of God, that they would suffer ill-health in this world, and that they caused poverty.² Drunkenness not only led to other sins, said one homilist - it "wasteth upon him what he should spare for poor men, or should rather pour it out than make men drunken therewith..."³ All the zeal which 17th century puritans devoted to attacking drunkenness can be found in the mediaeval friar.⁴

Again, there seems to be no necessary connexion between Protestantism and the attack on drunkenness. The ascetic habits of Thomas More have already been noted, Shene

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- 1 G.R. Owst, Literature and Pulpit in Mediaeval England, 2nd Edn., Oxford, pp. 426, 428, 435.
 - 2 Early English Text Society, No. 137, 12th Century Homilies (1909), p. 77; R. Morris: Old English Homilies, 1st Ser. Parts 1 & 2, (Early English Text Society, Nos. 29-34, 1867-8), p. 102.
 - 3 Rev. R. Morris (ed.), Old English Homilies of the 12th Century, Early English Text Society, No. 53 (1873), p. 212.
 - 4 G.R. Owst, Preaching in Mediaeval England, Cambridge, 1926, pp. 32, 94.

Carthusians of the late 15th century were required to abstain from all drinks except diluted wine.¹ One 17th century temperance enthusiast pointed out that the link between asceticism and Roman Catholicism should not be allowed to prejudice Protestants against self-denial: on the contrary, the latter should "seek to advance and excell them, inasmuch as the puritie of our Religion exacts a more perfect endeavouring after all manner of true vertue, than theirs can do".²

If Roman Catholics often favoured water-drinking asceticism, the early Protestants favoured moderation rather than abstinence: Calvin's Commentaries pointed out that food and drink existed not only for mere sustenance but were given pleasant flavours "because our Heavenly Father wishes to give us pleasure with the delicacies he provides".³ John Hooper in the 1540s felt that each man must decide on his diet for himself, and that older men perhaps required more wine than the young.⁴ On the other hand, John Jewel described

1 C.P. Matthews, 'The Laye Brethern's Statutes (Shene)', Surrey Archaeological Collections, Vol. 39, p. 117.

2 Preface to L. Lessius, Hygiasticon, Cambridge, 1634; cf. John Dunlop on his visit to Paris in 1828, below, pp.

3 Commentaries, Tr. J. Harontunian & L.P. Smith (1958 edn.), p. 349.

4 J. Hooper, Early Writings, Cambridge, 1843, p. 349.

drunkenness and gluttony as "the root and mother of all evil",¹ and the phrase "we should eat to live, and not live to eat" often recurs in 16th century religious literature.² Many of the more radical Protestant sects, from the Hutterian Confession Brotherhood which forbade its members to become public innkeepers,³ to the followers of John Robins the Ranter, who trained his followers on a diet of bread, raw vegetables and water so that they would be able to reconquer the Holy Land⁴ - showed pronounced ascetic traits.

Thirdly, puritans were by no means the only opponents of drunkenness in late 16th and early 17th century England. From Henry VII onwards English monarchs favoured licensing legislation, for the purposes of police and grain conservation.⁵ Elizabethan bishops, such as Bishop Barnes of Durham and Bishop Middleton of St. David's, frequently attacked

1 J. Jewel, Works, Vol. 2, Parker Society, Cambridge 1847 (sermon on Romans xiii, 12.).

2 e.g. Archbishop Sandys, Sermons, Parker Society, Cambridge, 1841, p. 137.

3 J. Horsch, The Hutterian Brethren. 1528-1931, Goshen, 1931, p. 139; cf. G.H. Williams, The Radical Reformation, Philadelphia, 1962, pp. 265, 183, 191.

4 J.E.C. Hill, op. cit., p. 141.

5 H.G. Hudson, A Study of Social Regulations in England Under James I & Charles I: Drink & Tobacco, Chicago, 1933, pp. 3-4.

drunkenness;¹ Raleigh denounced it on health grounds, Burghleigh on grounds of economy. Drunkenness in the 16th century was an aggravation of a crime; only during the 19th century did it come to be pleaded as an extenuation.² James I attacked drunkenness almost as vigorously as tobacco smoking,³ and many of the J.P.s who attacked church ales in 1628 were not puritans at all.⁴ The "reaction" of 1660 owes as much to the contrast in personality between Charles I and Charles II as to any reaction against puritanical attempts at liquor restriction.⁵

There were of course many resemblances between the 17th and 19th century temperance campaigns. The social situations in which the two campaigns were conducted are in some ways similar. In the 1590s as in the 1830s, when the two campaigns began to mount in intensity, there was serious unemployment due to the enclosure movements and to rapid economic change.⁶

1 W.P.M. Kennedy, Elizabethan Episcopal Administration, Alcuin Club, 1925, II, p. 73; III, p. 151.

2 R.V. French, op. cit., pp. 150-1; W.S. Holdsworth, History of English Law, VIII, p. 441.

3 James I: Works, 1616, pp. 181, 218, 219-20.

4 H.G. Hudson, op. cit., p. 16.

5 R.V. French, op. cit., p. 225.

6 H.G. Hudson, op. cit., p. 4; see below, pp. 59 ff.

One 17th century temperance reformer maintained that husbandmen migrating to the towns took up drink trading because they knew no other occupation; and they tarried in taverns because the manor house and parsonage - once open to travellers - were now closed.¹

Again, just as the 17th century attack on churchales came primarily from J.P.s in the textile manufacturing counties - from Somerset, Wiltshire, Dorset, Devon, Worcestershire, Berkshire, Yorkshire and Lancashire,² so the 19th century temperance movement flourished best in the textile manufacturing towns of the North. Thirdly, both campaigns began partly as a response to a recent alleged change in drinking patterns. An alleged switch in popular taste towards spirits after the tax reductions of the 1820s lay behind the early 19th century temperance movement just as an alleged increase after the Dutch Wars in the taste for foreign wines and hopped beers lay behind the 17th century attack on drunkenness.³

Attacks on drunkenness, from Philip Stubbs' Anatomie of Abuses onwards, use many of the arguments found in 19th century temperance tracts. Masters must behave well before servants⁴ (compare the 19th century liquor restriction-

1. S.Harris, The Drunkards Cup, 1619, p.A.4.

2. J.E.C.Hill, Society & Puritanism, 1964, p.427.

3. Many references in H.T.Buckle, Miscellaneous & Posthumous Works, Ed.H.Taylor, 1872, II, p.363.

4. The way to Make All People Rich (Anon.), 1685, p.20; cf. W.Assheton, Discourse Against Drunkenness, 1692, p.33.

ist's pursuit of "respectability"); man by voluntarily destroying his reason defaces the image of God,¹ (compare the 19th century rationalist, anti-Evangelical, phrenological teetotaler); health-drinking infringes individual liberty, constitutes a veritable anti-religion incongruous in the self-consciously loyal, and acts as "a shooing-horn to drunkenness",² (compare John Dunlop,³ arch-enemy of drinking customs in the 1830s); in both campaigns Englishmen surpass continental peoples in drunkenness; temperance reformers in both periods taught that the purpose of recreation was "the repairing of nature, and fitting of our selves to all due employments".⁴ Again, both 17th and 19th century temperance campaigns attack drunkenness in high places as well as among the poor, and complain when the authorities fail to give equal treatment to drunkards from all social spheres.⁵

In some respects there are similarities even in mentality between 17th and 19th century temperance reformers. In both

1. M. Scrivener, A Treatise Against Drunkenness, 1680, p. 100.

2. J. Gere, Divine Potion to Preserve Spirituall Health, by the Cure of Unnaturall Health Drinking, 1648, p. 4; cf. M. Scrivener, op.cit., pp. 126-7; W. Pryne, Healthes Sicknesse, 1628, p. 10.

3. See below, p. 48.

4. For continental comparisons see The Way to Make All People Rich, p. 21; T. Young, England's Baxne, 1617, unpagd; for recreation, see S. Harris, Drunkards Cup, p. 21.

5. D. Defoe, The Poor Man's Plea, 1698, p. 9; cf. T. Reeve, God's Plea for Nineveh, 1657, p. 121.

movements there were individuals who delighted in conducting physiological experiments on their own persons. One 17th century temperance tract anticipates the 19th century teetotalers' attack on obesity,¹ and the 19th century temperance reformer's hostility to the professional doctor was certainly shared by Thomas Tryon.² Again , Tryon's desire to extend the sphere of personal liberty by subordinating the body to the soul through personal abstinence resembles the desire of William Godwin and of extreme libertarians in the temperance movement like F.W.Newman , to subordinate body to mind. "Where Uncleaness and Intemperance reigns", wrote Tryon , "the soul is subjected with the Body that it cannot discern things Celestial".³

Some 17th century temperance reformers even anticipated the 19th century prohibitionists in some respects. "Who can be ignorant that if the importation of wine were forbid,it would both clean rid the possibility of committing that odious vice, and men might afterwards live happily and healthfully without the use of intoxicating liquors", exclaimed Milton.⁴

1. The Way to Make All People Rich,p.26; the 19th century teetotalers combated the notion that a rubicund countenance and a plump body were signs of good health.

2. T.Tryon,The Way to Health,Long Life & Happiness,1683, p.532.

3. ibid.,p.54; but see below,pp.483ff.

4. R.V.French,op.cit.,p.204; his remarks were often cited in 19th century temperance tracts.

So strong was the feeling against Somerset alehouses during the Interregnum that J.P.s conceded local option to each village.¹

Yet despite these many similarities between the 17th and 19th century temperance campaigns, they differed in several respects. Firstly, the initial object of the 19th century campaign for liquor restriction - restrain spirit-drinking - did not become relevant to English drinking patterns till the late 17th century; puritan temperance tracts attacked only the excessive drinking of wine and beer. Brandy drinking began to spread inland during the 1660s,² but gin-drinking did not become common till the end of the century.

Secondly, no 17th century tract demands total abstinence from any type of alcoholic drink. Indeed, they sometimes maintain, as no 19th century teetotaler could, that intoxicants can be legitimately used to refresh the spirits, though not to drown them: for friendship and "for honest delight", though not for escapism.³ Drink is not the right way to alleviate melancholy, says the Drunkard's Character: the

1. R.F.Bretherton, 'Country Inns & Alehouses', in R.Lennard (Ed.) Englishmen at Rest & Play, Oxford, 1931, pp.160-1, 172.

2. A. à Wood, Life & Times (Ed. A.Clark, 1892), II, p.96.

3. J.Downname, 'Disswasion from the Sin of Drunkennes', in his Four Treatises, 1613, p.90.

correct method is "labouring in a lawfull calling".¹ Milton, despite his prohibitionist statements, can often be found praising wine,² and several puritans, including Bunyan, attacked the notion held by many 19th century liquor restrictionists that the Bible forbade all consumption of alcoholic drink.³

While 17th and 19th century puritans may resemble each other in their taste for sabbath observance and for bibliolatry, they seem mostly to differ in their attitudes to liquor restriction. In 1895 a Tory M.P. taunted Harcourt, the champion of Local Option, for admiring Cromwell - a man "who ... if reports were true, was not greatly in favour of a Local Veto Bill".⁴ Cromwell had not been an abstainer in youth and later ridiculed the notion of promoting sobriety through prohibition.⁵ The Major Generals' attempts to close

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1. Quo. from R.Young,Drunkard's Character, in R.Hunter & I.McAlpine,Three Hundred Years of Psychiatry,1535-1860, (1963),p.117.
 2. Quo. in E.Legouis,'The Bacchic Element in Shakespeare's Plays',Proceedings of the British Academy,1926.
 3. D.Dent,Sermon Against Drunkennes,1628,p.5; cf.R.B. Schlatter,Social Ideas of Religious Leaders 1660-1688, (1940),p.192.
 4. 4 Hansard 30,c.1357 (17 June 1895).
 5. J.E.C.Hill,Puritanism & Revolution,p.319.

drinking places were inspired rather by a desire to prevent sedition than to promote temperance, and here their motives hardly differ from those of the Tudors and Stuarts. The main objective of the 17th century temperance reformer seems primarily to have been the discouragement of "tippling" or drinking outside the home and outside mealtimes.

17th century temperance reformers never saw in the nation-wide voluntary association of abstainers the cure for the drink problem. Yet the Leveller movement shows that 17th century England was quite capable of mounting a large-scale reforming campaign. Why, then, did it produce no temperance movement? Two factors seem to be partly responsible - the lack of alternative beverages, and the absence of widespread spirit-drinking.

First, alternative beverages. Admittedly, the 17th century puritan had access to fresh water. One of their tracts assigned it "the first place amongst all Drinks", and Tryon held that water "contains a most ravishing and excellent Spirituous Balsamick Vertue, whence proceeds that sweet refreshing Quality, whereby it hath Power by its innate Vertue to digest and purifie all sorts of Food..."¹ But there were no cheap palatable non-alcoholic drinks which could be used

¹ The Way to Make All People Rich, p. 102; cf. T. Tryon, op. cit., p. 143.

on social occasions. The first bag of coffee was not brought to England till 1652, and tea was a new drink for Pepys in 1661.¹ Coffee, tea and chocolate in the late 17th century were drunk only by the relatively rich; even when they became cheap in the early 19th century, the temperance movement still felt it necessary to embark on an educative campaign to induce the public to use them at social gatherings.

Secondly, the total abstinence principle was adopted by campaigners against drunkenness only after the widespread introduction into Britain of an alcoholic drink which produced peculiarly powerful effects. While the anti-spirits societies of the 1830s resembled puritan opponents of drunkenness in recommending moderation in wine and beer, the growth of spirit-drinking during the 18th century caused them to advocate total abstinence from spirits: it is this principle which distinguishes their efforts from all previous attacks on drunkenness. Furthermore, soon after the creation of the anti-spirits movement, the divergence from the puritan attack on drunkenness was accentuated by the application of the total abstinence principle to wine and beer also.

¹ C.H. Denyer, 'Consumption of Tea, & Other Staple Drinks', Economic Journal, III, 1893, p. 33; J. Crawford, 'History of Coffee', Journal of the Roy. Statistical Soc., Apr. 1852, p. 51.

17th century puritans were less optimistic than 19th century teetotalers about curing intemperance. Prynne, unlike Dunlop, never envisaged a temperance society as the weapon with which to destroy drinking customs, nor could John Downname think of any better remedy for drunkenness than frequent communion, meditation, and constant emphasis on the sin's evil consequences.¹ "This sinne", wrote Young in 1638, "is like a desperate plague, that knows no cure; it may be called the Kings evill of the Soule.... for it cannot bee cured with the Balme of Gilead, nor by any Physitian".²

17th century opponents of drunkenness showed little of that sympathy with the drunkard which the 19th century teetotaler displayed. The Petition and Advice suggested that drunkards should be disfranchised,³ and some 17th century congregations excommunicated drunkards instead of assisting them.⁴ 17th century opponents of drunkenness concentrated on deterrence rather than on cure,⁵ and their tracts, unlike their 19th century successors, seem to have been primarily directed at those in authority. They often condemned bad example-setting by the rich: "heretofore", wrote one, drunkenness "was the sinne of Tinkers, Hostlers, Beggars, &c. now of

1. J. Downname, opcit., pp. 123-6.

2. Quoted from R. Young, Drunkards Character, 1638, in R. Hunter & I. McAlpine, op.cit., p. 117.

3. C.H. Firth & R.S. Rait, Acts & Ordinances of the Interregnum 1642-1660, H.M.S.O. 1911, II, p. 1050.

4. H. Davies, Worship of the English Puritans, 1948, p. 235; I owe this reference to Dr. John Walsh, Jesus College, Oxford.

5. L.B. Wright, Middle-Class Culture in Elizabethan England, 1958 edn., p. 194.

Farmers, Esquires, Knights, &c."¹

One further factor may help to explain the absence of a 17th century temperance movement: the puritan does not seem to have shared the 19th century temperance reformer's prejudice against state intervention, nor did he search so vigorously for alternatives in the form of voluntary association and individual moral reform. 17th century temperance tracts urge their readers to enforce the law against drunkenness, not to take the pledge. There are no signs in the 17th century of that moral zeal surging up from below which sent 19th century sweeps, blacksmiths and fishsellers on to the temperance platform.

There is thus no continuous Puritan tradition of total abstinence in England, though the 19th century temperance movement has a link with the 17th century puritans via America, for New England produced an anti-spirits movement in the early 19th century and exported it to Great Britain.² Furthermore, opponents of drunkenness in the two centuries are united by an affinity of temperament, though not by an identity of abstinent conduct or belief.

Many 19th century liquor restrictionists were nonconformists, and felt themselves to be direct spiritual descendants of the 17th century puritans, just as 19th century Scottish teetotalers looked to the Covenanters for inspiration.

1. S.Harris, op.cit. p.22.

2. See below, pp.40 ff..

Insistence on adherence to principle: sincere conviction of righteousness: refusal to compromise with human frailty - these qualities can give even the most atheistical of 19th century working-class teetotalers more common ground with the 17th century Puritans than with many of his 19th century Christian contemporaries. In this sense, every generation has its puritans.

The absence of a temperance movement from late 17th century England is somewhat more surprising. During the 1670s Anglican religious societies were formed, aiming at the religious self-improvement of their members. As early as the 1680s there are signs of a link between temperance and the Whig party.¹ The French wars fostered domestic moral reform; in the 1690s there appeared philanthropic organisations similar in organisation and national coverage to those based in the 19th century on Exeter Hall. Societies for the Reformation of Manners also arose - whose marked resemblance to temperance societies was noted in the 19th century.²

But the religious societies often met in public-houses, and never favoured teetotalism. And the Reformation Societies - though enthusiastic for temperance and (unlike the religious societies) not mere adjuncts of the Established Church - differed in several ways from 19th century temperance societies: they sought legislative suppression of vice, a course to which the 19th century resorted only as a last resort; they did not specialise in attacking any one vice; they

1. See below, p. 469

2. Temperance Spectator, June 1859, p. 85.

generally sought to suppress tippling only on Sundays; and their members were upper and middle class reformers seeking to improve their social inferiors without themselves setting a personal example of abstinence. Prosecution of the poor rather than example-setting by the rich was their keynote. Although the early anti-spirits societies of the 1830s also displayed this dichotomy between supporters and beneficiaries, the teetotal movement became the vehicle of moral reforming zeal rising from below; this did not characterise the late 17th century reformation societies.¹ 19th century teetotalers would certainly have shared Defoe's objection to these bodies - that "in the Commonwealth of Vice, the Devil has taken care to level Poor and Rich into one class".²

And far from the war promoting temperance, it actually encouraged drinking when it linked patriotism with the consumption of British spirits and port wine.³ True, 18th century Quakers were forbidden to engage in spirit manufacture, which they classed as a harmful occupation; but they were often manufacturers of beer, the "temperance drink" of

1 Paragraph based on G.V. Portus, Caritas Anglicana, 1912, p. 14; J. Woodward, A Disswasive from the Sin of Drunkenness, 1769 Edn., pp. 9-11; D.W.R. Bahlman, Moral Revolution of 1688, Yale, 1957, pp. 67-83, 107.

2 D. Defoe, op. cit., p. 6.

3 J.C. Drummond & A. Wilbraham, The Englishman's Food (1958 Edn.), p. 116.

the day.¹ Though the horrors of the gin riots provoked the government into unsuccessful attempts at prohibition, they failed to produce an anti-spirits, let alone a teetotal movement, based on moral suasion and voluntary association.² Stephen Hales believed that habitual drunkenness was curable but could think of no other remedy than isolation from drinking company and dilution of the drink.³

Wesley vigorously attacked spirit-drinking, but never formed a temperance society, though some 19th century teetotalers maintained that if he had lived in their generation he would have done so.⁴ A writer of 1770 stressed that "there are some temptations, from which we cannot possibly escape without fleeing", and urged drinkers to abandon their drinking companions;⁵ but he did not recommend the formation of societies for mutual protection against temptation.

During the 1780s, an increase in gin-drinking after the reduction of duties in 1785 combined with Evangelical pressure

1 P. Mathias, Brewing Industry, p. 299.

2 Best account, M.D. George, London Life in the XVIIIth Century, 1930, pp. 27ff.

3 S. Hales, Friendly Admonition to the Drinkers of Gin.... (1754 Edn.), p. 28.

4 e.g. R. Tabraham, Temperance News & Weekly Journal, 30 May, 1846, p. 39; cf. E.C. Urwin, Methodism & Sobriety, 1943, pp. 11-19.

5 Earnest & Affectionate Address to the Poor.....in a Letter from a Minister to his Parishioners, 1770, p. 25.

to prompt magistrates, beginning in the Yorkshire and Lancashire manufacturing areas, to supervise alehouses more closely, and to suppress many. Yet they were as interested in curbing gambling, cruel sports and Sabbath-breaking as in suppressing drunkenness. Their policy persisted until after 1815, and the Webbs felt that it had done much to raise the respectability of the early 19th century working man.¹ But it had no direct connexion with the rise of the temperance movement, whose emphasis lay on individual voluntary reform, not on compulsory reform through magistrates' authority. Early liquor restrictionists did not protest against the 1830 Beer Act's attack on magistrates' authority, and studiously refrained from advocating state intervention.

Nevertheless, the temperance movement undoubtedly was a delayed product of the late 18th century humanitarian movement. The link between Saturday's drunkenness and Monday's battered faces forcibly impressed Lovett as he watched London working people setting off on Monday morning, in 1821.² The early temperance and humanitarian movements had the same friends - women, Quakers and Evangelicals; and the same

1 S. & B. Webb, History of Liquor Licensing (1903), p. 84; for a general discussion of magistrates' restriction in the 1780s, see ibid., Ch. III.

2 W. Lovett, Life and Struggles,^{1876,} p. 24.

enemies - cockfighters, swearers, gamblers, tyrannical husbands and irresponsible drinksellers.¹ Again, the early anti-spirits societies depended, like other humanitarian organisations, on upper-class patronage and example-setting rather than on lower-class initiative.

Yet the Evangelicals developed no specialised institution before 1830 for combating drunkenness. Though they denounced the sin, they did not advocate total abstinence, even from spirits.² They were closely allied with the brewers³ and enjoyed full cellars and a good table.⁴ Henry Venn deplored drunkenness because it deprived man of his reason and took food from the poor; but he never recommended total abstinence.⁵ And though, for Thomas Scott, the Christian was "a stranger and a pilgrim upon earth", he must not reject life's rational comforts.⁶

1 Temperance Society Record, Sep. 1830, p. 54; Moral Reformer, 1 July, 1833, p. 205; Parl. Papers, 1852-3, xxxvii (855), Q. 5469.

2 See Appendix, Plate 96.

3 See below, p. 141, 146

4 W. Jerdan, Autobiography, 1853, III, p. 304; I owe this reference to Dr. John Walsh; cf. J.H. Overton, English Church in the 19th century, 1880-1833 (1894), p. 94.

5 H. Venn, Complete Duty of Man (first pubd. 1763), 1841 Edn., pp. 250-2.

6 T. Scott, Essays on the Most Important Subjects in Religion (9th Edn. 1822), p. 213.

Wilberforce and the second generation of Evangelicals regarded the dinner-table as one of their chief recruiting-grounds. For strongly anti-Catholic Evangelicals, virtue could hardly consist in "an austere monkish system of harsh severity and rigid mortification".¹ Thus if Evangelicals later espoused the temperance cause, their conduct owed more to thirst for souls than to any affinity between total abstinence and their theology. Nevertheless, the affinities between temperance agitation and the Evangelical Revival were sufficiently obvious to provoke surprise both from contemporaries and from subsequent historians that the temperance movement appeared so late in English history.²

Thus before 1829 there existed temperance advocates, individual abstainers and a realisation of the evils of drunkenness, but no temperance movement. There were even groups of abstainers - from spirits (in the case of the Quakers): and after 1809 from all alcoholic drinks (in the

1 J. Bowles, Reflections on the Political & Moral State of Society, 1800, p. 161.

2 e.g. Wm. Allen at the annual meeting of the British & Foreign Temperance Society, 29 June, 1831, reported in the Christian Advocate; cf. F.K. Brown, Fathers of the Victorians, Cambridge, 1961, pp. 404-5; M. Jaeger, Before Victoria, 1956, p. 18; but similar surprise was expressed that other Evangelical good causes had been inaugurated so late - see, e.g., R.I. & S. Wilberforce, Life of William Wilberforce, 5 vols., 1838, II, p. 463.

case of the Cowherdites). Joseph Brotherton, a leading Cowherdite, publicly recommended total abstinence in 1821 as the best way to combat drunkenness. But he did not suggest that abstainers should form a society ; the principle of Cowherdite association was religious not dietetic.¹ Similarly, if Cobbett, Hunt, and many Lancashire radicals abstained from wine and spirits after the Napoleonic Wars, their motive was that of the Boston tea-party on which they modelled themselves - to enhance radical solidarity and to weaken the government by depriving it of excise revenue , rather than to promote temperance for its own sake. The Manchester radicals did not hesitate to brew their own beer at Oldham wakes.²

Cobbett, impressed by the efforts of Quaker abstainers from slave-grown sugar, even suggested in 1820 that "little communities, little circles" be formed for abstainers from excised goods. Yet although he disliked wine and spirits, Cobbett was a devotee of home-brewed ale, and

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1. T.P.Winskill,op.cit.,I,p.413; II,p.155; II,p.239; W.E.A.. Axon,(Ed.),Joseph Brotherton:The First Teetotal Tract, Manchester 1890 (first pubd.,1821). D.N.B. IV,p.1304:the Cowherdites adopted vegetarianism together with teetotalism in 1809.
 2. S.Bamford,Passages in the Life of a Radical,2nd.Edn.,Heywood n.d.,p.275; A.Prentice,Historical Sketches & Personal Recollections of Manchester,Manchester,1851,p.151; D.Read,Peterloo,1958,p.159.
 3. Political Register,22 Jan 1820,p.697.

strongly condemned tea; when temperance reformers appeared in the 1830s he denounced them as "despicable, drivelling quacks".¹ A society was formed to repress drunkenness in Redruth in 1805, but it did not depart from the old pattern of upper class enforcement of sobriety through the police.² One of the last attacks on drunkenness published before the appearance of the temperance movement, by Yates in 1818, gives no hint of the forthcoming remedy.³

By the 1820s , however, three recent social changes favoured the creation of a temperance movement: a change in attitudes to drunkenness, a development of the techniques of public campaigning , and an increased receptivity to change. Firstly : drunkenness became unfashionable at least a generation before the temperance movement appeared. Analysis of the publication years of works on drunkenness shows a gradual rise in interest since the beginning of the century, rather than a sudden leap after 1829.⁴ The softening of upper class manners was occurring even in Joshua Reynolds's time, and according to Adam Smith by the 1770s drunkenness was "by no

1. Political Register, 24 Nov 1832; cf. his Cottage Economy, (many edns.).

2. Rev. R. Polwhele, History of Cornwall, VII (1816), p.108.

3. J. Yates, Effects of Drinking Spirituous & Other Intoxicating Liquors, described in four Sermons, Glasgow, 1818.

4. See appendix, table 4..

means the vice of people of fashion".¹

The causes of the change in upper class conduct are obscure, but they may well have been assisted by several medical attacks on excessive drinking at the end of the 18th century. The pioneer figure was Dr. Trotter, the first scientific investigator of drunkenness, who chose it as a thesis subject in 1788.² He maintained that drunkenness stemmed from psychological as well as physiological inadequacies, and anticipated many teetotal attitudes when he claimed that the doctor must know all the personal circumstances of the patient before he could effect a cure. Drunkenness, he said, "carried to a certain length, is a gulph, from whose bourne no traveller returns";³ the only cure was for the patient to abandon all alcohol, and for the doctor to establish a personal friendship with him.⁴

Trotter's Essay....on Drunkenness was published in 1804, but by that time several other doctors were interested in

1 M.J. Quinlan, op. cit., pp. 59-60; Wealth of Nations (Ed. Cannan), I, p. 457.

2 T. Trotter, Essay, Medical, Philosophical, & Chemical, on Drunkenness, and its Effects on the Human Body, 2nd. Edn., 1804, p. 2.

3 R. Hunter & I. McAlpine, op. cit., p. 589.

4 T. Trotter, op. cit., p. 179.

the subject. Dr. Lettsom, a Quaker influenced by the American Dr. Rush, published his "Moral and Physical Barometer"¹ in 1789, and in 1798 wrote a tract on the effects of hard drinking. Again, Erasmus Darwin, seeing the effects of alcohol on his patients, and fully recognising the connexion between drinking and gout,² conceived a medical rather than moral objection to intoxicants, and himself drank only well-diluted wine. Though he continued to prescribe alcohol for certain diseases, his influence was said to have promoted sobriety throughout Derbyshire.³ Dr. Beddoes' Hygeia was also influential, and in 1814 Basil Montagu, Q.C., published his Enquiries into the Effects of Fermented Liquors, which emphasised that total abstinence was quite compatible with a hard-working literary life.

Many commentators in the 1830s believed that drunkenness had become unfashionable between 30 and 50 years previously and had greatly declined within living memory. Indeed, they often used this as proof that temperance legislation was now superfluous.⁴ It was not the activities of the recently

1 See Appendix, Plate 96.

2 E. Darwin, Zoonomia, 3rd. Edn., 1801, I, p. 367.

3 D. King-Hele, Erasmus Darwin, 1963, p. 33.

4 e.g. Parl. Papers, 1834, viii (559), c. 330; ibid., QQ. 36-7. J. Bowles, Letter to Robt. Wissett, Esq., 1815, p. 54; Buckingham, 3 Hansard 24, c. 97 (3 Jun., 1834); Times, 12 July, 1831.

founded temperance movement which enabled the Eclectic Review in 1835 to pronounce drunkenness "now a vulgar vice".¹ But while the interest shown by late 18th century doctors in the subject helped prepare the climate for the temperance movement, they do not seem to have strongly influenced its early leaders; not only was there a delay of over twenty years between Trotter's Essay and the appearance of the movement: the early temperance reformers seldom mention the views of Darwin, Beddoes, Lettson and Trotter. Their movement began as a moral crusade, not as a medical reformation.

Among lower social grades, improvement had begun with the curbing of the gin mania in the 1750s, and the number of spirit-retailers in London declined markedly between the 1750s and the 1790s.² Although Place did not claim that drunkenness had become less prevalent among working people, he was convinced that a labour aristocracy, characterised by sobriety and self-improvement, had separated out during the first quarter of the 19th century. A start had thus been made before 1829 towards making drunkenness unfashionable also with the lower orders,³ The temperance movement therefore appeared, like many reforming movements, as both a cause

1 Eclectic Review, Oct. 1835, p. 283.

2 M.D. George, op. cit., pp. 36, 41.

3 See below, pp. 123-4 ; & James Mill, Westminster Review, Oct. 1826, p. 264.

and a consequence of mounting sensibility to the seriousness of the evil it attacked.

It is easier to attach a date to the change in attitudes than to discover its cause. While the timing makes it likely that Evangelical influences and the moral example set by George III were partly responsible for the change in aristocratic habits before 1800, the Evangelicals never won the support of the British aristocracy as a whole. Still, Evangelical influence was felt far beyond the limited circle of its aristocratic converts, and was reinforced by the secular consideration that in an age of revolution and rapid social change, the aristocracy must prove its title to power by displaying superior morality. By the 1840s, aristocrats were firmly controlled by bourgeois opinion,¹ which in turn was strongly influenced by Evangelicalism.

But these influences were hardly likely to influence the London labour aristocracy: here completely different influences were at work: Godwin, Benjamin Franklin, Robert Owen and the rationalists discussed in working men's political societies. Nor were intellectual influences the sole forces at work. Place attributed the change among the London working men partly to an improvement in living standards after the

1 J.S. Mill, in Edinburgh Review, Vol. 72, p. 41 (Oct. 1840).

Napoleonic Wars.¹ Increased wine duties, and wartime military experience of continental manners may have promoted sobriety among the aristocracy.² There were regional variations in temperance zeal: in the industrial areas, where the magistrates' restrictive campaign of the 1780s began, economic and social change prepared the way for Methodist influence, and hence provided Northern operatives with the sober ideal which Londoners derived from the rationalists. The change once begun, peace in 1815 as in 1918 and 1945 focussed attention on domestic reforms. A series of important committees on police and crime before 1830 prepared society to receive reformers who claimed from the start to be attacking crime at its root.³ And a sequence of fiscal reforms caused many to believe that free trade principles were incompatible with popular sobriety.⁴

Though in the 1830s fashion still dictated a level of drinking at Christ Church which caused the youthful Ruskin anxious to avoid drunkenness to pour claret down his waistcoat, it therefore seems that this is yet another sphere in which

1. See below, p. 124

2. See statistics for wine consumption in G.B. Wilson, Alcohol & the Nation, 1940, pp. 364-5, & J.G.D., (Ed.), Dunlop Papers, Vol. 1, Autobiography of John Dunlop, 1932, p. 27; 3 Hansard 143, c. 915 ff. (15 July 1856).

3. Times, 20 Dec 1815, p. 3; cf. B/ritish M/useum Addit. MSS. 27826 (Place Papers), f. 193.

4. See below, pp. 56 ff

Oxford lagged behind the times.¹ If Evangelicals correctly assumed that aristocratic influence would gradually transform social attitudes, and if Place correctly trusted to the influence of the labour aristocracy, the temperance movement appeared precisely when associations designed to alter trend-setters' attitudes to drink were less needed than ever before. Like so many reformers, the founders of the temperance movement were behind the times in their view of the problem.²

As with the contemporary attack on the Established Church, the vehemence of the 19th century attack on drunkenness does not seem to be closely related to the extent of the evil it attacked.³ Originality, wrote John Morley, lies "as much in perception of opportunity as in invention".⁴ The temperance reformer in the earliest years - 1828-30 -

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1. J. Ruskin, 'Crown of Wild Olive', Works (Ed. Cook & Wedderburn) Vol. 18, p. 506; cf. ibid. p. 169 (unpublished fragment of 'Sesame & Lilies').
 2. A. Sauvy, 'The School of Reformers. Or Some Thoughts on Historic Opportunity', Diogenes, 1962, pp. 70-72.
 3. S. M. Elkins, Slavery, Chicago, 1958, p. 158. I owe this reference to Dr. Walsh.
 4. J. Morley, Life of Gladstone (3 Vol. edn., 1903), II, p. 58; cf. Temperance Spectator, Jan. 1859, p. 2.

was the mouthpiece of ideas dormant in many peoples' minds, but only half formulated. Clearly, society in the 1820s was ready to welcome a new solution to the drink problem, paradoxically because it had already begun to ~~solve~~ it.

Secondly, by the 1820s, society had become aware of the possibilities of voluntary organisation and campaigning. The Economical Reform movement first linked sustained public agitation to specific items of policy, and the Anti-Slavery movement, with which many early temperance reformers were connected,¹ refined campaigning techniques. By 1829, the Edinburgh Review was complaining that no spiritual work could now be begun spontaneously; the "machinery" of public meetings, prospectuses, and committees had first to be set in motion. The older belief in the illegality of external pressure on parliament was gradually discredited, and the 19th century system of voluntary campaigning for political ends, unparalleled elsewhere except in Scandinavia and America, was gradually introduced.²

Yet the temperance movement in its moral suasion stage was distinct from the Economical Reform and Anti-Slavery

1 See below, pp. 94ff.

2 Edinburgh Review, June 1829, pp. 442-3; cf. E.J. Hobsbawm, The Age of Revolution, 1962, p. 127; A. de Tocqueville, Journeys to England & Ireland (Ed. J.P. Mayer), 1958, pp. 87-8.

movements in rejecting political remedies. Its novelty lay in its encouragement of individual moral reform; it prided itself on diverging from previous moral reforming movements in not applying to the government for penal enactments against drunkards and drinksellers.¹ The originator of the temperance movement was he who first united a consciousness of the drink problem with a realisation that voluntary association could combat it, and who then vigorously promoted such association. One final pre-condition of success was therefore the existence of citizens receptive to a change in their personal conduct.

In several ways, industrialisation promoted this. It lent self-confidence, or self-assertiveness, to new groups outside the governing classes; it enabled moral initiative to be displayed independently of Westminster and to some extent in criticism of it, by individuals for whom state intervention meant class domination. Contemporary Frenchmen would never have attacked drunkenness by founding temperance societies, said Tocqueville; they would simply have pressed the government to supervise drinking places more closely.²

1 Lord Stanhope, British & Foreign Temperance Intelligencer, 21 Sep. 1839, p. 378.

2 A. de Tocqueville, Democracy in America (Ed. P. Bradley, New York, 2 Vols., 1961), I, p. 198; II, pp. 117-8.

English temperance reformers at the Brussels International Philanthropic Congress of 1856 were surprised by the continental tendency to rely on the government to curb intemperance.¹

Industrialisation also gave assistance by fostering a widespread faith in scientific discovery, to which anti-spirits societies (through sympathetic doctors) and teetotalers (through the Malt Lecture)² appealed. A faith in the possibility of securing rapid social change through the diffusion of ideas lies behind the temperance movement's copious distribution of tracts in the 1830s.³ "The only rational way of dealing with erroneous opinions", said the temperance reformer Benjamin Parsons in 1851, "was to talk and to write them out of people".⁴ Such sentiments owe much to 18th century rationalism, but also much to the way in which technological innovation accustomed British society to rapid change.⁵

1 National Temperance League, Annual Rept. 1856, p. 16.

2 See below, pp. 163 ff.

3 For examples of temperance tracts, see Appendix, Plates 7, 18, 47 and especially No. 23; for the numerous temperance periodicals, see Appendix, Plates 16, 26, 34, 98.

4 Quo. Bristol Temperance Herald, Apr. 1851, p. 58.

5 R.S. Fitton & A.P. Wadsworth, The Strutts & the Arkwrights, 1958, p. 198.

The first parliamentary champion of liquor restriction, J.S. Buckingham, ridiculed Cobbett's argument that because drunkenness was a long-established vice it could never be eliminated.¹ Like the political economists, 19th century liquor restrictionists too readily assumed that rational conviction would lead to immediate action, and underestimated the degree to which the strain of adaptation to novelty could ward off the most cogent arguments for reform. But they themselves were quite conscious of the link between their campaign and recent industrial changes: Livesey's Struggle carried the advertisement "A BETTER MORAL MACHINERY WANTED".²

II

Social change occurs when new ideas and favourable social circumstances coincide.³ By the 1820s, social conditions favoured the appearance of some form of agitation to deal with the drink problem. The idea of temperance association had now to be introduced to public attention. The idea of total abstinence from spirits had long existed; the fusion of the idea of association with the idea of abstinence was

1 3 Hansard 23, c. 1362 (27 May 1834).

2 The Struggle (Ed. J. Livesey), No. 41, p. 4.

3 J.S. Mill, Dissertations & Discussions, II (1859), p. 190.

now required. This occurred in America in the first quarter of the 19th century.¹

The Evangelical Christian Observer first mentioned the American temperance movement in July 1826, and by May 1828 was urging London to participate.² The Evangelical Magazine in 1830 doubted at first whether anti-spirits societies would be useful in England where gin-drinking was less fashionable, but later hoped that Englishmen would follow the American lead.³

Behind this exchange of ideas lies a whole complex of Anglo-American philanthropic activity. Though the English aristocracy disliked republican America, many English dissenters considered it "the ne plus ultra of political perfection",⁴ and felt that they had more in common with Americans than with their own governing class. Temperance, peace, anti-slavery,

1 Dawson Burns, op. cit., I, pp. 14-27.

2 Christian Observer, July 1826, p. 441; Aug. 1827, p. 497; Sep. 1827, p. 567; May 1828, p. 340; Nov. 1828, p. 719; Jun. 1829, p. 387.

3 Evangelical Magazine, Jan. 1830, p. 24; Feb. 1830, p. 66; May 1830, p. 194; Nov. 1830, p. 477.

4 Anon, Autobiography of a Dissenting Minister, 5th Edn., 1835, p. 38; Dr. Walsh kindly referred me to this source. On American influence in general, see F. Thistlethwaite's two articles: 'Atlantic Partnership', Econ. Hist. Rev., 1954, p. 12; 'America & Two Nations of Englishmen', Virginia Quarterly Review, Autumn 1955, p. 510; and his book The Anglo-American Connexion in the Early 19th Century, Philadelphia, 1959, p. 79.

penal reform and Christian missions were all 19th century campaigns which functioned on an Anglo-American basis.¹

For the 19th century nonconformist moral reformer, as for the 17th century puritan, America constituted a laboratory for social experiment.² American temperance reformers frequently crossed the Atlantic as a natural extension of their domestic campaign, which might otherwise have been obstructed by drunken immigrants.³ Anglo-American philanthropic rivalry was vigorous enough sometimes to take a bitter turn.⁴

Anglo-American commercial ties fostered this interchange; the significant economic and religious frontier at this time lay in the Appalachian mountains rather than in the Atlantic Ocean.⁵ Like Cobden, J.S. Buckingham, the prominent temper-

1 C. Taylor, 'Some American Reformers & their Influence on Reform Movements in Great Britain 1830-1860', (Edinburgh Univ. Ph.D. thesis), p. 3.

2 J.E.C. Hill, A Century of Revolution 1603-1714 (Edinburgh, 1961), p. 84.

3 See the remark of E.C. Delavan, quo. in New British & Foreign Temperance Society, Third Annual Rept. 1839, p. 58.

4 F.J. Klingberg, 'Harriet Beecher Stowe & Social Reform in England', Amer[ican] Hist[orical] Rev[iew], Apr. 1938, passim. cf. British & Foreign Temperance Herald, Dec. 1832, p. 143.

5 A.D. Gayer, W.W. Rostow & A.J. Schwartz, Growth & Fluctuation of the British Economy, 1790-1850, 1953, I, pp. 145-6, 181-2, 213, 215, 250-1; cf. Thistlethwaite, 'Atlantic Partnership', p. 3.

ance reformer of the 1830s showed his faith in America by investing his money there. And like several English temperance reformers, he also toured America. Francis Beardsall, the Bible Wine controversialist of the 1830s died in mid-ocean, en route for "that land of liberty....where his mind would not be pained by a people's sufferings, the result of heartless oppression".¹

Americans helped in several ways to establish the British temperance movement. American sea-captains first introduced temperance principles to Liverpool in 1829; American ministers influenced the two earliest temperance leaders, John Dunlop in Scotland and Dr. Edgar in Ulster, and also introduced temperance principles to Cork, soon to be Father Mathew's headquarters.² A letter from New York prompted the missionary G.C. Smith in 1829 to write the first English tract advocating the formation of temperance societies, and the Livesey-Delavan transatlantic correspondence in the 1830s reinforced enthusiasm on both sides of the ocean.³

1 Rechabite Magazine, July 1850, p. 298.

2 P.T. Winskill, Temperance Movement & its Workers (1892), I, pp. 47-53, 57; J. Dearden, Brief History of the Commencement and Success of Teetotalism, Preston, n.d., p. 17; Church of England Temperance Magazine, 1865, p. 20; Temperance Penny Magazine, Jan. 1836, p. 14; W.E. Moss, 1831-1931. Blackburn's First Temperance Society Centenary, Blackburn, 1931, p. 5.

3 G.C. Smith, Intemperance... (1829); Dawson Burns, op. cit., I, p. 40. Temperance Society Record, Apr. 1831, p. 75; J. Pearce, Joseph Livesey (1885), pp. cxi, cxii, cxv.

Americans supported extremist tendencies in the British temperance movement throughout the 1830s, and induced the first London temperance society to convert itself into a national organisation. Later they championed the more demanding "long" pledge against the "short",¹ and generated enthusiasm through their literature and domestic legislation. Lyman Beecher's Six Sermons on Intemperance and the annual reports of American temperance societies were very influential, as were the Bible Wine researches of Eliphalet Nott and Beaumont's medical observations on Alexis St. Martin. Again, the curtailing of spirit rations to the American services and, later, the Maine Law, set important precedents. So close a link with America, however, though invaluable in establishing the movement with English nonconformists, helped prejudice the governing classes against it.²

Continental influences also helped create the new movement. Although he had heard of the American temperance societies beforehand, it was only his visit to Paris in 1828 which focussed John Dunlop's attention directly on the temperance question: how could a nation "of papists and infidels", he asked himself, surpass in morals a nation with an "upright confession of faith" and where the Bible was the "test and

1 P.T. Winskill, op. cit., I, p. 73; & see below, pp. 195 ff

2 3 Hansard 24, c. 109 (3 June 1834); and see below, pp. 245 ff

spring of all ethical purity"?¹ Throughout the 19th century, Englishmen apparently supreme in so many economic and religious spheres suffered from an inferiority complex about their drinking habits.

Hume in 1834 said that one could land at Ostend and visit Brussels, Antwerp and Liège without seeing as many drunken men en route as he could see in half-an-hour in London.² Liquor restrictionists were rightly sceptical of such claims: the contrast between England and the continent lay less in the quantity of alcohol consumed than in the manner of its consumption. Even today there is a contrast between the Frenchman's regular drinking and the intermittent but helpless drunkenness of a minority of Englishmen.³ As a teetotaler put it in 1839 "the French, generally, are not drunkards....but they are regular drinkers".⁴

The contrast between foreign sobriety and British drunkenness particularly embarrassed the Evangelicals, not only in their efforts against American slavery, but also because

1 Parl. Papers 1834, viii (559), Q. 4614; J. Dunlop. Autobiography, p. 59; and see Plate 15.

2 Mirror of Parliament, 1834, III, c. 1988 (3 June 1834); cf. Huskisson, 2 Hansard 10, c. 362.

3 H. Jones, 'Alcoholism & Society', New Society, 21 Mar. 1963.

4 Beardsall, in British Temperance Advocate, 15 Mar. 1839, p. 27.

Protestant missions in France were discredited by drunken English navvies building French railways in the 1840s, and by reports of England brought back by French visitors.¹ Again, if an Avenging God bestowed material power only in return for superior morality, Englishmen must engage in temperance reform from motives of national defence. Temperance reformers profited from such attitudes and their tracts often draw analogies between 19th century Britain and Rome in her dotage. "In proportion as a people become loose in morals", says a temperance handbook of 1847, "they must sink in the scale of nations".² The temperance reformer thus took up two unrelated positions on continental drinking habits: when faced by free-traders arguing that a non-restrictive policy promoted sobriety and that French sobriety proved it, he replied that the French were not as sober as they seemed. Yet he did not hesitate also, on other occasions, to emphasise the relative prevalence of intemperance in England as opposed to France.

Similarly, the drunkenness of English colonists, and the unscrupulousness of English traders embarrassed Evangelical missions to the heathen. Chinese, Syrians and Kaffirs

1 Church of England Temperance Magazine, Feb. 1863, pp. 133ff.

2 P. Burne, Teetotaler's Companion, 1847, p. 311.

appeared on Exeter Hall platforms to rebuke the English for their sin. Visitors to the despised Arab populations like Buckingham and F.W. Newman were surprised to find them excelling the English in sobriety, and were inspired to engage in temperance activity when they got home.¹

How did temperance societies spread over Great Britain during 1829-30? In summer 1829, two simultaneous but independent anti-spirits movements appeared in Ireland and Scotland, both areas whose working people drank spirits rather than beer, and where complaint had been caused by the recent reduction of spirit duties.² On 14th August, Dr. John Edgar, presbyterian professor of divinity at Belfast, who under the influence of the American presbyterian minister Revd. Joseph Penny had recently hurled the family whisky out of the parlour window, appealed in the Belfast News-Letter against Sabbath-breaking and intemperance.³ G.W. Carr, congregational minister

1 Dawson Burns, op. cit., I, p. 121; London Temperance Tract No. 42; for Buckingham & Newman, see below, pp. 68, 289

2 See below, pp. 56, 116.

3 W.D. Killen, Memoir of John Edgar, 1867, Belfast, pp. 28, 32, 40, 48: Edgar was at this time in his thirties, an energetic and eloquent minister and opponent of slavery. He later wrote much propaganda for the anti-spirits societies, but violently opposed teetotalism; when the latter seemed triumphant, he retired from the temperance cause after 12 years' activity. A controversial personality, like so many liquor restrictionists.

at New Ross, on the same day at a Bible Society meeting in a Quaker meeting-house, founded the first British anti-spirits society requiring total abstinence from spirits and moderation in other drinks. Later claims that a similar society had been formed much earlier at Skibereen are unimportant since this society, if it existed, wielded no influence outside its locality.

By November, Dr. John Cheyne, physician to the forces in Ireland and Revd. W. Urwick a prominent Dublin congregational minister had joined the movement. But though the Roman Catholic archbishop of Cashel and the Bishop of Kildare lent their approval, Catholic fears of Protestant proselytism hindered progress in Ireland until Father Mathew's campaigns in the late 1830s. Temperance, like chartism, suffered in Ireland from the bitterness of religious rivalries there.¹ The Quakers were very helpful from the first, and by 1830 the Hibernian Temperance Society was distributing sophisticated tracts reconciling the anti-spirits movement with medical opinion, political economy, and political prudence: the upper classes must sustain their threatened social position, it argued, by demonstrating their superior morality.²

1 cf. Weekly Record, 13 Dec. 1856, p. 305.

2 Dawson Burns, op. cit., I, p. 32; Parl. Papers, 1834, viii (559), QQ. 3007-9; for the tracts, see especially the

Dr. Edgar almost immediately visited Scotland, but when he reached Glasgow in September 1829 he found that the Evangelical, wealthy, serious-minded, well-educated socio-religious reformer, John Dunlop,¹ had independently established an anti-spirits movement there. Dunlop's observations on his visit to Paris in the previous year had been published as a tract, and in August 1829, influenced by an American minister and by American literature, he agitated to establish a temperance movement in Scotland. The fact that two simultaneous movements appeared independently should, like the simultaneous inventions of the industrial revolution, encourage the historian to devote as much attention to the social need which pioneer anti-spirits societies claimed to meet as to the personality of their leaders.

The courage required from early temperance reformers should not of course be underestimated. Dunlop was undoubtedly

Footnote 2 from previous page contd./...

society's Second Letter on the Effects of Wine & Spirits, by a Physician (2nd Edn.); A Letter to a Member of the Dublin Temperance Society, on the Supposed Value of Ardent Spirits in Relation to National Wealth; & the Address of the Hibernian Temperance Society to their Countrymen (all published in Dublin, 1830); I am most grateful to Mr. K.V. Thomas of St. John's College, Oxford for drawing my attention to these tracts in his possession. See also below, pp. 148 ff.

1 See Appendix, Plate 15.

inspired by his religious principles: Knox, Wesley, Wilberforce and Chalmers were his guiding-lights, despite Chalmers' failure to join the new movement until many years later. Thus in October 1829, Dunlop walked "in great fear and trembling" to his first public temperance meeting in Glasgow. The first Scottish anti-spirits society was established at Greenock in the same month. At that time, said Dunlop later, "everything seemed against me".¹

By June 1830, the Temperance Society Record, the first British temperance periodical,² could list a total Scottish membership of 3332; Glasgow boasted 952, Greenock 415, Dundee 326, Dunfermline 200, Paisley 120 and Perth 60. The efforts of the Scotsmen Dunlop and Collins were most important in spreading the anti-spirits movement in England, especially in Manchester, London, Bradford and Bristol. Scottish zeal for liquor restriction long continued to burn more brightly than English enthusiasm; its religious atmosphere closely resembled that of New England, where the American temperance

1 This account is based on Scottish Temperance Review, 1848, pp. 372-3; Temperance Society Record, Jan. 1831, pp. 8-9; W. Logan, Early Heroes of the Temperance Reformation, Glasgow, 1873, p. 44; J. Dunlop, Autobiography, pp. 59-62, 303, 429; Collins was also influenced by Chalmers: Temperance Congress of 1862, National Temperance League, 1862, p. 171.

2 See Appendix, Plate 16.

movement was born.¹

England trailed behind: despite G.C.Smith's pamphlet of 1829 and the efforts of three American sea-captains visiting Liverpool in that year, the first English temperance society was not established till February 1830. In November 1829 Henry Forbes, a Scottish worsted manufacturer aged 34 from Bradford, was won over, while on a business trip to Glasgow, by Scottish temperance reformers. In this, as in the commercial sphere, he became an excellent salesman of other peoples' ideas; though his views were often regarded in Bradford as "utopian and visionary", he succeeded in establishing an anti-spirits society there. He later became an Anti-Corn Law Leaguer, espoused the cause of the Scottish seceders, was described by Bright in 1853 as "very well informed", and became third Mayor of Bradford.²

He was vigorously aided by Dr. Thomas Beaumont, a surgeon of Wesleyan family and educated at Kingswood. Beaumont spoke well, became very active in local government after moving to Bradford in 1822, and eventually became one of the city's

1. C.Taylor, op.cit., p.25.

2. Bradford Observer, 18 Oct 1870 (obituary); Bradford Temperance Society, Second Annual Report, 1832, p.9; Dawson Burns, op.cit. I, p.41-3; Temperance Society Record, June 1830, p.6; July 1830, pp.26-7; B.M.Addit.MSS.43383 (Bright Papers), Bright to Cobden, 28 Nov 1853.

first aldermen.¹ William Collins the publisher travelled down from Glasgow to speak at the new society's first meeting in June 1830. The Dublin Quaker, G.H. Birkett, took the lead in founding the second and third English temperance societies, at Warrington and Manchester respectively.²

The early Bradford society strove rather to establish societies elsewhere than to promote the cause locally. It was the Bradford model which encouraged Edward Baines to recommend the new movement in his Leeds Mercury in January 1830, and later in the year to help found the Leeds Temperance Society.³ William Collins, on a visit to London in Summer 1830, found no temperance society there, and had great difficulty in founding one;⁴ this was the first sign of a metropolitan apathy which was to hinder the temperance movement like most other reform movements throughout the 19th century. Wales was even slower than England to embrace the new movement,

1 Temperance Spectator, Nov. 1859, p. 164.

2 A. Mounfield, Beginnings of Total Abstinence. The Warrington Societies of 1830, Warrington, 1902, pp. 7-21; Dawson Burns, op. cit., I, p. 42; P.T. Winskill & J. Thomas, History of the Temperance Movement in Liverpool & District, Liverpool, 1887, pp. 5-6.

3 Leeds Mercury, 23 Jan. 1830; Bradford Temperance Society, 2nd Annual Rept. 1832, p. 9; see the earliest entries in Leeds Temperance Society MS. Minute Book 1830-45 in Leeds Central Library's Crosfield Collection.

4 Dawson Burns, op. cit., I, pp. 43-4; cf. Addit. MSS. 43667 (Place Papers), f. 53: Place to Cobden, 4 Mar. 1840.

and the first two temperance societies for Welshmen, in Liverpool and Manchester, were not founded till 1831.¹

The London Temperance Society held its first public meeting in June 1831, but only when American influence had changed its title to "British and Foreign Temperance Society" was the British anti-spirits movement safely launched.² These events, despite their great importance to temperance historians of later years, attracted very little attention in the contemporary press, even in the Leeds Mercury. Except for the Monthly Review which in 1830 mentioned the "most praiseworthy zeal and determination" of its leaders,³ the Evangelical monthlies were the only London papers to pay any attention to the new movement. In general, the newspapers in 1830 had more important things to write about.

III

The bare narrative of events in 1829-30 demands analysis. While the temperance movement could not appear without the various long-run enabling conditions already discussed, were

1 P.T. Winskill, Temperance Movement & its Workers, I, p. 75; IV, p. 99.

2 ibid., I, p. 73.

3 Monthly Review, N.S., XV (1830), p. 187.

there also any short-term provocations causing both Ireland and Scotland to launch their movements independently but simultaneously? Clearly the energies of Evangelical protestants are important, since religious zeal was the driving force of the two leading personalities, Dunlop and Edgar: they obtained their inspiration via the Anglo-American philanthropic network. Similarly with less important figures like Collins, Baines, G.W. Carr, and the many Quakers who supported the early movement, like G.H. Birkett and the manufacturer John Rand, first president of the Bradford Temperance Society. From the first, the anti-spirits societies were agencies for religious recruiting; their speeches and periodicals have a strongly Evangelical flavour.

Yet 19th century temperance historians concentrated too exclusively on personalities and paid too little attention to the social situation in which early liquor restrictionists found themselves. Bred in the nonconformist tradition of the improving spiritual biography: attracted by the relative ease with which biographical history is written: and naturally, as temperance reformers themselves, admiring the courage of their predecessors and interested in their personalities - they compiled huge biographical dictionaries, hagiographical biographies and chronicles stuffed with personalities and

devoid of sociological analysis.¹ Hence the frequent bitter controversies about who should gain credit for which particular innovation,² paralleled in the contemporary controversies over the origins of railways and Sunday schools.

Two factors suggest the superficiality of a discussion which concentrates exclusively on individual initiative and religious zeal. Firstly, the temperance movement was only one of several attempts in the 1830s to induce working people to adopt a middle-class style of life. The Lord's Day Observance Society was founded in the same year as the British and Foreign Temperance Society. And during the 1830s increasing pressure was exerted on working people to model their sexual conduct on the postponed and provident middle-class marriage.³ Contemporaries noted the "striking circumstance" that friendly societies and provident institutions of all

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- 1 The most monumental is P.T. Winskill: Temperance Standard Bearers of the Nineteenth Century, Liverpool, 1897, (2 Vols.); cf. J. Inwards, Memorials of Temperance Workers, 1879; T. Lythgoe, Biographical Key to the Picture Containing One Hundred and Twenty Portraits of Temperance Reformers, Manchester 1860; W. Logan, op. cit. Engravings of temperance workers are the sole illustrations in P.T. Winskill's vast chronology, Temperance Movement & its Workers.
 - 2 e.g. the controversies in Alliance News, 22 June 1861, p. 1224, & Weekly Record, 5 Sept. 1857, p. 317; British Temperance Advocate, 15 Dec., 1840, p. 145.
 - 3 J.A. Banks, Prosperity & Parenthood, 1954, p. 29.

types were flourishing at the same time; they were also flourishing in the same place - predominantly in Lancashire and Yorkshire, together with contemporary mechanics' institutes and co-operative societies.¹

Secondly, both religious and irreligious opinion-formers advocated sobriety at this time: the 19th century attack on intemperance was almost as vigorous among proletarian rationalists and sympathisers as among bourgeois Evangelical Christians. Hetherington, Place, Cleave, Lovett and Owen, influenced by Godwin and the rationalist tradition, and unconnected with the religious institutions of the 1830s, were quite as ~~un~~conscious as Celtic Evangelicals of the need for sobriety. Forces more fundamental than religious zeal seem to have driven both the religious and the irreligious in the same direction. Besides, religious zeal and individual energy could not act in divorce from prevailing social conditions; religion, in the 1820s, was only gradually becoming segregated from other aspects of life.

Several short-term factors helped establish the anti-

¹ Monthly Review, N.S. 1830, XV, p. 188; E.J. Hobsbawm, 'Economic Fluctuations & Some Social Movements since 1800', Econ. Hist. Rev., 1952, pp. 1-2, 11; London Review, 1829, No. 1, p. 261; M. Tylecote, Mechanics' Institutes of Lancashire & Yorkshire, 1957, pp. 66-7; A.E. Musson, 'Ideology of Early Co-operation', Trans. Lancashire & Cheshire Antiquarian Society, 1958, passim.

spirits movement in the years 1829-31. First, taxation changes: in the 17th century, the early and late 18th century and the early 19th century, the increase in public concern about drunkenness usually accompanied some alleged change in popular taste for a stronger type of intoxicant. Just as the 17th century attack on drunkenness was partly inspired by an alleged increase in the consumption of stronger foreign wines and by the substitution of hopped beer for the traditional ale,¹ so early and late 18th century concern was fostered by fears that reduced taxation or cheap corn prompted spirit-drinking.

Similarly, the early anti-spirits movement flourished on contemporary fears that recent tax reductions would lead to a second "gin age". Statistics founded on excise returns certainly seemed to show a marked increase in spirits consumption, and the number of spirit-retailing licences rose rapidly in relation to the number of alehouses and to population.² Though much of the apparent increase stemmed from the diversion of liquor from illegal to legal outlets, it did

1 See above, p.13

2 See Appendix, tables 5, 9, 10, 11; & diagram 5; see also G.B. Wilson, Alcohol & the Nation, table 25 (p. 394), for figures of retail liquor licences issued. On contemporary fears of increasing spirit consumption, see, e.g. Mirror of Parliament, 1830, II, p. 1888 (21 May 1830); Parl. Papers, 1830, x (253), p. 112.

at least help prepare the public, especially in spirit-drinking Ireland and Scotland, to receive the anti-spirits society favourably.

A second factor contributing to the "gin panic" of the 1820s, though in London rather than in Scotland and Ireland, was the evolution of the "gin palace", lavishly decorated within and without. Though the actual expression "gin palace" does not seem to have been used till 1834, licensed premises were being adapted for this purpose at least as early as 1815.¹ Here too, however, public alarm was largely misplaced; many gin palace customers were collecting intoxicants for home consumption. Its appearance sprang not from an increase in spirits consumption, but from a retail revolution similar to that which was also taking place among London chemists, hosiers and tea-sellers, and which was designed to enable ginsellers more efficiently to supply the needs of the huge London population.²

One further cause of alarm in the 1820s was the Londoner's obsession, shared by contemporary Parisians, that crime was rapidly increasing. Between 1811 and 1827, criminal convic-

1 J. Bowles, A Letter to Robert Wissett, Esq., 1815, p. 48. See Appendix, Plate 17; Oxford English Dictionary (Ed. Murray), Vol. IV, Pt. 2, p. 172.

2 H.B. Fearon, Suggestions & Correspondence Relative to Magistrates' Licences, 1830, p. 39; cf. Francis Place Newspaper Collection (British Museum), Set 42, f.223.

tions in the London area quadrupled, but few attributed this to improved police efficiency. Several important inquiries into police and crime were held between 1815 and 1828, and though no causal connexion between gin and crime figures was or could ever be proved, the two were linked together in the public mind.¹ A few individuals denied all these fears. Chadwick denied that crime had been increasing, Fearon denied that the appearance of the gin palace indicated increased gin-consumption, and free traders, including McCulloch, denied that spirit-drinking had increased in Scotland since duty reduction.² Nevertheless, all these fears, however mistaken, helped provide the early anti-spirits society with its clientèle.

A second important factor helping to generate the anti-spirits movement seems, in the 19th century as in the 17th,³ to have been the peculiar situation of the textile industry, though here the evidence is less conclusive; though in America the temperance movement originated in non-industrialised areas and stood there for the assertion of rural and "frontier"

1 See Appendix, table 8 & diagram 6; cf. L. Chevalier, Classes Laborieuses et Classes Dangereuses à Paris pendant la Première Moitié du XIXe Siècle, Paris, 1958, p. v.

2 London Review, 1829, No. 1, p. 262; Edinburgh Review, Jan. 1830, pp. 486, 492; Dec. 1826, p. 169.

3 See above, p. 12-13

as against urban values,¹ it seems to have succeeded in England for entirely different reasons. The British temperance movement seems rather to have embodied a protest of urban meliorism against ignorant rusticity.² Mark Rutherford perceptively made the auctioneer Brother Scotton, who "represented Cowfold urban intelligence as against agricultural rusticity"³ one of the first teetotalers in the agricultural township of Cowfold. Many rural teetotal labouring men, however, found it difficult to persist in conduct of which the village squire or clergyman disapproved.⁴ Teetotalism could only survive there if continually regenerated by urban missionaries.

A large proportion of liquor restrictionists in the early 1830s came from the textile centres of Lancashire and Yorkshire.⁵ The earliest anti-spirits societies originated in the two textile manufacturing areas of Ulster and Glasgow, and spread through England from the textile centres of Preston, Bradford and Leeds.

Although the strength of the early temperance movement in Cornwall reminds us that there is no neat one-to-one relationship between textile manufacture and temperance enthusiasm, there are further indications that there was some link between the two. The pioneer Henry Forbes was a

1. A. Sinclair, Prohibition, 1962, pp. 38ff.

2. M. Rutherford, The Revolution in Tanner's Lane, pp. 366, 370.

3. See Appendix, table 12 & diagram 7.

4. G. W. Knighton, in Temperance Weekly Journal, 28 July 1843, p. 244.

5. See appendix, table. 16

worsted manufacturer and the early anti-spirits societies certainly seem to have flourished among the nonconformist trading classes in Northern industrial towns- the group from which so many textile manufacturers were recruited.¹ There were close links between the employees of Horrocks' mill and the early Preston temperance society; millowners occasionally agreed to chair temperance meetings in the 1830s;² Leeds Temperance Society's ninth anniversary celebrations were held in Marshall's new Holbeck Mill;³ and several Bradford worsted manufacturers allowed their workpeople to leave the factory early on 14th June 1830, to boost attendance at Bradford Temperance Society's great inaugural meeting in the Bradford exchange buildings. Manchester millowners gave similar encouragement to the early anti-spirits movement.⁴

There were particular reasons why textile manufacturers should sympathise with anti-spirits societies at this time. The cotton millowners in the difficult years of 1827-1832 experienced rising output but falling profits, a falling return for fixed capital. However low the ceiling price obtainable,

1 See below, pp. 183-4 & Appendix, table 30.

2 Preston Temperance Advocate, Aug. 1835, p. 62.

3 British Temperance Advocate, 15 July 1840, p. 89.

4 Dawson Burns, op. cit., pp. 42-3.

high overheads demanded full-capacity output. Demand for cotton goods was not rising as fast as production. Further mechanisation, reduced wages, increased manufacturing efficiency, or an enlarged demand for cotton goods were the only remedies.¹ The latter two objectives could certainly be pursued through temperance propaganda.

In the woollen industry, too, falling prices accompanied increasing output at this time, and both woollen and cotton industries were depressed during 1829.² Dunlop's two visits to Glasgow in 1828 failed to arouse interest in his proposals for anti-spirits societies, but he found support there during his visit of August 1829. Again, it was in November 1829 that Forbes went to Glasgow on business; early in 1830 he established the first English temperance society in the wool-centre of Bradford. By March 1830, trade had begun to improve in the textile districts, but the important step in initiating the anti-spirits movement had by then been taken.

It would be rash to suggest that these factors were the sole cause of the success in the North of the early anti-spirits movement. Probably the anti-spirits movement would

1. Gayer, Rostow & Schwartz, op.cit., I, p.222; R.C.O. Matthews, Study in Trade-Cycle History; Economic Fluctuations in Great Britain, 1833-1842, Cambridge, 1954, pp.130-1.

2. ibid. I, pp.225-6.

have spread to England whatever the industrial situation. Nor was there any necessary connexion between the attack on drunkenness and textile manufacture as opposed to other manufacturing concerns; it was simply that the textile industry was one of the first to adopt a factory organisation on a large scale. Any industry requiring punctuality and steadiness in its work force was likely to favour temperance activity. Nowhere, said Ure in 1835, was the Gospel truth more applicable than "godliness is great gain" than in the administration of a large factory.¹

Personal abstinence became a useful index to character. Industrial employees were expected to possess a "character", or testimonial to their reliability, long before the same requirement was made of the agricultural labourer.² William Heywood, searching Manchester for employment in the 1840s, made little headway with the head partner of one firm until he was able to say that he was a teetotaler. "He asked me, Had I been given to drinking, &c.? I promptly answered, 'No, I have been a Teetotaler nine years'. That seemed sufficient.

1 A. Ure, Philosophy of Manufactures, 1835, pp. 8-9; E. Baines, History of the Cotton Manufacture in Great Britain, 1835, p. 484, ~~& see above, pp.~~

2 R. Jefferies, Hodge & His Masters, 1890 edn., p. 345.

He said , 'When are you ready to come?!...."¹ . In this way, the temperance movement solved the problem of poverty for a small section of the working force, though not for the working classes as a whole.

Religious and economic motivation cannot be distinguished, however, in the textile manufacturers who favoured liquor restriction. Lack of suitable clothes was often an important reason for staying away from church or chapel. The importance of the early 20th. century improvement in ready-made clothing, wrote Ensor , "will not be underestimated by any one who remembers what a cruel and unescapable badge of inferiority clothes had till then constituted."² The millowners who so frequently sponsored chapels for their employees, in trying to divert funds from drink to textiles, could have acted as much from religious motives as from economic self-interest..

19th century reforming movements found society more receptive to their panaceas during times of depression.³ Although the "industrial" arguments for abstinence from spirits were not prominent in the speeches of the earliest anti-spirits campaigners, they may well have formed an important but unstated influence on the early movement. Certainly

1. T. Lythgoe, Biographical Key, p. 65.

2. H. J. Perkin in A. H. Birch, (Ed.), Small-Town Politics, 1959, p. 18; L. Pope, Millhands & Preachers, 1942, p. 28; R. C. K. Ensor, England 1870-1914 (1936), p. 555.

3. B. M. Addit. MSS. 43656 (Cobden Papers), f. 380: Cobden to Joseph Sturge, 15 June 1857; cf. Leeds Temperance Society: 9th. Annual Report, 1850, p. 8.

the need to enlarge the home market was often emphasised later by teetotalers and prohibitionists, especially during the similar economic situation of the 1870s.¹ The Carlylean lament that "cotton-cloth is already twopence a yard or lower; and yet bare backs were never more numerous among us"² was often heard on temperance platforms. By 1834 teetotalers were emphasising the size of the resources which abstinence would release for expenditure on clothing, food, and other consumer goods; they even regarded personal abstinence as the solution to the problem of pauperism.³ Chadwick told Thomas Spencer in 1841 that it was in the temperance societies that he rested his hopes for the recovery and permanent improvement of the labouring classes.⁴

Again, early temperance tracts often listed the clothing which could be bought with a year's drinking money.⁵ The battle between the drink and the textile industries, of which the temperance movement seems in some ways to be an institutional outcrop, is seen at its crudest in the exchange of clothing for drink - in the "doffing do", as Lancashire called it -

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1. Gayer, Rostow & Schwartz, op.cit., I, p.222, n.1; see also W. Hoyle Our National Resources & How They Are Wasted, cheap edn. 1871; S. Fothergill, The Threatening Element in England's Prosperity 1871; "A Cotton Manufacturer", Inquiry into the Causes of the Present Long-Continued Depression, 3rd Edn., 1869.
 2. T. Carlyle, 'Past & Present', in Works (Ashburton Edn.), II, 1891, p.155.
 3. Baines, Mirror of Parliament, 1834, III, p.1989 (3 June 1834); Parl. Papers 1834 viii (559), p.xi; Preston Temperance Advocate July 1834, p.49.
 4. British & Foreign Temperance Intelligencer, 7 Aug 1841, p.252; But see below, p.564
 5. e.g. Ipswich Temperance Tract, No.64; there are several examples among the London Temperance Tracts, 1839.

from which pawnbrokers made their fortunes.¹ Clothing and textile manufacturers such as the congregationalists Charles Jupe, Titus Salt and Samuel Morley, the Quaker Peases, Priestmans and Clarks, were among the temperance movement's most generous supporters.² The industrial arguments for temperance may partly explain why the 19th century directed such a vigorous campaign against drunkenness, while leaving adultery to fend for itself.

But textile manufacturers were not the movement's only generous supporters: their interests coincided with those of the manufacturers of non-alcoholic drinks, since ships exporting shirtings often returned loaded with tea, coffee, and cocoa.³ Nor could the Cadburys, Frys, Crosfields, Rowntrees, and Peeks lose by supporting a movement which attacked the consumption of drinks which rivalled their own; temperance periodicals always carried advertisements for non-intoxicating drinks. It would be wrong, however, to take effect for cause; Quaker cocoa manufacturers and tea dealers were often motivated, like 18th century brewers, by a desire to promote sobriety. John Cadbury became a teetotaler as early as 1832. Coffee-house keepers, of whom there were 2000 in London in 1844, were prominent supporters of the early temperance movement, and encouraged their customers to read.⁴

1. J. Clay, 24th. Chaplain's Report, 1847, p. 70.

2. See below, pp. 511ff.

3. Lawrence Heyworth, Birmingham Journal 17 Sep 1842, p. 3.

4. New Parley Library, I, No. 19 (13 July 1844), pp. 293-4; H. Freeman, History of the Total Abstinence Pledge Question, c. 1840, p. 25.

Thus a third factor smoothing the path for the anti-spirits society in the 1830s was the new-found cheapness and improved accessibility of non-alcoholic drinks. One coffee-house keeper in 1840 attributed the appearance of working mens' temperance societies "entirely to the establishment of coffee-houses , because a few years ago it used to be almost a matter of ridicule amongst working men to drink coffee: now they are held up to emulate each other".¹ While there had been no significant improvement by the 1830s in the quality of drinking water, boiled water was safe and its flavourings had recently become increasingly attractive; the temperance movement from the first encouraged its consumption at social gatherings in the form of tea and coffee.²

The reasons for the appearance of any new social movement are difficult to isolate. But once the anti-spirits movement had been established, its immediate task was clear: it must accumulate evidence in support of its case before it could hope to challenge deeply-rooted social customs. In this process the first parliamentary inquiry into the problem of drunkenness, promoted by James Silk Buckingham in 1834, played an important part. It deserves extended discussion not only for this reason, but also because its history sheds considerable light on the nature of the early anti-spirits movement.

1. Parl. Papers 1840 v (601), Q.2815.

2. e.g. Moral Reformer, 1 Aug 1832, p.242; Preston Temperance Advocate, Feb 1837, p.14.

CHAPTER TWO

THE FIRST PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY:

FRANCIS PLACE AND THE "DRUNKEN COMMITTEE": 1834

Only five years after the temperance movement reached Britain, Parliament held its first inquiry into drunkenness. It must be discussed in detail firstly because its written proceedings formed an important part of the "liquor restrictionist case" during the coming century. Secondly, because the initial and, as it turned out, premature appearance of the temperance movement in parliament emphasises the strength of the prejudice which liquor restrictionists had to overcome. Thirdly, because it provoked an interesting controversy between the temperance movement's religious and non-religious wings. Fourthly, because, like other committee evidence, the committee's report has been used uncritically by the Webbs and the Hammonds.¹ It must be considered in the context of parliamentary inquiries in general, whose reliability as evidence for the social historian has been increas-

¹ e.g. J.L. & B. Hammond, Age of the Chartists, pp. 144, 146; S. & B. Webb, op. cit., p. 128. I am most grateful to Mr. W.E.S. Thomas of ~~York~~ University & Miss Patricia Wells for reading through this chapter and making several suggestions for its improvement.

ingly impugned in recent years.¹

I

But first the interesting and controversial personality of James Silk Buckingham, the committee's instigator and chairman, must be discussed, since this undoubtedly affected not only the character of its report but also the parliamentary response it evoked. Though Maccoby considered him "one of the most unusual men in the first Reformed parliament",² he is now virtually forgotten. Born in Cornwall in 1786, he went to sea at ten, was imprisoned at Corunna at eleven, returned home to be converted in a Methodist revival, rejoined the navy at sixteen, deserted owing to disgust at the brutality of naval life and became a lawyer. He later became a sea-captain, settled in India, and founded the radical Calcutta Journal, whose vigorous attacks on the Indian government resulted in its suppression. His property confiscated, Buckingham returned home to England and began in the 1820s a

1 e.g. by L. Brown, 'The Board of Trade & the Tariff Problem, 1840-2', English Historical Review, 1953; W.H. Hutt, 'The Factory System of the Early 19th Century', in F.A. Hayek, (Ed.), Capitalism & the Historians, 1954; D. Bythell, 'The Hand-loom Weavers in the English Cotton Industry during the Industrial Revolution: Some Problems', Econ. Hist. Rev., Dec. 1964, p. 350.

2 S. Maccoby, English Radicalism, 1832-1852 (1935), p. 77.

campaign for redress which was to last a lifetime.¹

By 1829 he was well-known for his travel books and for his itinerant lecturing against the East India Company monopoly. The Whigs in opposition dallied with his case, and Buckingham sought official employment from them in November 1830.² "I would die with you, or for you, if a sacrifice were necessary", he told Brougham privately in 1832.³ He was elected radical M.P. for Sheffield in the same year.

He came to Westminster convinced that parliament would rapidly adopt his many rational solutions to existing social problems. His ideas were remarkably in advance of his age: he favoured compulsory education for all boys and girls between five and ten, held an exaggerated faith in the ballot and universal suffrage, and promised to resign if three-quarters of a constituency ^{meeting} wished it. He wanted the Anglican salary-scale transformed and in his first parliamentary session he proposed the complete reorganisation of the financial system; this included nationalisation of the railways

1 All biographical details from R.E. Turner, James Silk Buckingham (1934) & S.T. King, 'James Silk Buckingham', (London Univ. M.A. thesis, 1932).

2 University College London, Brougham MSS.: Buckingham to Brougham, 29 Nov. 1830.

3 ibid., Buckingham to Brougham, 16 May 1832.

and a graduated taxation which would take 40-50% of the income of the rich while asking only 5-10% from poorer groups and nothing at all from the labourer.¹ He had only been in parliament a month when he proposed an elaborate scheme for rationalising the business activities of the House.²

While his vigorous reformism, which may owe much to his happy home life, and his optimistic faith that man had only been made bad by government oppression,³ align him with the Utilitarians, his support for Sabbath Observance and reduction of working hours, as well as his dislike of brutal punishments, helped align him with the Evangelicals. A convinced feminist, he enjoyed lecturing before women and supported female suffrage.⁴ With this ample stock of intelligence and advanced ideas, experienced in public-speaking and journalism, possessing a pleasant, open, almost boyish appearance,⁵ and full of hope and ambition, Buckingham when he entered parliament for the first time in 1833 could hardly fail to succeed.

Why then did he fail? Contributory factors included

1 3 Hansard 19, c. 6ff. (2 July 1833).

2 3 Hansard 15, c. 1010 (20 Feb. 1833).

3 3 Hansard 18, c. 53 (22 May 1833).

4 Parliamentary Review, 1833, I, p. 246; IV, p. 61; cf. D. Spring, 'The Clapham Sect. Some Political & Social Aspects', Victorian Studies, Sep. 1961, p. 44.

5 See Appendix, Plate 19.

parliament's irritation at a member who exaggerated the power of reason, failed to allow for the prejudices and interests of ordinary men, and lacked the humility expected from a new member. Always incredulous when politicians rejected what seemed to him the most rational solutions to political and social problems, Buckingham shared the political naiveté of another leading temperance reformer, Sir Wilfrid Lawson.¹ Other factors: parliament's preference for diplomatic and religious questions at a time when it wished to prevent franchise reform from leading to social revolution;² parliament's distrust of a member who wielded extra-parliamentary influence through his itinerant and, worse, his paid lecturing;³ parliament's distaste for a member whose Parliamentary Review criticised the low calibre of M.P.s and listed the qualities of the ideal legislator,⁴ most of which, as it happened, Buckingham himself possessed: and parliament's suspicion of a member who, on becoming an M.P., almost immediately began pushing his claims for compensation from the

1 See below, pp. 423

2 Sir R. Heron, op. cit., pp. 203, 210, 297; cf. R.A. Slaney, A Plea, to Power & Parliament, for the Working Classes, 1847, pp. 133, 146; W.O. Aydelotte, 'Voting Patterns in the British House of Commons in the 1840s', Comparative Studies in Society & History, Jan. 1963, p. 157.

3 C.S. Emden, The People & the Constitution (1962 Edn.), pp. 288ff.

4 Parliamentary Review, 1833, IV, p. 57, p. 2; II, pp. 385-6.

East India Company. Buckingham's career thus displays an unusual combination of self-seeking and selflessness, of conceit and compassion, of intelligence and innocence.

For all these reasons, Buckingham endured in parliament many of those unobtrusive but painful tyrannies which exclusive bodies can apply to their members: he did not make his ideas more acceptable by appealing against such treatment to extra-parliamentary assemblies and to posterity. Thus his maiden speech on the reorganisation of parliamentary business was received "with a degree of derision, mockery, and scorn, which would have been quite sufficient to silence any man of less nerve than myself".¹ Coughing and cries of "question!" interrupted his appeal against Irish coercion and forced him to sit down; on another occasion he stood for fifteen minutes before he could make himself heard.² Such hostility did not prevent him from displaying a degree of activity remarkable in a new member; during 1833 he told the House that it must abolish slavery immediately, curtail flogging in the navy, free the Poles from Russian oppression, emancipate the Jews, prepare India for self-government, abolish capital punishment, introduce the ballot, and abolish the East

1 Parliamentary Review, 1833, IV, p. 57.

2 3 Hansard 16, c. 618 (13 Mar. 1833); Parliamentary Review, 1833, I, pp. 277-8.

India Company monopoly. Yet he told his constituents that he had spoken little during his first session, thinking it better "to start gently at first, and save my breath for the end".¹

It was thus not lack of energy which caused Buckingham's failure; indeed, if he had been less active, he might have been more successful. His parliamentary conduct can usefully be contrasted with that of a previous and successful reformer: William Wilberforce's recipe for political success - the quiet acquisition of a close knowledge of parliamentary business together with a reluctance to speak² - Buckingham certainly did not follow. Or with the young Disraeli, who like Buckingham at first faced great hostility, and whose oratory was tainted with the "cleverness" and didacticism which marred Buckingham's speeches.³

Whereas Disraeli took Shiel's advice and minutely studied the mood, manner and procedure of the House, Buckingham seems to have made little effort to adapt his speaking manner to an audience very different from those to whom he lectured in

1 Parliamentary Review, 1833, IV, p. 58.

2 R.I. & S. Wilberforce, Life, I, p. 20.

3 W.F. Monypenny, Life of Benjamin Disraeli, II (1912), pp. 11, 229.

the Provinces.¹ He was perhaps too old and too experienced to change his ways . His long , well-argued, somewhat florid speeches read well today , a sure sign that they did not impress those who heard them delivered.² He was nicknamed "Lord Hum", and assured his constituents in 1834 that during the session he never spent longer than 30 minutes on a meal.³ Yet while Lovett felt "great respect" for him, Place pin-pointed his defects: he was "an active bustling man never without a purpose", whose tactlessness rendered his great exertions futile.⁴ Buckingham's reception in 1833 thus contrasts sharply with that of another new member whose few moderate, informed, but self-effacing speeches made his first session in this year a striking success: W.E.Gladstone.⁵

By April 1833, Buckingham , against his original intention,⁶ was attacking the Whigs whom only three years before he had begged for office. He was bitterly disappointed

1.W.F.Monypenny,op.cit.II,pp.14,229.

2.ibid.,II,p.229.

3.Parliamentary Review,1834,II,p.1316;cf.E.Baines,Life of Edward Baines,1851,p.194-5.

4.B.M.Addit.MSS.27827 (Place Papers): Lovett to Place,17 Nov 1834 (f.31); Addit.MSS.27829 (Place Papers),f.86.

5.J.Morley,Life of W.E.Gladstone (2 Vol.~~E~~dn.,1905),I,pp.100ff.

6.Parliamentary Review,1833,II,p.156.

at the triviality of the change in parliamentary attitudes wrought by the Reform Act,¹ and would have felt happier in the parliament of 1868 than in that of 1833. "Phrenologically speaking", he told his constituents, "I am quite without the organ of veneration". It was possession of this organ which helped make Cobden's reforming career so decided a success.² The Whigs, to judge from their titters when Buckingham rose to speak, clearly returned the sentiment; he was hurt by these attacks and sought support for his parliamentary ordeals in the more sympathetic atmospheres of Exeter Hall or constituency meetings. "Here I stand", he wrote after the 1834 session, "a proud proof of the power of Truth and Justice to outlive, to conquer, and to triumph over falsehood, oppression, and calumny".³

An impecunious M.P. had to resist formidable temptations to conformity;⁴ 19th century radicalism outside St. Stephen's, even among the wealthy, frequently became moderate liberalism within. Yet Buckingham retained his integrity: whenever he

1 J.S. Buckingham, Qualifications & Duties of Members of Parliament, Nottingham, n.d. (1831), p. 6. cf. Parliamentary Review, 1833, II, p. 385.

2 Parliamentary Review, 1833, IV, p. 57; Sussex County Record Office, Chichester, Cobden Papers, 31f: Cobden to Combe (copy): 1 Aug. 1846.

3 Parliamentary Review, 1834, II, p. 1310.

4 N. Gash, Politics in the Age of Peel, 1953, pp. 106-7.

felt depressed by opposition and discouraged by treachery, he reminded himself of the nobility of his principles.¹ In a speech strangely yet characteristically combining nobility and absurdity, he pointed out that amid all this ridicule, "this was my consolation, that though merely as Mr. Buckingham, I might have stood humble and abashed before them, yet....I felt that I was the representative of the 90,000 inhabitants of Sheffield....My feeling was 'It is not I, but Sheffield that speaks'".²

The ridicule which greeted Buckingham's proposal for an inquiry into the causes and prevalence of drunkenness in 1834 therefore stemmed as much from the proposer's unpopularity as from parliament's blindness to the evil he attacked. But there were also other constituents of this ridicule, among them the novelty of inquiry into such a subject: the sudden transition from debating great questions to what was then considered an absurdly vulgar subject, with which parliament could not profitably concern itself: and the apparent futility of attacking a vice hitherto accepted as incurable and, like poverty itself, inevitable. To Buckingham's antagonists, in their ignorance, drunkenness seemed to result simply from the desire for drink: inquiry into its causes

1 Parliamentary Review, 1833, IV, p. 13.

2 ibid., p. 56.

seemed superfluous.¹ Again, if the House seemed apathetic this was not because it was indifferent to social evils, said Hume: it had been crowded for the debate on the Factories Bill, it was only ill-attended for the drunkenness debate because parliament could not think of a remedy.² Such explanations, if true, reveal the difficulty of the task of temperance reform.

The attack on drunkenness was not the only 19th century parliamentary campaign to progress from initial ridicule to eventual extreme seriousness; the feminist movement showed a similar development.³ Parliament apparently laughs when an established institution is attacked, but not seriously threatened: it imposes a form of sanction on a member who deviates too sharply from its norms.⁴ Yet this cannot be the whole explanation since, as the modern investigator knows, humour even now surrounds the subject. It is important to inquire further, since such mirth provoked temperance reformers into extreme statements which still further discredited their movement.

1 Weekly Dispatch, 10 Aug. 1834, p. 260.

2 Mirror of Parliament, 1834, III, p. 1987.

3 3 Hansard 289, c. 182 (12 June 1884).

4 H. Bergson, Laughter. An Essay on the Meaning of the Comic, (Tr. C. Brereton & F. Rothwell, 1935), p. 20.

Three factors can be isolated: firstly, opponents of the temperance movement found the prospect of rational inquiry into irrational conduct as incongruous as anti-feminists found the prospect of serious political activity by frivolous females. Secondly, there was the contrast between the grandeur of the temperance reformer's claims for his movement and the relative triviality of his remedy - a contrast which was to influence Dickens in Pickwick Papers.¹ Thirdly, the reminder that a narrow barrier separates sanity from insanity, normality from abnormality, has provoked a fear-dispelling laughter not only at drunkenness, but also at sexual deviation and mental illness - disabilities whose tragedy is only now becoming fully recognised and whose humorous connotations have therefore only recently begun to die away.

How did Buckingham come to embrace the liquor restrictionist cause? Place regarded his alliance with the Evangelicals over the temperance question in 1834 as incongruous, and the Examiner explained it as a last and despairing bid for political success.² Yet many individuals outside the Evangelical Movement co-operated with Exeter Hall in the attack on violence; Buckingham, though a Christian, did not

1 C. Dickens, Pickwick Papers, Oxford, 1947 Edn., p. 459.

2 Addit. MSS. 27829 (Place Papers), f. 29; Examiner, 10 Aug. 1834, pp. 497-8.

attach himself to any particular Christian denomination or party. And though it was perhaps excusable for an observer in 1834 to look on him as a politician on the make, he had in fact long been interested in the drink question.

His alarm during the naval experience of his boyhood at the contrast between British intemperance and continental sobriety,¹ was reinforced by his travels in the Middle East. His attempts to induce his sailors to abandon their grog earned him the nickname of "the water-drinking captain".² When he returned home after 10 years absence, "no language could adequately describe" his alarm at the extent of insobriety: his prolonged travels had sensitised him to the existence of an evil which most of his contemporaries were content to accept.³

Buckingham gave up spirits and, after 1826, wine too; but he only abandoned beer later under teetotal influence.⁴

1 Sheffield Independent, 13 Sep. 1834; J.S. Buckingham, History & Progress of the Temperance Reformation, 1854, p. 439.

2 Sheffield Independent, 13 Sep. 1834; 3 Hansard 24, c. 102, (3 June 1834); 3 Hansard 23, c. 1126 (16 May 1834).

3 3 Hansard 29, c. 563 (14 July 1835).

4 London Temperance Intelligencer, 30 May 1837, p. 219; J. Pearce, op. cit., p. lxxxix; Sheffield Iris, 9 Sep. 1834; 3 Hansard 23, c. 1124 (16 May 1834); Moral Reformer, 1 Dec. 1832, p. 373.

By March 1833 he was advocating many of the remedies for drunkenness which later appeared in his committee's report, including prohibition of all spirit-shops.¹ Yet he was no sour restrictionist.² He wanted the poor to enjoy themselves. Though like so many liquor restrictionists he was in a hurry to get rid of poverty, he did not share their tendency to ignore or depreciate the recreative functions of the drinking place. It was not love of drink, he declared two years before his death, but a desire for a "cheerful and friendly intercourse...with his fellow men" which first sent a man to the drinking place.³ Thus while Buckingham favoured restrictive licensing, he also advocated reading-rooms, sailors' homes and public parks. In his old age, he planned a utopia which is now regarded as a precursor of the Garden City.⁴

II

"With mere politicians, I have no right to hope to

1 Sheffield Independent, 13 Sep. 1834; Parliamentary Review, 1833, I, p. 442.

2 Parliamentary Review, 1834, II, p. 1258.

3 J.S. Buckingham, Temperance Reformation, 1854, pp. 559, 562.

4 J.S. Buckingham, National Evils & Practical Remedies, 1849, passim. W.H.G. Armytage, Heavens Below, 1961, pp. 218-9; & see Appendix, Plate 20.

succeed", said Cobden, when attacking agricultural protection in 1845: "but give me a committee, and I will explode the delusion".¹ Buckingham in 1834 shared Cobden's realisation that a favourable report together with press coverage of the subsequent parliamentary debates could overcome the apathy of M.P.s. How then did he succeed in getting his committee appointed? Firstly, the members of anti-spirits societies, often trained in agitation by the Evangelical anti-slavery movement,² enabled him to make some impression on a hostile parliament. Although Althorp doubted in 1833 whether a motion for such an inquiry would even find a seconder,³ such was the power of a petitioning campaign to rouse public opinion that in 1834 the inquiry had become politically feasible.

Buckingham employed the recess of 1833-4 in distributing circulars prompting petitions, encouraging the campaign in his Parliamentary Review, and lecturing in the North of England.⁴

1 Speeches, I, p. 282.

2 See below, pp. 94ff.

3 J.S. Buckingham, introduction to Evidence on Drunkenness (published independently of parliament), p. iii; cf. J. Morley, Life of Richard Cobden, 11th Edn., 1903, p. 147.

4 Parliamentary Review, 1834, I, pp. 385, 528; Rochdale Public Library, R.G. 787.6: MS Secretary's Minute Book of the Rochdale Auxiliary Temperance Society, 1 Jan. 1834.

221 petitions were received, nearly half from Ireland and Scotland, and Buckingham made a point of speaking when presenting them. The petitions were at first greeted with much amusement, and Buckingham endured "a perpetual volley of sarcasm" from both political parties whenever he entered the House.¹ Far more were received against drunkenness than against the Beer Act or agricultural distress.²

Buckingham derived moral support from the British and Foreign Temperance Society, based on Exeter Hall. Although this society, fearful of losing its nonconformist support, timidly refused to help promote state legislation,³ it did give Buckingham 1000 circular addresses encouraging petitions for inquiry and urged its supporters to make "immediate exertions" for it.⁴ Its lack of sympathy with legislative action was a serious hindrance, however, at a time when

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- 1 3 Hansard 29, c. 565 (14 July 1835); of the 204 petitions identified, Scotland produced 56, South-Eastern England 38; Ireland 34; Northern England 33; Midlands 27; South-Western England 13; Wales 3; defining "Northern England" as the area North of the Southern borders of Lancashire/Yorkshire; "Midlands" as the area South of this line as far as the line Gloucester-Boston, inclusive; "Western England" as all West of this line. The petitions are listed as presented in Journal of the House of Commons, Vol. 89 (1834).
- 2 Mirror of Parliament, 1834, IV, p. 3351 (11 Aug. 1834).
- 3 British & Foreign Temperance Herald, Apr. 1834, p. 39; May 1834, p. 52.
- 4 The Record, 22 May 1834; rept. of speech by Buckingham.

parliament could only be induced to pass social reform legislation after mobilisation of the public conscience.¹

When before a thin House notably empty of rural members² Buckingham rose on 3rd June 1834 to move for an inquiry he was greeted by "an audible titter....on both sides of the House", though he later claimed that incredulous smiles were more noticeable on Liberal than on Tory faces.³ His speech fills 30 columns of Hansard, and many M.P.s left the House during its delivery.⁴ It listed the evils of drunkenness, discussed possible remedies, urged state intervention and outlined the blessings which national temperance would furnish. He was seconded by Sir George Strickland, a water-drinker; Althorp was apathetic; Hume believed only in education. But Baines strongly supported the motion, which passed by 64 votes to 47.

Analysis of the members chosen to sit on the committee reveals the second factor contributing to Buckingham's success in obtaining the inquiry - the concern prevailing in industrial

1 J.L. & B. Hammond, Lord Shaftesbury, 4th Edn., 1936, p. 70.

2 Mirror of Parliament, 1834, III, p. 1987: (Pease).

3 J.S. Buckingham, Temperance Reformation, pp.450-1.

4 3 Hansard 24, c. 91 (3 June 1834); J.S. Buckingham, Temperance Reformation, p. 451.

cities of the North at the problem of drunkenness, which Baines considered inseparable from the problem of Poor Law amendment.¹ Among the 64 members of the majority who voted for the inquiry, there were few county but many urban members, including both members for Wigan, Bradford and Sheffield; and one each from Stockport, Sunderland, Leeds, Glasgow, Walsall, Halifax, Salford, Oldham, Belfast, Bolton, Wolverhampton and Ashton. ^eByond Baines, Fielden and Morpeth, however, they included no famous names. Of the 59 members in this majority who can be identified on Buckingham's contemporary analysis of political allegiances,² twelve were "Tories", sixteen "Liberals", and thirty-one "Whigs".

Over a million copies of the printed speech were sold in England and overseas.³ Robert Owen pronounced it "most excellent and valuable" but Place thought it contained "many gross Exaggerations Falsities and absurdities": it either cited unreliable sources, or quoted reliable sources out of context.⁴ Buckingham himself was proud of the speech, which temperance reformers long regarded as one of their most

1 Mirror of Parliament, 1834, III, p. 1989 (3 June 1834).

2 Parliamentary Review, 1834, I, p. 37.

3 J.S. Buckingham, introduction to Evidence on Drunkenness, p. iv.

4 Addit. MSS. 35149 (Place Papers), f.303; Addit. MSS. 27825 (Place Papers), f.207.

important documents.

Analysis of the composition and conduct of the committee reveals the third source of Buckingham's success: the capacity of a small but zealous minority not only to get a committee appointed, but also to draft its report. 19 of the 36 committee members had voted in favour of the inquiry; 10 came from Northern industrial towns; 3, Sir George Strickland, Joseph Brotherton and George Williams, were teetotalers. Other members included Knatchbull, High Tory opponent of the Beer Bill, Joseph Pease, the Quaker, Edward Baines, proprietor of the Leeds Mercury, Peel and Althorp, neither of whom seem to have attended the committee, and later Sir Andrew Agnew, the Evangelical sabbatarian. Still suffering much ridicule from the House, Buckingham chaired the committee, which interviewed 50 witnesses in 22 days between 9th June and 28th July. The report was presented on 5th August.

Its extravagant phraseology, reminiscent of Buckingham's speeches, was clearly aimed at public opinion as well as at parliament. It claimed that intemperance had declined at the top of society but was increasing at the bottom, owing to drinking customs, the cheapness of intoxicants and the excessive number of drinkshops. Loss of property, grain, labour and time resulted, and since the government had both the right and the power to intervene, a long list of "immediate" remedies

was appended.

All licences should be annually renewable under magistrates' supervision, and their number should be limited according to the size and density of population. Closing hours should be uniform and earlier. Spirit-shops should be open to public view; and the sale of spirits, except in the inn, should be entirely separated from the sale of other goods. Army and navy spirit rations should be abolished; wages should not be paid nor should benefit societies meet, in public-houses. Parks, reading rooms and libraries should be established, duties on books, newspapers and non-alcoholic drinks reduced, temperance societies encouraged and a national education system established.

As "ultimate" remedies, to be applied when public opinion allowed, the report suggested the absolute prohibition of the manufacture, import and sale of spirits. By outlining his ultimate intentions from the start, Buckingham hoped to avoid the charge levelled against the anti-slavery movement, of hypocritically concealing ~~his~~ long-term objectives.¹ But unfortunately the draft report did not distinguish sufficiently clearly between "ultimate" and "immediate" remedies, and thus astonished many M.P.s with its apparent audacity: when at

¹ Parliamentary Review, 1834, II, p. 1159; Sheffield Independent, 13 Sep. 1834; Mirror of Parliament, 1834, IV, p. 3235; 3 Hansard 25, c. 966 (5 Aug. 1834).

one stage in the subsequent debate the clerk was ordered to read the report, he "was accompanied by much cheering and laughter".¹

O'Connell ridiculed the report: it would, if printed, discredit the House and encourage legislators to move for inquiries into the most absurd subjects such as "the best means of preventing flies from destroying butter or honey".² Several members of the committee dissociated themselves from its report on grounds of non-attendance,³ and one maintained that the evidence and the report conflicted.⁴ Yet Buckingham was not entirely deserted: Baines expressed disgust at these "ungracious" attacks; Brotherton and Col. Williams said that some action should be taken to remedy the problem.⁵ The order to print the report was carried by 63 votes to 31.

More important for Buckingham however was the debate in the country: he risked prosecution for breach of privilege by printing the report in cheap weekly numbers against the

1 3 Hansard 25, c. 966 (5 Aug. 1834).

2 ibid., c. 967.

3 Mirror of Parliament, 1834, IV, p. 3237; 3 Hansard 25 (5 Aug. 1834), c. 966ff.

4 ibid., Philip Howard.

5 Mirror of Parliament, 1834, IV, p. 3237.

Speaker's advice, in the hope that its distribution would prepare the ground for legislation in the following session.¹ Yet Buckingham was handled as harshly by the London papers as in parliament: the Times, apparently already hostile to Buckingham,² found the report "ridiculous beyond all ordinary powers of laughter".³ All the London papers were at first misled by the confusion between immediate and ultimate remedies, and only the Morning Herald showed much sympathy.⁴ The press discussion reflects the contrasted attitudes of London and the North which runs throughout the history of the 19th century temperance movement, and which in this case Buckingham attributed to the London papers' greater dependence on a taproom clientèle. "In this controversy...", he wrote, "the Country is against the Town".⁵

The Leeds Mercury found the report humane and often sensible, but "the production of a benevolent theorist...who often fails of accomplishing any good by aiming at too much".⁶

1 J.S. Buckingham, Temperance Reformation, pp. 516-9; P.T. Winskill, Temperance Movement & its Workers, I, p. 51.

2 Parliamentary Review, 1833, II, p. 66.

3 Times, 7 Aug. 1834, p. 2.

4 Morning Herald, 7, 18 Aug. 1834; cf. Spectator, 9 Aug. 1834, p. 741; Weekly Dispatch, 10 Aug. 1834, p. 260.

5 Parliamentary Review, 1834, II, p. 1304.

6 Leeds Mercury, 9 Aug. 1834.

More important for Buckingham personally, all three Sheffield papers sympathised, and the Sheffield Iris regretted that so important a subject had not been treated by parliament "in a becoming manner".¹ With the latter verdict, no modern investigator of 19th century drinking habits could disagree, and the whole history of the temperance question in the 19th century retrospectively justifies Buckingham in his concern at the problem. But how useful were the committee's detailed recommendations? Contemporary criticism centres on the novelty not only of the remedies, but even of the inquiry itself. It also rightly emphasises the inability of the existing police to enforce prohibition.

Buckingham's reply to such criticism was that in the Age of Reform novelty alone was no valid objection to any proposal; besides, his report advocated prohibition only as an ultimate remedy, feasible only in an improved state of public opinion; indeed the report was itself designed to alter public opinion. Judging from the frequency with which subsequent legislators, acting independently, advocated the same remedies, the report was far-sighted. The 1853-4 Committee, followed by H.A. Bruce in 1871, wanted the number of licences related to population density; throughout the 19th century licensing hours were made uniform in particular

¹ Sheffield Iris, 12 Aug. 1834; cf. Sheffield Independent, 9 Aug. 1834, 30 Aug. 1834.

localities, and were steadily reduced, notably in 1839, 1854, and 1872. Parliament eventually assimilated all types of drinking place under magistrates' control. Army and navy spirit-rations were cut down and alternatives provided many years later.

So much for the report's negative proposals. More remarkable were its positive remedies, even more in tune with modern opinion. The negative remedies would have appealed to the Evangelical members of the committee: the positive remedies were probably inspired by Buckingham himself; he certainly tried to promote them later. The provision of parks, reading rooms and libraries was a counter-attractive policy favoured by many individuals outside the temperance movement; the policy of promoting public sobriety through high drink taxes runs through Gladstone's great series of budgets. Even the "ultimate" remedy of prohibition was adopted by the United Kingdom Alliance in 1853, and was eventually applied (though admittedly without success) in the United States. The report's "immediate" proposals constituted a detailed and intelligent attempt to deal with the problem, better by far than the self-righteous turning away from the licensing system which was many liquor restriction-ists' substitute for a temperance policy.

But to say that many of the report's proposals were subsequently adopted is not to justify the report as a basis for

immediate action. It exaggerated the ease with which its recommendations could be enacted; and if parliament had adopted its restrictive proposals without its positive remedies, not only would drunkenness have persisted: the populace alarmed by Poor Law reform might well have risen in revolt. Yet contemporary opinion was totally opposed to public provision of parks and libraries, which only began to appear on a tentative, voluntary or permissive basis during the 1840s. The widely-admired report of the 1853-4 Committee avoided such sweeping recommendations, and engaged in far more precise analysis of the existing licensing system; it also dealt with coffee- and beer-houses. Despite the extension of temperance opinion and the improvement in police in the interval, even this report failed to result in legislation for many years.

Some of the 1834 proposals approach closely to that arbitrary boundary between the imaginative and the eccentric: while Buckingham struck at the root of the problem in his desire to make drunkenness shameful, his proposal to expose gin-shops to public view, a reversal of the Evangelical policy of concealing vice, and founded on assumptions which would have justified the public execution, might well have made drunkenness even more prevalent. His 1837 Licensing Bill moreover proposed to disfranchise drunkards without saying how they could be defined. Such suggestions helped

discredit his more sensible recommendations. As for the relationship between the report and the evidence, and the manner in which the inquiry was conducted, far more serious criticisms can be made.

III

Francis Place criticised the report most vigorously along these lines. But since his comment stems largely from hatred of the Evangelicals, their relationship to the committee must first be considered. The report suffered not only from the unpopularity of its chairman, but also from the unpopularity of sabbatarian legislation recently advocated by one of its members, Sir Andrew Agnew.¹

The Evangelicals were closely involved with the committee. Until the rise of teetotalism after 1834, the public naturally regarded associational temperance activity as yet another Evangelical negative stratagem. The report contains some Evangelical phraseology and its members grilled the Owenite witness John Finch for venturing to advocate dancing as a remedy for intemperance.² Many of the committee's witnesses had Evangelical connexions, and one, John Dunlop, discussed with Agnew the possibility of extending the principle of

1 Examiner, 10 Aug. 1834, p. 497; cf. 3 Hansard 23 (30 Apr. 1834).

2 Parl. Papers, 1834, viii (559), c. 3822.

"negative association" to other Evangelical bugbears such as duelling, prize-fighting and gambling.¹ It was no coincidence that one of the few social reformers to recognise the report's value was the prominent Evangelical Lord Ashley, who claimed in 1843 that it had "never received a tithe of the attention so valuable a document deserved".²

There were close connexions between the temperance and anti-slavery movements. When one great reforming cause is won, lecturers have to be employed, new outlets for philanthropic zeal discovered.³ Buckingham in 1834 sought to

1 J. Dunlop, Autobiography, p. 83; there are good reasons for attributing Evangelical views to at least 14 of the 50 witnesses before the committee. A closer inspection of Evangelical societies at the time might well reveal more. Connected in some way with temperance societies were Mark Moore, John Poynder, Rev. John Edgar, Joseph Livesey, William Collins, Thos. Hartley, Samuel Capper, G.W. Carr, John Cheyne, John Finch and John Dunlop. Finch was an Owenite, however, and Livesey, though a Scotch Baptist, disliked Evangelical societies. Other witnesses with Evangelical links were Lieut. Arnold ("a tricky saint", according to Place's marginalia, in B.M. Addit. MSS. 27830); Dr. J.R. Farre, who had given evidence before the 1831 Sabbath committee; Capt. Edward Brenton, founder of the Children's Friend Society; Charles Purnell, who used decidedly Evangelical language before the Committee, and Rev. David Ruell, whom Place also branded as a "saint". "Evangelical" is of course a loose term, embracing people from many denominations, but contemporaries found the term meaningful.

2 3 Hansard 67, c. 62 (28 Feb. 1843).

3 3 Hansard 99, c. 961 (20 June 1848).

mobilise the Evangelical anti-slavery machinery which had been so successful in the previous year. Liquor restriction-ists long regarded the anti-slavery campaign as a model.¹ They often met in the same premises, used the same arguments, attracted the same men - Richard Barrett, Captain Pilkington, and the Quakers Bowly, Alexander, Sturge, and Cadbury. Buckingham himself had once resigned command of a ship rather than sail to Zanzibar on a slaving voyage.² Both movements attacked an evil "traffick", both sought to free slaves and both eventually resorted to political campaigning.³

Much of the hostility to the "drunken committee" therefore stemmed, not from unimaginative self-interested opponents of progress, as historians of the temperance movement imply, but from defenders of popular liberties against a formidable, but as events have turned out, an ephemeral "church party". This error in the temperance histories is understandable, since they were written at a time when Evangelical influence had permeated the whole of English life;

1 Parliamentary Review, 1834, I, pp. 385, 528; Sheffield Mercury, 9 Aug. 1834; Sheffield Independent, 9 Aug. 1834. Canon Stowell, Speeches...in Behalf of the Permissive Prohibitory Liquor Bill, United Kingdom Alliance, 1865, p. 31; see also United Kingdom Alliance, Twenty-Third Annual Rept. 1874-5, p. 120.

2 R.E. Turner, op. cit., p. 112.

3 Preston Temperance Advocate, Jan. 1835, p. 6; cf. B. Wilberforce, The National Sin: "Sound an Alarm" (1876), pp. 5-6.

it was difficult for temperance historians to see how arrogant, restrictive and absurd Evangelical attitudes could still seem in the far-off days of 1834.

Place's virulent attack upon the report must thus be considered against the background of contemporary hostility towards Evangelicalism. Place's research into the history of popular morals convinced him that brutality and drunkenness among London working men had declined markedly during his lifetime, and in 1834 he published a pamphlet to this effect.¹ He also wrote a "Defence of the People" against "the drunken committee" and "that crazy bigot" Agnew.² Why should he attack so strongly an inquiry into a vice which was "of allothers...most readily cast in the teeth of the working man"?³

He was alive to the miseries resulting from drunkenness; "No efforts can be too great which tend towards its cure", he wrote.⁴ Nor did he attack Baines, Brotherton and the

1 Improvement of the Working People. Drunkenness-Education.

2 B.M. Addit. MSS. 27829 (Place Papers), f.71 (title page). There is no reference to the MS "Defence of the People", in G. Wallas, Life of Francis Place (1898).

3 J.M. Ludlow & Lloyd Jones, Progress of the Working Class, 1832-1867 (1867), p. 245.

4 Addit. MSS. 27829 (Place Papers), f.105; G. Wallas, op. cit., p. 195.

committee for their desire to convince the poor that their own conduct was often responsible for their misery.¹ He had himself risen in society by keeping out of the public-house, and wished others to follow his footsteps. In 1834 he had not drunk a pint of beer for twenty years.² No working man could deny that drunkenness contributed towards the problem of poverty. During his criticisms of the committee, Place never used the Socialist argument that drunkenness owes much to an unfavourable environment. Indeed, such an argument could not fairly be used against a committee which recommended the provision of public parks and libraries in conjunction with a reduction in the number of drinking places. Place was even less of a socialist than Buckingham.

Why , then , did Place engage in what he himself described as the "very laborious business"³ of attacking the committee? How could he co-operate for this purpose with Fearon the gin-seller? Place even annotated Fearon's assertion before the committee that his occupation was as honourable as that of any person in the room with the words "Well done Fearon".⁴

1. 3 Hansard 23,c.1364 (27 May 1834).

2. Addit.MSS.27830 (Place Papers),f.91.

3. Addit.MSS.35149 c.328:Place to Lovett,21 nov 1834.

4. Addit.MSS.27830 (Place Papers)f.191.

There are three closely interlinked reasons for Place's attitude. First and most important was his belief that drunkenness could only be permanently cured by training working men to exercise their reason; they must be educated to a true understanding of their social situation , and through knowledge their lives would acquire a diversity and a self-directing quality which would deprive the drinking place of its temptations for them."As the working people get more information", he said in 1835,"they get better habits".¹ In several respects, the Evangelical temperance campaign deliberately frustrated such a remedy.

It was easily carried away by sentiment. According to W.J.Fox , the whole basis of Evangelical diagnosis of social ills was superficial.² Momentary passion rather than scientific inquiry lay behind their reforming campaigns.In denouncing political economy as "the selfish philosophy" they had already allowed the heart to triumph over the head. Far from teaching, with Godwin ,Place's master, that morality consisted "entirely in an estimate of consequences", Evangelicals made precisely the sort of vague appeal for moral conduct which Godwin detested.³ Or, worse, they exploited supernatural

1. Parl.Papers 1835,vii (465),Q.813.

2. Monthly Repository,N.S.VIII,1834,p.628.

3. W.Godwin,The Inquirer,1797,p.104; for Godwin's profound influence on Place , see Francis Place Newspaper Collection, Set 56 (Oct 1840-Feb 1841),Appendix,p.33:Place to Henry Vincent,9 Sep 1840.

fears, and emphasised that no drunkard would enter the kingdom of heaven. For the rational radical "gin shops" and "gospel shops" were equally harmful; as a correspondent of the Poor Man's Guardian wrote in 1833: "as men are physically poisoned at the one, so they are morally poisoned at the other".¹

Humility, not self-help, was the attitude of mind encouraged by Evangelicals: man's need for Divine Grace and the impossibility of attaining sobriety without prayer. Place wanted them to concentrate on the medical rather than on the moral arguments for sobriety.² But Evangelicals disliked appeals to such "low" worldly motives. "As for the Temperance people", Place told Lovett, "there are very few among them who are not much more concerned about the souls than the bodies of the people".³ Place had already clashed in a controversy over Lancastrian schools with precisely these Evangelical Quaker groups who supported the early anti-spirits societies.⁴

1 Poor Man's Guardian, 24 Aug. 1833, p. 276, letter signed "G-e L-y". I owe this reference to Miss P. Wells, Nuffield College.

2 Addit. MSS. 27830, f. 194 (comment on C. 2663).

3 Addit. MSS. 35149, c. 328: Place to Lovett, 21 Nov. 1834.

4 G. Wallas, op. cit., p. 105.

Evangelicals again diverged from Godwin when they maintained that moral improvement could sometimes be promoted by legislative action . They had already legislated against cruel sports and during the 1830s tried to pass sabbatarian legislation.¹ Their efforts helped to discredit the campaign for moral progress with the poor , and even fomented class conflict. If Place disliked state promotion of morality through the licensing system ("there should be no licensing at all", he said²) this was partly because Evangelicals had recently shown how harmfully state power could be wielded. Furthermore Place's economic beliefs encouraged him to deplore any attempt by the government to do anything "in the active way" to sponsor teaching and public recreation.³ It should never provide any service which individuals could obtain for themselves.

The recent attempts to use state power for sabbatarian purposes caused Place to be more conscious in 1834 of the way in which state intervention could hinder sobriety than of its power to promote it. Place denounced the Evangelicals' "fiendlike disposition" which discouraged rational recreation

1. G.M.Ellis, 'The Evangelicals & the Sunday Question, 1830-1860' (Harvard Univ. Ph.D. Thesis, 1951), microfilm copy, p.92.

2. Addit.MSS.27830 marginalia against Q.175.

3. Addit.MSS.35149 (Place Papers), f.328: Place to Lovett, 21 Nov 1834.

and helped make working people "as gloomy, as Perverse and ignorant , as the antisocial want of human feelings could devise".¹ He felt that the state could do little more than open museums and encourage the provision of public parks. Although the British and Foreign Temperance Society in 1834 shied away from state legislation , the committee sharply conflicted with Place's view: it considered that "the right to exercise legislative interference for the correction of any evil which affects the public weal , cannot be questioned ... without dissolving society into its primitive elements"; and that "the power to apply correction by legislative means, cannot be doubted , without supposing the sober, the intelligent , the just and the moral portion of the community unable to control the excesses of the ignorant and disorderly".²

Another way in which Evangelicals stifled the free play of reason was in their use of the association of abstainers, to accentuate the social pressures bearing on the individual. Godwin doubted the political value of organised campaigns and societies , and though Place was prepared to encourage mutual improvement societies , he probably shared the

1. B.M.Addit.MSS.27829 ff.72,77.

2. Parl.Papers 1834 viii (559),p.vi.

libertarian objections to pledge-signing expressed by Hetherington's Odd-Fellow.¹ The latter regarded the pledge not only as an unnecessary infringement of individual liberty, but also as a morally debilitating expedient which merely substituted one form of dependence for another. For the Odd-Fellow as for G.J.Holyoake , pledge-signing was "a confession of weakness".² Those who could not remain sober without taking the pledge were unlikely to keep even that for long. Individuals intellectually convinced of the advantages of sobriety should not need the aid of other individuals to hold them to their intention. A total abstinence pledge imposed an arbitrary limit on human conduct. Temperance reformers strengthening community pressures on the individual were infringing liberty as seriously as those who favoured state regulation of morality.

In these ways , therefore, the Evangelicals seemed to be hindering the free play of reason , which was , for Place, the only reliable cure for intemperance. To expect reason alone to be sufficient was to make excessive demands upon human nature; even the Evangelicals had a more realistic

1. B.M., Francis Place Newspaper Collection, Set 56 (Oct 1840-Feb 1841), Appendix, p.43: Place to Vincent, 11 Nov 1840. Odd-Fellow, No.167 (12 Mar 1842), p.2.

2. F.R. Lees & G.J.Holyoake, Public Discussion on Teetotalism & the Maine Law, 1856, p.184.

sense of human capabilities. Sensationalism and fear were quite as efficient as rational persuasion in recruiting support for 19th century reforming pressure-groups. Besides, for many working people , even those whose actual livelihood did not depend on drinksellers' goodwill, the earthly benefits of sobriety were not always as obvious as philosophic radicals tended to claim. Thus the dramatic and irrational conversion was sometimes the only instrument which could take effect. Even Alcoholics Anonymous have found that drinkers whose will cannot control their desire must ground their ideals "in a power greater than themselves".¹

The second reason for Place's hostility to the committee was his belief that by denouncing the drinking habits of working people and by encouraging them to follow aristocratic leadership , it was hindering that assimilation of working and middle classes which he so longed to see.² In contrast to the proletarian teetotal societies which even while the committee was sitting were springing up in the North , the Evangelical anti-spirits societies sought moral progress through working-class deference and aristocratic example-setting. At Exeter Hall, an aristocratic clique seemed to be out-

1. Alcoholics Anonymous (1950 edn., New York), p.4.

2. W.E.S. Thomas, 'Francis Place & working Class History', Historical Journal, V (1962), pp.66-7.

bidding working men in the struggle for alliance with the middle-class. Place felt that temperance societies "cannot avoid doing some good , which it is our duty to take advantage of and push to the utmost as far as we have the power";¹ but as long as a dichotomy persisted between their supporters and their beneficiaries, temperance societies could also , in Place's view , do considerable harm.

Place felt that if Evangelicals constantly drew attention to the sins of the "lower orders" (an expression which he detested), the desired alliance of middle and working classes against feudal privilege and religious obscurantism might never materialise. Again , by claiming that drunkenness had increased among working people in recent years , the committee implicitly proclaimed the failure of all Place's efforts to promote self-improvement and assimilation of working and middle classes. Place felt that the report would make working people seem "despicable miscreants and consequently to increase the contempt and dislike of the gentility against them",² and was "exceedingly averse" from exacerbating ill-will between employer and employee; such class animosities he said "should by every good man be reduced as much as possible".³

1. Addit.MSS.35149 (Place Papers),f.328:Place to Lovett, 21 Nov 1834.

2. ibid.

3. Addit.MSS.27829 (Place Papers),f.105.

For Place, as for Marx, the classless society was the ultimate objective, but for Place the middle rather than the working class was the nucleus round which the classless society would grow.

Not only did such attacks on working-class habits obstruct a middle-class alliance; they must also have seemed a deliberate attempt to keep working people in permanent political subjection. Throughout the 19th century, franchise discussions involved much mud-slinging between the social classes, with voters and voteless each laying claim to superior morality.¹ Opponents of franchise extension emphasised working-class intemperance. One franchise reformer in 1866 said he would gladly go to the poll with a working man, but felt degraded when he marched to the poll abreast of a drunkard.² More influential was Robert Lowe's famous question: "if you want venality, if you want ignorance, if you want drunkenness, and facility for being intimidated, where do you look for them in the constituencies? Do you go to the top or to the bottom?"³

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- 1 J. Ruskin, 'Crown of Wild Olive', in Works, Vol. 18, p. 404; cf. Cooper's Journal, I (1850), 19 Oct. 1850, p. 453.
- 2 W. Arnot, Exeter Hall Lectures, 1866-7, p. 81; I owe this reference to Dr. John Walsh.
- 3 3 Hansard 182, c. 147-8; cf. 3 Hansard 178, c. 1431.

Thus to emphasise the low morality of the working people in the 1830s was to attack them at the political level; the report, said Place, "may be characterized as an attempt to stigmatize and debase the whole body of the working people".¹ Place and Fearon therefore strove to return the compliment by hunting out details of upper class drinking habits.²

Indeed, Place probably regarded the report not only as an attempt to damage the working classes politically, but even as an attempt to prevent them becoming temperate. "Sure I am that people who have property are what they always were", he said, "desirous that the working people should be kept as poor and as ignorant as it is possible to keep them".³ Before a drunkard could be reclaimed, his self-respect had to be restored; constant⁴ emphasis on working class intemperance would hardly do this. Indeed, by engaging in the latter, Exeter Hall Christians could actually emphasise the social distinction between themselves and the working people while at the same time appearing to express concern for their moral

1 Addit. MSS. 27829 (Place Papers), f. 82.

2 Addit. MSS. 27829, f. 8: Place to Geo. Smith, 27 Oct. 1834; ibid., f. 111; Parl. Papers, 1834, viii (559), Q. 2375; cf. People's Paper, 5 Jan. 1856, p. 1.

3 Addit. MSS. 35149 (Place Papers), f. 328: Place to Lovett, 21 Nov. 1834.

4 C. Thomson, Autobiography of an Artisan (1847), pp. 174-5.

welfare. "Notions of contempt", wrote Place, "freely and frequently expressed, of the grades below that in which any one has entered and been accepted are necessary not only to his advancement towards a higher grade, but even to a continuance in his own grade".¹

The Evangelical emphasis on total depravity, which Wilberforce wanted "firmly seated in our understandings, and radically worked into our hearts", could easily lend itself to more secular and less elevating purposes than he had intended.² Place was indignant at liquor restrictionists who "instead of endeavouring to make a man have a higher notion of his own respectability and moral consequence, endeavour to make him humble - a canter - a coward, and a grovelling slave".³

Thirdly, Place attacked the committee because its conduct offended him personally. He was proud of his humble birth, and regarded all criticisms of working people as criticisms of himself.⁴ He knew from personal experience how

1 B.M. Addit. MSS. 27790 (Place Papers), f. 115; cf. W.M. Williams, Sociology of an English Village, p. 99; C.M. Arensberg & S.T. Kimball, op. cit., p. 218.

2 W. Wilberforce, Practical View, p. 54. (1798 edn.)

3 Addit. MSS. 35149 (Place Papers), f. 328.

4 W.E.S. Thomas, art. cit., p. 66.

ill-informed such attacks often were,¹ and was the first to recognise that drink for working people was "the sole means....of getting away from themselves", and that the pleasure of drunkenness was for them "beyond all comparison greater...than to any other class of persons". He himself had experienced the "sickening aversion" to work which sometimes overtook working people, and while he himself had escaped to Highgate or Norwood for the day, he could easily understand why others took the shorter route to oblivion through the public-house door.²

Pique may also have contributed to Place's anger. He was widely regarded as the expert on working-class conditions,³ yet his own evidence, his own papers sent to Buckingham suggesting sources of information on popular morality, were ignored. He wrote his Defence of the People as a result of the "shuffling conduct" of Agnew and Buckingham, "and their dishonest refusal to examine witnesses".⁴ Contemptuous of the evidence he heard submitted by William Collins, the Glasgow temperance reformer,⁵ and exasperated by the attitude

1 e.g. Addit. MSS. 27826 (Place Papers), f. 186.

2 Addit. MSS. 27825 (Place Papers), f. 14.

3 Monthly Repository, N.S. VIII (1834), p. 626.

4 Addit. MSS. 27829, f. 72; Addit. MSS. 35149, f. 302: Place to Hawes, 7 July 1834.

5 ibid., f. 301.

of the committee, Place tried first, however, to influence its conduct through one of its members, Benjamin Hawes.

On 7th July, Place plied Hawes with his own views on the recent improvement in working-class habits and with suggestions for witnesses who would support them. The spirit-sellers Coates and Fearon, he said, would "speak out plainly, as they did in the Beer Bill": so would some of the employers who gave evidence on combinations in 1824.¹ But Hawes by 17th July was in despair: "It is quite disgusting to see the way they are going on", he wrote: "there was no doing anything - there was scarcely anybody to help me - no all went one way".² Hawes stood alone in votes of the committee and completely failed to influence its report.³ During the subsequent debate, Hawes claimed to have regularly attended the committee, but Buckingham said that he had been present "rarely for any length of time....and then almost uniformly endeavouring to browbeat, confound, and embarrass the witnesses under examination, with a view to damage their testimony in favour of any legislative remedies whatever".⁴

1 ibid., f. 303.

2 Addit. MSS. 27229, ff. 213-4: Hawes to Place, 17 July 1834.

3 Parliamentary Review, 1834, II, p. 1158.

4 ibid.; cf. 3 Hansard 25, c. 965 (5 Aug. 1834); Mirror of Parliament, 1834, IV, p. 3238. (Hawes' statement does not appear in Hansard, far inferior in its reports to the Mirror of Parliament at this time.)

All that Place could now do was to discredit the report through a written attack. He may well have primed some of the M.P.s who ridiculed the report on 5th August. Hume, who often consulted Place, certainly echoed several of his views on 3rd June.¹ Place claimed that his threats to organise parliamentary opposition if the committee were prolonged into the next session had forced it to report at once.² It thus had no time to summon witnesses who could reconcile the contradictions between the evidence of Place, Fearon and the other witnesses; evidence which conflicted with the preconceptions of those members who drafted its report was therefore ignored.

Place worked off his frustration by scribbling angry comments all over his printed copy of the report. Evangelicals "puffed up with unholiness"³ certainly led him to abandon that calmness and rationality in politics which Godwin had recommended.⁴ "This saint is as usual a twaddler", he wrote beside the evidence of one clergyman;⁵ "saintish

1 Mirror of Parliament, 1834, III, p. 1987 (3 June 1834).

2 Addit. MSS. 27829, f. 72.

3 ibid., f. 29.

4 W. Godwin, Political Justice, 2 Vols. 1796, I, p. 274, 289ff.

5 Addit. MSS. 27830 (Place Papers), f. 238, against Q. 3572.

Absurdities", "a gross lie", "A lie - a wicked lie", "Absurd proposition" are among the explosive comments with which he filled the margins.¹

Place embodied a more weighty protest in his Defence of the People. He took much trouble with this, but lacked the resources to publish it.² Yet the success of himself and others in discrediting the committee made publication superfluous, especially as most of his points were made in H.S. Chapman's 1835 attack on the committee's arguments.³ So ineffective was the report that in the 1850s a periodical as well-informed as the Economist was ignorant of its existence.⁴

Place's Defence perorates by passionately denouncing the Evangelicals as leaders in the campaign for moral progress: they were "blind guides" trying to lead by fear rather than by hope. The aristocracy, he maintained, could never inculcate self-respect in the working people; but there was "a body of good...men working in many respects in the right way;

1 ibid., ff. 81, 91, 143, 229.

2 Addit. MSS. 35150 (Place Papers), f. 97; Place to G.R. Porter, 22 Dec. 1835.

3 H.S. Chapman, 'Sobriety of the Working Class', printed with J.A. Roebuck, A Church What? A State Church What?, (1835).

4 Economist, 18 Oct. 1856.

their number will continually increase and to them and the wiser and better sort of men among the working people themselves the matter must be left".¹

Can Place's interpretation of the report and of Evangelical motives be accepted? He was certainly wrong in judging Buckingham "by far the worst man among the bitter enemies of the working people".² Buckingham's whole subsequent career proves that he had their welfare at heart. And though he lacked personal influence in 1834, and had to annexe the support of Evangelicals such as Agnew, he never shared his allies' almost exclusively repressive and negative outlook. Nor did his report, which the Hammonds have described as "almost undiluted Buckingham",³ consist merely of repressive recommendations; indeed, as we have seen,⁴ its **proposals** were in some ways more realistic than those of Place.

Furthermore, Place underestimated the capacity of temperance association to promote the self-help and embourgeoisement of the working people. While he was writing

1. Addit.MSS.27829 (Place Papers),ff.147-8.

2. Addit.MSS.35149 (Place Papers),f.328:Place to Lovett, 11 Nov 1834.

3. J.L. & B.Hammond,Age of the Chartists,p.160.

4. See above,pp.101-2

his Defence a vigorous teetotal campaign was mounting in the North which was soon to jettison aristocratic patronage and to rely for its energy on vigorous moral enthusiasm from below. This movement helped train the Teetotal Chartists, and men such as George Howell, Thomas Burt, John Burns and John Cassell, of whose careers in reconciling middle and working classes Place would have thoroughly approved. Furthermore, Place over-estimated the movement's desire to rely on legislation rather than on individual moral reform.

Again, were the Evangelicals as actively malicious towards the working people as Place imagined? True, some sought to keep them politically subject; but perhaps it was best to attack intemperance most vigorously where it caused the most misery.¹ True, the Evangelicals on the drunken committee, like the free-traders on the Import Duties Committee of 1840,² sought to make out a case, and consequently rejected Place's advice, witnesses and evidence. But this was less because they intended ill towards the working people, than because they felt that a hierarchical social structure possessed the best interest of all classes, and because they were relatively uninterested in worldly

1 Addit. MSS. 27828 (Place Papers), f. 14: W. Forman to Place, 18 Oct. 1834.

2 L. Brown, art cit., passim.

amelioration in comparison with spiritual improvement. Only two years later Evangelicals were making use of the report's gin-drinking statistics as a fund-raiser for the London City Mission.¹

While Place's social diagnosis may have proved correct in the long run - with all classes assimilating to the middle class - in the short run, there was much to be said for the Evangelicals' skilful utilisation of working class habits of deference to the aristocracy. Upper class sobriety had, after all, been improving before 1834, nor did Place ever clearly deny that the working people in general had been getting more drunken; he simply claimed that an élite had crystallised out from their midst which was setting the tone for new patterns of conduct.

Place underestimated aristocratic willingness to promote working class self-improvement. It is perhaps unreasonable to expect the Place of the 1830s to foresee the social atmosphere of the 1850s - to anticipate the appearance of a Shaftesbury, a Lyttelton, an Ingestre, a Manners, a Carlisle and a Stanley - all of whom denounced sources of working-class misery which Place's idealised manufacturing classes tended to ignore. But Place did exaggerate the degree to which working man's sufferings could be blamed on feudal

1 J. Harris, The Christian Citizen, 1837, pp. 71-2.

privilege, and overestimated the willingness of contemporary industrialists to join with their employees in attacking the aristocracy; many of them were in fact anxious to become aristocrats themselves. And like many subsequent liquor restrictionists, including T.H. Green,¹ Place was too hopeful that the labour aristocracy would continue to act as leaders of working class self-improvement rather than drift into the middle class.

Place expected the Evangelicals to take an earthly ground in attacking drunkenness, whereas their fear of Divine Wrath and their belief in an after-life made worldly considerations relatively unimportant. Many Evangelicals sincerely believed that they benefited working men more by preparing them for heaven than by making their life more tolerable on earth. Indeed they often regarded working people's worldly discomforts as a positive blessing in disguise, which would enable them the more easily to avoid worldly temptation.

Furthermore, the Evangelical Movement was never a monolithic whole. It contained its Agnews but also its Ashleys who, though they wished to retain the existing class structure, did at least help to stir the upper-class conscience. Evangelicals took a leading part, for instance, in providing facilities which weakened the supremacy of the public-house.

¹ See below, pp. 308 ff.

Shaftesbury himself in 1859 told a meeting for establishing drinking-fountains in London that "it was unjust to charge the people with intemperance when they were given no means of being otherwise".¹ The Evangelical movement helped train many social reformers whose reforming zeal , even when they abandoned the Evangelical fold, owed much to an Evangelical upbringing.

The bitterness of Place's antagonism may owe something to the fact that he and the committee had more in common than he realised. Both campaigned against the violence and degradation resulting from drunkenness; both wanted to avoid violent class-conflict; both competed for working-class support. But they diverged because , for Place , drunkenness must be attacked because it caused worldly discomfort, whereas ~~for~~ the Evangelicals were more concerned about the other-worldly perils to which drunkenness might lead.

IV

The argument between Place and the "drunken committee" was confused by lack of information. The 1834 Drunkenness Committee resembled the 1816 Police Committee in lacking a previous report on the same subject to whose proceedings it could refer. Buckingham's committee in 1834, like Calcraft's

1. Weekly Record of the Temperance Movement, 16 Apr 1859, p.149.

committee in 1830, suffered severely from lack of precise information: even as late as 1851, the national census failed to describe the social condition of the working classes.¹ And the committee was investigating a development peculiarly liable to impressionistic assessment; the relevant statistics fluctuated less with the prevalence of the evil than with public sensitivity to it and with the varying capacity of the state to enforce licensing legislation. Both sides in the discussion, moreover, wanted to prove a case.

Argument centred on six sets of figures, none of which, unfortunately, can show the precise nature of the nation-wide change, let alone changes within particular social classes. We can do no more than compare the way in which each participant gathered and interpreted its statistics.² First, statistics for spirits consumption. Both sides entered the controversy with subjective impressions; the fact that these were derived from experience of different parts of the country, and reinforced by witnesses called from different parts meant that the conflict became irreconcilable. The committee relied on evidence from anti-spirits societies

1 Addit. MSS. 35142 (Place Papers), f. 169; cf. Morning Chronicle, 17 Mar. 1851, p. 4.

2 The relevant statistics are in the Appendix, tables 5-11; see also diagrams 5 & 6.

primarily in Ireland and Scotland; Place relied on a lifetime's observation of beer-drinking Londoners.

Neither side thought of using beer consumption statistics, probably because beer was not then considered responsible for the more extreme types of drunkenness; the committee did not propose the abolition of the beershops and may have been influenced by Evangelical brewing connexions. Gross consumption could have buttressed Place's argument for a decline in drinking among working people, since beer was not normally consumed by the upper classes. Confining the discussion to spirits statistics, however, and taking first the short-term picture since 1825, the committee, when emphasising the apparent dramatic increase in gross spirits consumption since 1825, did not allow for diversion of spirits from illegal to legal outlets, and attributed the change to a decline in popular morals.¹ Place and Fearon, on the other hand, confined themselves to an even shorter time-span, 1829-34, which showed a slight decline.² In this discussion, therefore, the committee made a false statistical interpretation, and Place took too short a run of statistics.

1 See Appendix, table 9; Parl. Papers, 1834, viii (559), Q. 4065.

2 Addit. MSS. 27829, f. 7; Parl. Papers, 1834, viii (559), Q. 2450.

Taking the long-term picture, the committee cited the gross consumption figures since the 1790s of Mark Moore, the missionary, but did not comment on them or relate them to the population increase.¹ Place did not fall into this trap; he used for comparison not the 1790s, but, after painstaking research, per. capita figures for the 1740s - figures which inevitably helped his case since they came from the "gin age".² In presenting the long-term view, the committee therefore showed less intelligence and industry than Place, but more relevance.

The second area of discussion covered consumption of non-intoxicating drinks. The committee allowed this topic to go by default, and did no more than emphasise the mere size of the figures for gross consumption of spirits. Place rightly noted that any other commodity in general use could produce figures as spectacular.³ The committee ignored the evidence of the 1830 and 1833 Beer Bill committees together with the growth of coffee shops and mechanics' institutes. Place noted that coffee's per capita consumption had increased

1 See Appendix, diagram 5.

2 Addit. MSS. 27829 (Place Papers), f. 139; cf. Addit. MSS. 35149 (Place Papers), f. 302.

3 cf. Parl. Papers, 1877, xi (418), Q. 9762; A.J. Mott, Alcohol & Total Abstinence (repr. from National Review, May 1884), pp. 10-11.

rapidly since 1820. It was a short series, but was supported by personal impressions.¹ By citing inaccurate consumption figures for tea, however, Place was deceived into claiming that its per capita consumption had risen since 1820. In fact, despite a fall in duty and even more in price, the per capita consumption of tea remained remarkably stagnant till the 1840s.²

Place also failed to emphasise how small was the existing United Kingdom per capita consumption of non-intoxicants in relation to that of beer and spirits - only 1.41 lbs. of tea and 0.96 lbs. of coffee per year, as opposed to 23.1 gallons of beer and 1.13 proof gallons of spirits in 1834.³ But since he aimed rather to prove that the habits of a small influential group had changed rather than that consumption of intoxicants had declined throughout the working class, his coffee statistics supported his case.

Thirdly, the argument from criminal statistics. True, the rising figures for gin consumption and criminal arrests ran together in the 1820s. But it was rash to assume a causal

1 Addit. MSS. 27829 (Place Papers), f. 96, 97; see above, pp. 65-6 & see appendix, table 6 & diagram 6.

2 See Appendix, diagram 6.

3 B.R. Mitchell & P. Deane, Abstract of British Historical Statistics, Cambridge, 1962, p. 356; G.B. Wilson, op. cit., p. 332.

connexion, especially as the figures did not run together in any other period, and did not entirely dovetail even for the 1820s.¹ Sobriety was essential to certain types of criminal, and criminal arrest statistics were entirely unreliable as a guide during a period of varying police enforcement.² Again, changing criteria for arrest, and even a changing catchment area deprived statistics for London drunkenness arrests of much value;³ impressive in gross, they made no allowance for persistent offenders; furthermore, many drunkards were arrested for disorderly behaviour rather than for drunkenness. Nor could the statistics indicate changing drinking habits within each social class at a time when police seldom arrested respectable drunkards.⁴ Place wisely distrusted such figures and looked elsewhere for support.⁵

Fourthly, the argument based on the number of customers entering specified London ginshops at specified times. Here

1 See Appendix, tables 5, 7, 8, 9.

2 Parl. Papers, 1834, viii (559), Q. 4065, 4063; C. Reith, British Police & the Democratic Ideal, 1943, pp. 59, 127-8; Parl. Papers, 1877, xi (171), QQ. 1191-2; Morning Advertiser, 22 Jan. 1830.

3 G.B. Wilson, op. cit., p. 284.

4 O'Connor, in Northern Star, 21 Apr. 1830, p. 6.

5 Parl. Papers, 1834, viii (559), Q. 250; Addit. MSS. 27829 (Place Papers), f. 90.

again the committee sought to shock the public by quoting large figures. Temperance reformers of the 1830s saw cholera statistics have so striking an effect in moving public opinion to a sense of its danger that they tried to find similar statistics in their own field.¹ Observation of 14 London ginshops on 4 days of the week showed that 142,453 men, 108,593 women and 18,391 children must enter these shops every 7 days - a quarter of a million souls swallowed up by Satan once a week.² Yet here too, the committee did not allow for the regular drinker who appears several times in the statistics. They forgot that many customers were merely collecting spirits for home consumption.³ And once again they failed to give comparative statistics for shops selling other articles commonly consumed. These statistics, given much prominence by the committee, were in fact the most contemptible of all those which entered the discussion.

Fifthly, the committee printed statistics of licences issued for manufacture and sale of spirits. Even ignoring beerhouses, their number had certainly been recently rising

1 British Temperance Advocate, 15 Nov. 1839, p. 121.

2 Parl. Papers, 1834, viii (559), q. 16.

3 Addit. MSS. 27829 (Place Papers), f. 101.

much faster than population, though here as with spirit consumption figures, they indicated a transfer from illegal to legal outlets and only indicate increased consumption in so far as open rather than concealed sale increases temptation. The committee did not, however, relate these figures to population statistics; as usual, it simply cited them without comment.¹ Place could do little with these figures, though he tried, without much success, to contest the committee's assertion that increases in spirit-drinking had reduced the life expectation of a large proportion of the British population.²

On balance, though both sides in the discussion often showed remarkable statistical naiveté, Place showed greater industry and imagination. The statistical discussion was so inconclusive that both sides laid great weight on personal impressions. Here again, because both sides drew their information from different regions, disagreement was almost inevitable. Place spoke only of Londoners during his life-

1 For licences, see Appendix, tables 10 & 11, diagrams 3 & 4; using population figures in B.R. Mitchell & P. Deane, op. cit., p. 8, retail licences in England and Wales increased by 33% between 1821 and 1833; the corresponding figures for Scotland, 67%, & Ireland, 83%; population increases for the same period: England & Wales, 18%; Scotland, 15%; Ireland, 15%.

2 cf. Spectator, 16 Aug. 1834, p. 779; London Review, 1829, No. 1, p. 261.

time, and even perhaps only of particular parts of London, whereas the committee concentrated more on evidence from Irish and Scottish witnesses; both the committee and Place could thus have been correct in their assertions.

Place used no statistics for the London situation, he never defined what he meant by "drunkenness", and his assertions are sometimes contradictory. While on one occasion he claimed that "the very meanest and least informed" had become more sober, and that there had been "a very remarkable decline" in debauchery at London's seasonal fairs, on another occasion he admitted that intemperance had not declined "among those who are absolutely dissolute".¹ Hume, who agreed with Place on many points, claimed that the lower class of workmen had actually become less temperate, despite the overall improvement in the working class.² Place himself never denied that "much drunkenness" still prevailed among this grade.³

Much of his evidence shows a decline only among the élite of London working men; thus rum and gin bottles had

1 F. Place, Improvement of the Working People, 1834, p. 6; Addit. MSS. 27827, f. 221; cf. Monthly Repository, N.S. VIII (1834), p. 562; Parl. Papers, 1835, vii (465), Q. 939.

2 Mirror of Parliament, 1834, III, p. 1987 (3 June 1834).

3 Addit. MSS. 35149 (Place Papers), f. 302: Place to Hawes, 7 July 1834.

disappeared from tailors' and printers' shops, and week-end excursions had become less squalid.¹ Indeed, Place seems primarily to have tried to show, with Lovett's concurrence, how "a separation has taken place between those who are informed and those who remain in ignorance: they no longer associate in common, as they formerly did".² Thus the proportion of London's population who indulged in drunkenness was in his view "much less" than previously. The working people, he said in 1835, were "no longer indiscriminately mixed with the dissolute, as they were in former times".³ He also noted that the drinking habits of younger and older generations now diverged strikingly.⁴

When had this change begun? Wider diffusion of wealth since the American Revolution, and improved living standards among London working people since the Napoleonic Wars had provided, he thought, the material basis for gratification of the increased desire for education fostered by the French Revolution; mechanics' institutes and coffee houses with

1 Parl. Papers, 1834, viii (559), QQ. 2036, 2065.

2 F. Place, Improvement of the Working People, p. 10; cf. Addit. MSS. 27827, f. 30: Lovett to Place, 17 Nov. 1834.

3 Parl. Papers, 1835, vii (465), Q. 940.

4 F. Place, Improvement of the Working People, p. 18; cf. Addit. MSS. 27827, f. 30: Lovett to Place, 17 Nov. 1834.

newspapers appeared in the 1820s whereas they could never have survived ten years before.¹ Sunday Schools, Lancastrian Schools and reform societies had thus combined with mechanics' institutes in crystallising out a labour aristocracy. No drunkard, said Place,² would ever have been admitted to the London Corresponding Society. Drinking habits had become a test by which one's status within the working class could be assessed. The apparently absurd controversies about admitting intoxicants to Early Victorian working mens' institutions were really disguised controversies about the social class from which membership should be drawn.³

While improvements in the regularity and level of wage may, by the 1840s, have helped develop the labour aristocracy, especially in the North,⁴ Place's comments suggest that the London labour aristocracy first appeared among craftsmen, shoemakers and carpenters who were frequently without employment; in London, Place noted that "not so many as half" the

1 Addit. MSS. 35149 (Place Papers), f. 328: Place to Lovett, al Nov. 1834; Parl. Papers, 1834, viii (559), QQ. 2033, 2013, 1107; but see Addit. MSS. 27829 (Place Papers, f. 19 for a contrary view.

2 Addit. MSS. 27829 (Place Papers), f. 146.

3 E.g. London Working Men's College Archives, Scrapbook 1854-84, p. 271.

4 E.J. Hobsbawm, 'The Labour Aristocracy in 19th Century Britain', in Democracy & the Labour Movement (Ed. J. Saville), 1965, pp. 201-5.

working people had constant employment throughout the year.¹ It had, moreover, appeared long before London's employment structure had been greatly affected by the factory system. By 1834, said Place, the moral difference between skilled workman and common labourer had already become "as strongly marked as was the difference between the workman and his employer".²

On non-statistical evidence Place and the committee differed less sharply than they imagined. Their evidence, largely drawn from different areas, was reconcileable; their divergent preconceptions had simply led them to emphasise different aspects of the data. Place admitted that intemperance among agricultural labourers had probably increased.³ Confusion increased when Place used the term "working people" to exclude the drunken and dissolute, while the committee lumped all the "lower orders" together. Even the London missionary Mark Moore admitted that there was "very little" drunkenness among educated working men.⁴ The committee could not assume, like Place, that the new élite would continue to set the tone for the working-classes as a whole. In this

1 F. Place, Improvement of the Working People, p. 7.

2 ibid., p. 6.

3 Parl. Papers, 1834, viii (559), Q. 2035.

4 ibid., Q. 40; cf. Q. 3250.

they were not entirely mistaken. Not all labour aristocrats resembled Place, Cassell, Burt and Howell in retaining a pride in their origins; on the contrary, many wished to cover up their humble birth, and rise in society; even, perhaps, to enter that aristocracy which Place so despised.

V

The impossibility of precisely measuring per capita drink consumption at this period might distress the economic historian, but it is less serious for the historian of the temperance question, who is quite as interested in what people thought was happening as in what actually happened. The statistics used in the controversy, however unreliable, did strongly influence contemporary attitudes; the subjective impressions so fallible as guides to the real contemporary situation are invaluable as guides for the historian of social movements.

Similarly, if the committee's report is unreliable as a guide to contemporary social conditions, analysis of the relationship between its evidence and its conclusions, and of the preconceptions of its members can tell the historian much about the management of parliamentary committees in the 1830s. The committee certainly gave wild and absurd estimates of the loss caused to the nation by spirits manufacture; no precise statistical support was ever adduced for the figure

of £50 million: or for the proportion of 1/6 of the navy "as much destroyed [by drink] as if the men were slain in battle".¹ Several of the criticisms which can be made of the drunken committee, however, apply to most other contemporary parliamentary inquiries.

Firstly, biased selection of witnesses. The chairmen of parliamentary inquiries had wide powers, but a man with as little personal influence as Buckingham, dealing with a subject as complex as drunkenness could scarcely refuse Evangelical offers of witnesses. At least 14 of the 50 witnesses came from this quarter,² and doctors whose personal prejudices outran their scientific knowledge made their customary appearance.³ Only one drinkseller was summoned, and he was so pushed on to the defensive that he found himself defending the dignity of his livelihood instead of giving evidence on the prevalence of drunkenness.⁴ Beersellers and brewers were unrepresented, and Place noted how the committee preferred docile witnesses to his own nominees.⁵

1 Parl. Papers, 1834, viii (559), pp. ivff.

2 See above, p.93

3 O. McDonagh, A Pattern of Government Growth, 1961, p. 131.

4 See above, p.96

5 Addit. MSS. 35149 (Place Papers), f. 301: Place to Hawes, 7 July 1834.

Secondly, discrepancies between the evidence and the report. The evidence of Place, Rowan and Fearon was largely ignored or misinterpreted; hence the report constituted yet another "chronicle of distress".¹ One committee-member felt obliged to withdraw during the drafting of the report because when he ventured to doubt the accuracy of any statement or the wisdom of any recommendation, he was "at once met by the objection that I had not been in the room when the witnesses were examined, and that all the principles which I deemed exceptionable, and all the assertions which I considered inaccurate, were fully borne out by the evidence".²

Thirdly, the zeal of the minority enabled it eventually to dominate a committee held during June and July - a time when the governing classes were leaving London for the country.³ Buckingham himself admitted that many of the committee-members were absent, though he attributed this to their apathy or laziness rather than to the reasons which they themselves gave - their disgust at the committee's proceedings and the futility of their presence in a minority.⁴

1 R.M. Hartwell, 'Interpretations of the Industrial Revolution in England', Journal of Economic History, June 1959, p. 244.

2 Sinclair, Mirror of Parliament, 1834, IV, p. 3237.

3 L. Brown, art. cit., pp. 401-2.

4 See above, p. 87

During the consideration of the report, "five or six... only"¹ were present.

Fourthly, 19th century parliamentary inquiries could not easily discover the views of the working-class drinker: the "drunken committee"'s failure to interview any of the working-class drinkers with whom its report was primarily concerned reflects a general tendency to interview the articulate and the successful rather than the knowledgeable but less successful.² Thus parliamentary committees on the drink problem tended to interview the temperance reformer rather than the pubgoer, especially as the former was always so eager to give evidence. Hence 19th century M.P.s found it difficult to gauge public attitudes until warned by the occurrence of a riot.³

But even if the committee had wished to interview working men, its intimidating appearance would have made it difficult to elicit their genuine views. The only witnesses in 1834 who could conceivably be called working men were specially pre-selected by the Evangelicals: the Holborn

1 Mirror of Parliament, 1834, IV, p. 3237; cf. Addit. MSS. 27829 (Place Papers), f. 85.

2 B. Webb, 'Methods of Investigation', Sociological Papers, Vol. III, delivered 31 Jan. 1906, pp. 352-3.

3 See my article, 'The Sunday Trading Riots of 1855' in Historical Journal, 1965. 19th century inquiries into the water supply were also impoverished by lack of evidence from working-class consumers; interested parties could afford to send witnesses to London, whereas the poor could not. R.A. Lewis, Edwin Chadwick & the Public Health Movement, 1952, p. 135.

hatter, the Westminster grocer and the Manchester cotton-dresser all duly informed the committee that drunkenness had been increasing among working people.

Fifthly, the parliamentary committee could mould the type of evidence it received from all but the most determined and self-confident witness. Beatrice Webb herself had once been flustered before a parliamentary inquiry by the unexpected question, and by the unfamiliar experience of cross-questioning.¹ James Turner told Place in 1834 that he was not certain whether intemperance had been increasing among working men, but when giving evidence a few days later to the committee he had no doubts.²

Place noted the committee's "patience and perseverance, in prompting and hearing to a most monstrous extent the gabble of gloomy ignorant fanatics".³ The 1834 committee, like the 1840 committee on Import Duties,⁴ received witnesses who gave prepared lectures rather than evidence obtained by question-and-answer. Francis Place heatedly complained of just such a performance in William Collins, who contributed

1 B. Webb, My Apprenticeship, p. 277.

2 Addit. MSS. 27830 (Place Papers), f. 269.

3 Addit. MSS. 27829 (Place Papers), f. 99.

4 L. Brown, op. cit., p. 73.

"a long doleful preachment" in 1834.¹ He also frequently complained of leading questions.² While the committee helped along obliging witnesses, it was aggressive, as Finch and Fearon discovered, to those whose evidence did not accord with its preconceptions.

Sixthly, the whole inquiry lacked a scientific spirit. While the committee undoubtedly consisted of a number of experts on the subject - individuals who had for some time taken a practical interest in the temperance question, either by promoting licensing legislation, by personally abstaining, or by promoting anti-spirits societies - they do not seem to have regarded the committee as a tool for social investigation: only as a means of buttressing their preconceptions. If the committee had aimed simply to pursue a scientific inquiry into the drink question, the question-and-answer technique should have been used to discover new sources of information and to obtain answers to specific questions drafted in advance but the committee seems to have used it only as a way of getting rid of uncomfortable evidence. It sponsored no subsidiary statistical or other research, made no private investigations, ignored Place's offer to provide

1 Addit. MSS. 35149 (Place Papers), f. 301: Place to Hawes, 7 July 1834.

2 e.g. Addit. MSS. 27830 (Place Papers), notes beside QQ. 121, 3443-5.

knowledgeable witnesses, and did not call for written evidence. Yet, as Henry Taylor wrote, "business is seldom really and usefully transacted otherwise than in writing".¹

Finally, the committee did not reject hearsay evidence. Chadwick was the only witness who insisted on confining his answers to direct personal experience. "Any hear say nonsense is evidence in this committee", wrote Place on his copy of the report.² Like Sadler's factory report and most other contemporary parliamentary reports his report of the drunken committee was "emphatically partisan".³ The pursuit of impartiality in the selection of parliamentary committees was a later development: in 1834 most of the members were interested parties.⁴ "You must I think know as well as I do how reports are got up to suit particular purposes", Place told Hawes in July; "I never knew one which was really honest".⁵

If the drunken committee's report is seldom supported by the evidence, and if the evidence itself, with few exceptions,

1 H. Taylor, The Statesman, 1836, p. 46; cf. B. Webb, Our Partnership (1948), p. 397.

2 Addit. MSS. 27830, f. 233, note against Q. 3572; Parl. Papers, 1834, viii (559), Q. 310.

3 W.H. Hutt, art. cit., p. 164.

4 cf. L. Brown, art. cit., p. 402.

5 Addit. MSS. 35149 (Place Papers), f. 302: Place to Hawes, 7 July 1834.

had been carefully pre-selected, the historian in search of evidence for contemporary social conditions might use it cautiously. To expect the bulk of the report and evidence to reveal anything more than the attitudes of a particular social group would be to incur the posthumous wrath of so well-informed an expert on working-class conditions as Francis Place himself.

Yet before the committee is condemned too roundly, the novelty and immense complexity of the task it set itself must be emphasised. Only one other 19th century parliamentary committee sought to investigate "the extent, causes and consequences" of intemperance - the Lords' Committee of 1876-9 - with singular lack of success. Other committees confined themselves to investigating the simpler, though still thorny, question of licensing. If the 1834 committee be judged a failure, therefore, its failure must be weighed against the magnitude of the task it set itself.

VI

The rousing campaign during the recess for temperance legislation which Buckingham promised¹ never materialised. Only 68 petitions were presented for legislation in 1835, less from Scotland and more from South-Western England than

¹ Sheffield Independent, 13 Sep. 1834.

in the previous year.¹ For several reasons,² Buckingham never succeeded in uniting the Evangelicals behind his campaign, which required all their help if it was to prevail against such formidable obstacles. Buckingham favoured the parliamentary inquiry as a means of gaining publicity, but unfortunately it gained him the wrong sort of publicity, and did not therefore result in legislation. His licensing and public parks bills failed. Buckingham remained a lone temperance voice in parliament till he retired in 1837; thereafter, the temperance movement had to remain without a parliamentary spokesman for a generation.

But the temperance movement never regarded the committee as a failure: it had assembled information for use by the temperance advocate which temperance societies had neither the resources nor the power to command.³ Its evidence and report long remained the temperance advocate's source-book and supplied much of the material contained in those teetotal textbooks Grindrod's Bacchus, W.R. Baker's Curse of Britain

1 Journal of the House of Commons, Vol. 90 (1835); S.W. England, 20 petitions; Northern England, 16; Ireland, 13; S.E. England, 7; Midlands, 5; Wales, 4; Scotland, 2. Total identifiable 67.

2 See below, pp.

3 Sheffield Independent, 13 Sep. 1834.

and Burne's Teetotaler's Companion.¹ The prohibitionist Lawson said in 1866 that ever since 1834 it had been "a textbook for the temperance party".² Teetotal advocates after 1834 frequently quoted it.³ Throughout the 19th century, liquor restrictionists thought the 1834 committee had provided all the evidence required to justify prohibition, and therefore considered all subsequent inquiries superfluous.⁴ As late as 1932, Lord Rhayader pronounced it "far and away the most thorough and far-reaching" of all such inquiries.⁵

According to his public statements, Buckingham was not dismayed by the opposition to the "drunken committee". He tried on 11th August to use the presentation of a petition as an excuse for correcting "some misstatements" about its views, but was silenced.⁶ Only one press attack distressed him - that of the Examiner, a paper which he had long admired.⁷ He spoke less and less frequently in parliament,⁸

1 P. Burne, Teetotaler's Companion, 1847, p. v.; cf. Metropolitan Temperance Intelligencer & Journal, 25 Feb. 1843, p. 60.

2 Alliance News, 3 Mar. 1866.

3 Reasoner, 14 Oct. 1857, p. 229.

4 J.E.G. De Montmorency, Francis William Fox, 1923, pp. 29-30.

5 H. Townsend, Robert Wilson Black, 1954, p. 175.

6 Mirror of Parliament, 1834, IV, p. 3351.

7 Examiner, 17 Aug. 1834, p. 515.

8 Examination of Hansard indexes shows that in 1833 he spoke 32 times; 1834, 24; 1835, 24; 1836, 14; 1837, 5.

failed to win compensation from the East India Company, was pronounced by the London Mercury on 10th September 1837 "a very considerable humbug" who was "never weary...of begging from the public", and went off to America to raise money through a lecture tour. On his return, he appeared on many reforming platforms, for he never showed that exclusive devotion to one panacea which characterises the crank.

He continued the struggle for compensation from the East India Company and his letters to Brougham over the last twenty years of his life, almost all requesting a favour, are somewhat pathetic. Cobden also firmly refused a request to support one of his money-raising schemes.¹ Yet Buckingham never showed in adversity that small-mindedness which might have caused lesser men to amend their hitherto optimistic views of human nature. He was compensated for lack of contemporary appreciation by his conviction that posterity would acknowledge his merits:² his belief was not entirely unfounded, for he has been described by a modern sociologist as an "ancestor of the Welfare State".³

He regarded his life as a model for others: it showed,

1 Chichester, Sussex County Record Office, Cobden MSS., No. 2, f. 100: Cobden to Buckingham, 24 Mar. 1848.

2 cf. C.L. Becker, The Heavenly City of the 18th Century Philosophers, Yale, 1932, p. 141.

3 Ruth Glass, The Times, 17 Aug. 1955, p. 9.

he claimed, "that there is no obscurity of birth, no privation of property, and no opposition....that may not be overcome by industry, integrity, zeal and perseverance; - no depth of misfortune, from which the victim may not hope to emerge by labour, economy, temperance, and that single-mindedness which regards the faithful discharge of duty as the great object to which all others must be made subordinate".¹ Yet such candour did not prevent the Dictionary of National Biography from declaring that though "a man of great kindness of heart and liberality of opinion, a fluent speaker, and possessed of a lively imagination", he was "capricious in his work and had too many schemes in hand at the same time". His biographer pronounces his parliamentary career "a failure".²

Yet this is a short-sighted view: the complexity of Buckingham's personality renders the simple verdict unsatisfactory. True, Buckingham was indiscreet, apparently conceited, exasperating to other politicians, and at times so far in advance of his contemporaries as to seem eccentric. Yet he was also a courageous, unconventional, energetic idealist, many of whose radical solutions to social ills have since become commonplace. If his precocity prevented him

1 S.T. King, op. cit., p. 271.

2 R.E. Turner, op. cit., p. 338.

from personally producing legislative changes, and if his political skill never matched the liveliness of his imagination, there is surely a place in politics for the idealist who can envisage future developments without himself being able to ensure their political success. The compromises necessarily accompanying the "practical policy" may deprive original suggestions for social improvement of that challenging quality by which alone public opinion can be altered.

Buckingham and Lawson both eventually realised that reason alone could not move the Commons: it must be backed up by political influence and money. Buckingham, unlike Wilberforce, never possessed the advantages of birth and wealth.¹ Lawson described him in 1866 as "that great and good man".² Buckingham was too incapable of influencing his contemporaries, however, to qualify for "greatness"; and his lack of money caused him to be too self-interested to qualify for "goodness" without reservation. Yet posterity has to some extent justified his efforts; if James Silk Buckingham failed, who has succeeded?

1 J. Stephen, Essays in Ecclesiastical Biography, 4th Edn., 1860, p. 501.

2 Alliance News, 3 Mar. 1866.

CHAPTER THREE

THE TEETOTAL CAMPAIGN: THE ORIGINS OF TEETOTALISM AND THE PROBLEM OF PROLETARIAN SCHISM:

1830-1842

While the "drunken committee" was sitting in London, the North of England saw some important developments. In many respects, the temperance movement's significant break with previous patterns of moral reform occurs not with the creation of the anti-spirits movement in 1828-9, but with the spread of the teetotal movement from Preston after 1833. Only at this point did the temperance movement harness and in turn enhance that proletarian self-consciousness which had been mounting since the formation of the corresponding societies of the 1790s. Only in the teetotal society did the Wesleyan tradition of spontaneous conversion oust aristocratic patronage. With the appearance of the teetotal society, the aims and methods of the temperance movement were transformed, and a series of crippling schisms resulted. But before these are discussed, the nature of the anti-spirits movement, which teetotalers aimed to supersede, must first be considered.

I

The British and Foreign Temperance Society was a London-

based reforming society on the traditional Evangelical model. It paraded "great names", and within a year claimed the Bishop of London as president with four peers and four bishops among its vice-presidents. In 1837 the Queen's patronage was secured. Clergymen contributed about 1/20 of its funds, but nonconformist ministers like Dr. Pye Smith also gave their support. Quakers and women were prominent,¹ the latter donating about 1/10 of the society's funds. Cornelius Hanbury, philanthropist and member of the brewing family, was treasurer and Rev. Owen Clarke was its lifelong secretary and chief prop. Its supporters could be seen at the meetings of many other Evangelical societies.²

Members pledged themselves to abstain from all spirits "except for medicinal purposes", and to "discountenance the causes and practice of intemperance". For the B.F.T.S., this meant moderate beer- or wine-drinking; hence teetotalers labelled its members "moderationists". The subscription lists show that B.F.T.S. supporters were not themselves the victims of intemperance: the society raised over £2400 in its first two years, mostly from donors of £5 or more. Donations continued to rise till 1833-4.²

1 B[ritish] & F[oreign] T[emperance] S[ociety], First Annual Rept., 1832, p. 59; The Record, 7 July 1831, p. 4; Times, 10 May 1837, p. 6; B.F.T.S. Third Annual Rept. 1834, p. 45.

2 The Record, 7 July 1831, p. 4.

3 See Appendix, diagram 9.

Much came from Quakers - from the Manchester Crewdsons, the Lombard Street Gurneys, the Gloucester Bowllys, the Bristol Frys, the Birmingham Sturges. Quakers also gave time and energy to the early temperance movement, and the death of a leading Quaker such as Joseph Eaton in 1858 could disrupt temperance activity in his locality. The society had access to the banking-brewing complex, and also to aristocratic Evangelical ladies like Lady Olivia Sparrow and the Duchess of Beaufort: to admirals, generals and aristocrats like Lords Hervey, Bexley, Dover and Henley; and to two families long to shine in the temperance world - the Lawsons and Trevelyan. In the philanthropic world, self-effacement did not pay, and long subscription lists giving prominence to distinguished donors were appended to every annual report.

The B.F.T.S. concentrated on propaganda, and in three years spent over 1/4 of its income on printing and distributing over two million temperance tracts.¹ From 1832-5 it published the British & Foreign Temperance Advocate, and from 1834-5, the British & Foreign Temperance Advocate; from 1836, however, these were replaced by the Temperance Penny Magazine, containing a woodcut and more popular material.

1 B.F.T.S. Third Annual Rept., 1833, pp. 8-9.

In 1834 several temperance publications were presented to each M.P. The Society tried to influence clergymen and doctors, claimed 443 affiliated societies, and issued two monthly periodicals filled with membership statistics, subscription lists, American news and denunciations of spirits. It provided speakers for local temperance meetings all over England. In 1833 it had 5 agents at work, and two years later, 10. Over half its total expenditure went on oral and written propaganda.¹ Nominally, B.F.T.S. strength lay in the North, but much of its growth there was in fact spontaneous. Most of its achievement lay in the South and West, but it never became strong enough to decentralise its agencies, and failed in 1834 to institute a county union with its own agent.²

Despite all this activity however, criticism was rife. From the first, the B.F.T.S. attracted less support than had been anticipated.³ Few clergymen were prepared to set an

1 The figures for the years 1831-5 were:

Meetings expenses	538.	13.	2.
Salaries/Office Expenses	1107.	12.	9.
Tracts/Adverts/Printing	1296.	3.	10.
Agent's Salary & Trav. Exps.	2392.	1.	2.
Misc.	45.	0.	0.
Total Expenditure: 1831-5	5378.	10.	11.

2 British & Foreign Temperance Herald, Feb. 1834. See Appendix, table 15 & diagram 8.

3 The Record, rept. of meeting held on 19 May 1835; The Record, 22 May 1834, reporting meeting on 20 May.

example by taking the pledge; London was difficult to rouse,¹ and the reports of the Poor Law commissioners in the 1830s at no point mention the temperance society as a possible remedy for poverty. The Society gave disproportionate attention to intemperance overseas, its secretary noting with pride at the 1842 annual meeting that very few persons there could read the Society's foreign language tracts.² Even before teetotal attacks, therefore, the B.F.T.S. was an ailing body. The Society was closely wedded to the Established church, and nonconformists were sometimes embarrassed at having to act under the local vicar.³ It had "too long acted from expediency," declared Livesey in 1835: "seeking to please and secure the patronage and approval of the great.... instead of the working classes".⁴

Teetotalers when attacking the B.F.T.S. did not concentrate on criticising its aristocratic and Anglican structure: their attack was formulated or perhaps rationalised as a condemnation of the Society's inability to reclaim the drunkard. Firstly, although William Wilberforce had expressly condemned

1. B.F.T.S. 2nd Annual Rept., 1833, pp. 8-9.

2. B.F.T.S. 11th Annual Rept., 1842, p. 20.

3. Moral Reformer, 1 Aug 1833, p. 257 (at Bolton).

4. Preston Temperance Advocate, II, No. 9 (Sep 1835), p. 66; cf. Moral Reformer, 1 May 1832, pp. 138-42.

any notion that virtue made milder claims on the rich than on the poor,¹ the B.F.T.S. in spirit-drinking areas could be accused of proscribing the drink of the poor while allowing the rich to retain their wine. This objection prevented Brougham from joining , and the Poor Man's Guardian in 1831 urged the B.F.T.S. to begin its preaching at home.²

Secondly it was soon found , especially in the North of England , that a mere switch from spirits to beer or wine did not necessarily promote sobriety, and that the intoxicating properties of these three drinks diverged less strikingly than many had hitherto supposed. Indeed, anti-spirits societies could fairly be accused of promoting hypocrisy when some of their members became more drunk on beer than non-members on spirits.³ It seemed essential to close such loopholes; but the teetotalers tried to close loopholes without re-thinking fundamentals, and therefore embarked on a course which subordinated the original aim - the prevention of intemperance - to the pursuit of consistency of principle, an approach which was ultimately to lead to the demand for prohibition. Teetotalism seemed to bestow on the anti-spirits

1. Practical View, p.300.

2. 3 Hansard 47, c.1236 (3 June 1839); Poor Man's Guardian, 16 July 1831, p.12.

3. R.Macnish, Anatomy of Drunkenness, 5th.Edn., Glasgow, 1834, p.285.

movement that precision of aim so necessary to successful reforming associations. Teetotalers used the same arguments against the anti-spirits societies for allowing beer-drinking as the anti-spirits societies had used against the moderate spirit-drinkers.

Thirdly , the B.F.T.S. was not equipped to reduce drunkenness in beer-drinking areas. So pronounced were regional variations in drinking habits that only a teetotal pledge in beer-drinking rural England and Wales could match an anti-spirits pledge in spirit-drinking Ireland and Scotland. In the remoter parts, in Yorkshire and Staffordshire where home-brewed beer was highly prized, and also in the cider-drinking West, the B.F.T.S. could achieve little. Yet the prominence of brewers in the London philanthropic world caused it to be embarrassed by demands that it should attack beer-drinking. Even at the local level, brewers were prominent supporters of its auxiliaries.¹

Finally , the B.F.T.S. made no effort to reclaim the drunkard. Teetotalism , on the other hand , could claim credit for some striking reclamations. Anti-spirits societies were driven into embracing teetotalism by pragmatic rather than by theoretical considerations - by their need to insulate their members against temptation. Teetotalers challenged the

1. e.g. in Cork; Father Stanislaus, 'Father Mathew & Temperance', Capuchin Annual, 1930, p.166; and in Penrith, T. Whittaker, Life's Battles, p.98.

traditional belief that drunkards were irreclaimable.

"John's dispensation had passed away", said one teetotal zealot in 1836, "and the true tee-total light had come into the world".¹ Teetotalism at first seemed a miracle:

"What has it done? Delightful things,
Beyond our best imaginings:
The Ethiop's white, - the lion's tamed,
And hoary drunkards are reclaimed".²

During the dramatic debate at Leeds in 1836 between moderationists and teetotalers, the moderationist Revd. William Hudswell rashly likened his party to fosterbirds turned out of their nests by the young cuckoos they had unconsciously reared. The teetotal Crossley, the next speaker, at once pursued the metaphor, and amid loud cheering and laughter posed an embarrassing question: "if there be any eggs in the temperance nest, (and I am happy to say there are) those eggs are the drunkards who have been reformed; and (turning to the moderation side of the platform) - how many eggs did YOU lay?"³

The question was of course unfair: teetotalers and moderationists differed both in their aims and methods. The

1 Star of Temperance, 19 Nov. 1836, p. 369.

2 Anon, Life & Poems of Henry Anderton, 1867, p. 78.

3 Rept. of the Public Meeting, Leeds, 1836, p. 18.

B.F.T.S., like the Evangelical movement as a whole, was based on example-setting from above rather than on the generation of self-help and initiative from below. It sought to confirm the sober in their sobriety rather than to reclaim the intemperate. Propaganda of early anti-spirits societies explicitly sought to strengthen the superior station of "the higher ranks" now threatened by the progress of education, by encouraging them to take the lead in morally reforming their social inferiors.¹ The early teetotal meeting constituted a recruiting-ground for the labour aristocracy, and the early teetotal orator preached not only to the converted but also to reprobates, many of whose lives he transformed. At B.F.T.S. annual meetings, however, the attendance of drunkards was unthinkable.²

Teetotalers like Livesey and Whittaker could be seen walking through the streets arm-in-arm with the drunkard whom moderationists spurned as an embarrassment to their cause.³ J.B. Gough, the American reformed drunkard, said

1 Address of the Hibernian Temperance Society to their Countrymen, Dublin, 1830, p. 4; cf. Plint, in Leeds Temperance Society, First Annual Rept., 1831, pp. 15-16; B.F.T.S. First Annual Rept., 1832, p. 15. See also plates 21 & 22.

2 Temperance Penny Magazine, June 1840, p. 86.

3 J. Pearce, op. cit., pp. cxxxv, cxlvii-cxlvix; T. Whittaker, Life's Battles, 1884, p. 102.

that the unexpectedness of a teetotaler's kindly look "went right to my heart"; teetotalers found that kindness was a most effective cure.¹ Teetotal processions of reformed drunkards "clothed and in their right mind" lent the early teetotal movement all the glamour of the rapid and dramatic panacea for social ills.²

Once the temperance movement had adopted the reclamation of drunkards as its leading objective, it had to transform its local organisation. Regular meetings could alone give the ex-drunkard a counter-attraction to the drinking place, and provide him with the companionship which he had forsaken and the shield against ridicule which he needed. Only by regular visitation, by "pairings off" of reformed drunkards, and by creating a new framework of life for its members, could the teetotal movement secure any ground gained. Only by putting the reformed drunkard in office and by enabling him publicly to announce his changed life could the incentives to sobriety be sufficiently reinforced. All these remedies have since been rediscovered by Alcoholics Anonymous. For the moderationist the drunkard had failed to exert his will and deserved denunciation. For the teetotaler,

1 J.B. Gough, Autobiography (Ipswich Temperance Trace, No. 132), p. 24.

2 See Plates 40 & 41; Star of Temperance, 7 Oct. 1835, p.22.

the drunkard's will had been paralysed by alcohol and he deserved sympathy.

II

How did the teetotal movement originate? There had been teetotalers for centuries, and the writings of one, Benjamin Franklin, strongly influenced the teetotal movement.¹ Adam Smith in the 1770s considered teetotalism feasible,² Newman Hall's father independently realised, about 1816, that teetotalism was the only remedy for his drink cravings;³ Joseph Sturge became a teetotaler in 1827.⁴ Thus the teetotal movement did not originate the idea of teetotalism; it did, however, pioneer organised teetotalism as a necessary development of the anti-spirits society anxious to reclaim the drunkard.

Teetotal societies were formed in several places independently. Rev. W. Urwick advocated organised teetotalism in tracts of 1829; Paisley developed the first teetotal

1 B. Franklin, op. cit., p. 52; and see below, pp. 163 ff.

2 Adam Smith, Wealth of Nations (Ed. Cannan), II, p. 355.

3 Newman Hall, The Author of the Sinner's Friend. A Brief Memoir, 4th Edn. n.d. passim; I owe this reference to Dr. John Walsh.

4 National Temperance Chronicle, June 1847, p. 90.

society in 1832;¹ the Preston teetotalers, however, though not first in the field, were certainly the first vigorously to propagate the new cause. The origins of their zeal may partly be sought in the political, social and economic situation in Preston in the 1830s from which they emerged.

Orator Hunt's 1830 by-election defeat of the Stanleys marked Preston's repudiation of aristocratic patronage.² The Stanleys showed that they realised this by severing their connexion with the town and destroying their family mansion, Patten House, which they had visited every year during Preston races. Their cockpit, which had once housed the famous gamecocks of the 12th Earl, was rented by the dissenter Joseph Livesey as a lecture hall for radical and moral reform causes.³

Though not all Preston nonconformists supported Preston teetotalism, the prominent early Preston teetotalers all came from the Liberal/Radical nonconformist section of society, and the early Preston teetotalers were backed by the Whig Preston Chronicle against the Tory Preston Pilot. Livesey

1 W.A. Pallister, Essays, Chiefly on the Temperance Question, 1849, p. 8; Dawson Burns, op. cit., I, p. 63.

2 J. Livesey, Autobiography, pp. 27-8 (Ed. Pearce).

3 Bury Public Library, Hewitson Scrapbooks, III, p. 497. See also Appendix, Plate 30.

supported Wood in the 1826 election, and heckled Stanley in 1830.¹ Anderton the teetotal radical saddler versified for the Preston radicals, though he later split their ranks by campaigning against their public-house political meetings and by trying to sever their connexions with infidelity. He died in 1855 murmuring verses 1-3 of 14 Revelation.² The first two Preston teetotal missionaries to the nation were both Methodist local preachers. James Teare was a shoemaker from the Isle of Man, and spoke Bible in hand.³ Thomas Whittaker could never shake off his Methodist Sunday school-teacher's vivid descriptions of Hell.⁴ A Wesleyan minister presided over the Preston Temperance Society's first public meeting, held in a Wesleyan preaching room, and the second public meeting was held in a Primitive Methodist chapel.⁵

Despite Radical taunts,⁶ Swindlehurst and Livesey did

1 J. Livesey, Autobiography, p. 51.

2 W. Pilkington, The Makers of Wesleyan Methodism in Preston, 1890, pp. 182-3; T. Walmsley, Reminiscences of the Preston Cockpit & the Old Teetotalers, 1892, p. 17; Temperance Spectator, Jan. 1859, pp. 7-10; E. Grubb, The Temperance & Other Poems of the Late Henry Anderton, Preston, 1863, passim.

3 F.R. Lees, 'Memoir of James Teare', prefaced to F. Powell, Bacchus Dethroned, n.d., p. iii.

4 T. Whittaker, Life's Battles, p. 16; see also Appendix, Plate 39.

5 W. Pilkington, Facts About the Origin of the Teetotal Principle & Pledge, Preston, 1834, p. 26.

6 Proceedings at the Opening of the Bradford Temperance Hall, Bradford, 1838, p. 68; Moral Reformer, 1832, p. 375.

not, by embracing teetotalism, change their political principles. The four teetotalers identifiable in the 1835 Preston poll-book all voted for Perronet Thompson. The teetotal campaign in fact represented a useful way in which Christian principles and radical reformism could be conspicuously combined. In the Preston of the 1830s at least, teetotalism did not become a substitute for more radical reforms, as a brief description of Preston's most prominent teetotaler Joseph Livesey will show.

A self-made cheesemonger who as a child had worked at the loom, Livesey was connected with most Liberal causes in Preston. Though he supported the ballot and universal suffrage, he did not favour radical attacks on Whig reform bills; small mercies, he thought, should be gratefully accepted.¹ Individual moral reform was his road to social harmony. His monthly Moral Reformer, 1831-3, attacked corn laws, absentee landlords, brutal sports and lazy parsons, and advocated temperance, forbearance, and free trade in commerce and religion.²

In the 1840s, Livesey became a vigorous Anti-Corn Law Leaguer. He welcomed the railway, loved children and preferred working-class company to any other. An enthusiast

1 Preston Chronicle, 2 Apr., 1 Oct. 1831; see Appendix, Plates 24 & 25.

2 See Appendix, Plates 24-26.

for education, he helped establish the local mechanics' institution, and promoted a mutual improvement society in his Cockpit. The recollections of Thomas Whittaker, one of its members, show his enlightened teaching methods at work: Whittaker remembered seeing the whole group with their families joining hands in a ring to experience the effects of a shock administered by Livesey from a galvanic battery, and indulging, when the shock came, in "dancing and prancing and grimaces" worthy of a Hogarth or Cruikshank.¹

Livesey was one of Preston's leading opponents of the Established Church. As a youth he had denounced Anglican worldliness, and as an adult he admired the Quakers, but joined the Scotch Baptists because he found them less inward-looking.² By the 1830s he was describing the Established Church as "a monopoly of the worst description", and his property was seized when he refused to pay Easter Dues.³ He was a pioneer of that "practical" religion which swept the country in the late-Victorian period, and which substituted for theological and liturgical dispute a concern with moral

1 T. Whittaker, Life's Battles, pp. 35-6.

2 F. Coupe, Walton-le Dale, 1951, p. 156; J. Pearce, op. cit., p. lxxv; Moral Reformer, 1 Mar. 1831, p. 88.

3 Preston Chronicle, 29 Sep. 1832.

and social reform. His favourite rôle was that of mediator and peacemaker, whether it be in a street fight, a political squabble or a dispute between mother and child.¹ He found it difficult to identify himself with any one sect, and was as ready as the phrenologists to cite the text "by their fruits ye shall know them".² He believed that many of the poor who lacked the respectable clothes necessary for church-attendance would assuredly enter the kingdom of heaven.³

Livesey constantly preached against vicarious charity. Modelling his personal conduct on "the kindly, benevolent, sympathising, charitable, forgiving spirit of Jesus", he urged Preston Christians to imitate the Apostles in personally visiting the poor.⁴ He rebuked Owen for not realising that Christian principles could remove all social disharmony; they were, he thought "the best remedy" for the evils of the factory system.⁵ To his credit, he actively tried to carry out his principles and certainly did not use his Christian beliefs as a means of evading his social duties: on the

1 e.g. Preston Temperance Advocate, July 1834, p. 53.

2 Moral Reformer, 1 May 1832.

3 J. Pearce, op. cit., p. xxiv.

4 Livesey's Moral Reformer, N.S., 6 Jan. 1838, p. 3; 27 Jan. 1838, p. 29.

5 Livesey's Moral Reformer, N.S., 24 Feb. 1838, pp. 59-60.

contrary, they inspired his philanthropy.

He was the first to admit in 1830 that the state protected every sort of property except the poor man's property; he energetically expressed concern for Preston handloom-weavers suffering from technological unemployment.¹ He agitated against the new poor law on the local council and publicly debated the subject with Acland. With the aid of the teetotal Anderton's versified denunciations of the "Poor Law Prison" he helped prevent its introduction to Preston for decades.² Though some Preston teetotalers exaggerated their case and maintained that only the vicious applied for poor relief, Livesey, from his personal visitation of the poor, knew better: "it is not by charity, but by employment at competent wages", he said in 1830, "that the people ought to be maintained".³

There may be some link between the buoyancy of the Preston teetotalers in the early 1830s and the buoyancy of the local economy. The local cotton and flax-spinning trades were prosperous and Preston in the 1830s was growing more

1 Offprint of his published letter dated 2 Feb. 1830, in P.R.O. H.O. 44/119; Livesey's Moral Reformer, N.S., May 1838, p. 106.

2 Preston Guardian, 10 Feb. 1844; Anon, Life & Poems of Henry Anderton, p. 63.

3 P.R.O. H.O. 44/119; cf. Preston Chronicle, 18 Jan. 1834.

rapidly than Liverpool and Manchester. The Preston Chronicle in 1834 had "at no former period" seen such an expansion in the number of industrial and residential buildings as had occurred during the previous two years. Preston was "rapidly rising into a town of first-rate importance" at precisely the time when teetotal zeal reached its peak: indeed, the teetotalers themselves claimed some of the credit for the local prosperity.¹ By promoting tea consumption, they promoted exports to China of cotton shirtings, a large proportion of which were made in Preston.²

Finally, Preston's attention was focussed onto the drink question by the Beer Act. This measure, passed by Wellington's administration in 1830, instituted free trade in beer by allowing the granting of beer-house licences to everyone prepared to send two guineas with an application to the Excise. Its passage reveals the novelty of teetotalism in English society in the 1830s; for it was designed as a temperance measure: it derived much of its support from those who feared that spirit-drinking was on the increase, and who hoped to transfer popular taste to a milder drink.

1 Pigot & Co., National Commercial Directory, 1834, p. 512; Preston Chronicle, 21 June 1834; Preston Pilot, 5 Dec. 1835; J. Livesey, Malt Lecture, p. 24.

2 See above, p. 65 ; R.C.O. Matthews, op. cit., pp. 134-6; Preston Guardian, 10 Feb. 1844; H. Ashworth, The Preston Strike, 1854, p. 66.

But it was bitterly opposed by the High Tories, by opponents of free trade, and by the magistrates and clergymen responsible for maintaining rural public order. In the 1830 budget, Goulburn removed the beer tax; these two reforms covered England and Wales in the early 1830s with over 30,000 beer-houses.¹

Although a few of the early leaders of the anti-spirits movement were apprehensive about the Bill's effects in 1830, their movement raised no sustained protest against it. Brewers were powerful in Exeter Hall, and the Record in 1830 felt that it would have "happy effects...as....regards the morals of the people".² Thus when James Teare in 1832 denounced beershops as "vile and wretched establishments", he gave great offence to the Preston Temperance Society which, like other contemporary anti-spirits societies, was supported by the local beer interest.³

Although the Beer Act did not create the temperance movement, it undoubtedly hastened its progress towards teetotalism by undermining the exaggerated contemporary faith

1 See Appendix, diagrams 1-4. See also G.B. Wilson, op. cit., pp. 394-5.

2 Record, 18 Mar. 1830.

3 J. Teare, History of the Origin & Success of the Advocacy of the Principle of Total Abstinence, 1847, p. 13.

in the civilising effects of beer. While historians have probably over-estimated the evil effects which the Beer Act produced on popular sobriety,¹ in some areas, including Preston, the new beerhouses were thought to have promoted drunkenness. Joseph Livesey himself had opposed the Beer Bill in 1830, and continued to attack it during 1831. The people, he claimed, "should not be enticed by temptations which they cannot resist"; despite his enthusiasm for free trade in other spheres, Livesey maintained that here free trade principles did not apply.² By 1834 Preston supported 123 beershops as against 106 public-houses; "we have beer-shops in every street", complained Livesey to the 1834 committee.³

Subsequent controversy cannot obscure the fact that Livesey, both in personal conduct and propagandist energy, was the pioneer Preston teetotaler. By 1826, he was issuing tracts against drunkenness and by 1830 he was publicly declaring that no intoxicant was a necessity of life.⁴ His

1 The interpretation provided by the Webbs in their Liquor Licensing, chapter 4, relies uncritically on evidence provided against the beershops by magistrates and clergy.

2 Moral Reformer, 1 Jan. 1831, p. 26; 1 Apr. 1831, p. 117; 1 May 1831, p. 139.

3 Parl. Papers, 1834, viii (559), Q. 1055; cf. ibid., QQ. 1002, 1123. Pigot & Co., National Commercial Directory, 1834, pp. 512-520.

4 J. Pearce, op. cit., p. lxxv; letter in H.O. 44/119.

Moral Reformer gradually transformed itself between 1831 and 1833 into the first teetotal periodical. Alarmed at the effects of a glass of whisky & water offered him in the course of business by a Scotsman, Livesey, together with several other Preston acquaintances, began to abstain from all intoxicants.¹

Livesey was not, however, personally responsible for founding the first Preston anti-spirits society. This was formed by a group of young men attending his Cockpit adult school, though Livesey gave temperance tracts to its founder, an Anglican named Henry Bradley, and publicly encouraged the new development.² Several outside influences brought a more extensive anti-spirits association to Preston. John Finch, a Liverpool Owenite anxious to reclaim his drunken and nearly bankrupt debtor Thomas Swindlehurst, a Methodist Preston roller-maker, brought anti-spirits ideas and tracts from Liverpool. These were distributed by John Smith "a respectable chandler" and aroused so much interest that Teare, Livesey, Isaac Grundy, carpet manufacturer, and James Harrison, surgeon, wrote for aid to the Bradford Temperance Society.³

1 Moral Reformer, 1 July 1831, p. 207; Weekly Record, 24 May 1862, p. 193.

2 J. Pearce, op. cit., p. lxxix; The Youthful Teetotaler, Preston, June 1836, p. 43; Moral Reformer, 1 Jan. 1832, p. 25; 1 Feb. 1832, p. 58.

3 J. Finch, Teetotalism, Liverpool, 1836, pp.4-6; J. Teare,

Its agent, Revd. Mr. Jackson gave "two powerful lectures" in Preston, and on 22nd March 1832 the Preston Temperance Society held its first public meeting.¹ An Anglican clergyman and a Quaker from Blackburn whose temperance society was the first to adopt a pledge forbidding entry to drinking places, were also present. This pledge was the model for the Preston society, which also forbade the offering of intoxicants.² One further influence was that of William Pollard, a Manchester Wesleyan temperance advocate, whose speech "almost electrified the audience for a considerable time".³

Who urged the Preston anti-spirits society to adopt teetotalism? Several Preston teetotalers claimed the credit. John Brodbelt apparently advocated a teetotal pledge even before the Preston Temperance Society was founded.⁴ Thomas Swindlehurst's personal experience independently showed him

Footnote 3 from previous page contd./...

History of the Origin & Success of the Advocacy of...Total Abstinence, 1847, p. 9; J. Livesey, Reminiscences of Early Teetotalism, Preston, n.d., p. 4.

1 Moral Reformer, 1 Apr. 1832, p. 110.

2 Temperance Society Record, June 1831, p. 126; J. Livesey, Reminiscences, p. 4; J. Pearce, op. cit., p. lxxix.

3 Moral Reformer, 1 Apr. 1832, p. 123.

4 J. Pearce, op. cit., p. lxxix.

the inadequacy of a mere anti-spirits pledge.¹ James Teare later claimed to have been convinced by his visitation of the poor that intemperance resulted most frequently from beer-drinking, and that by publicly recommending in June 1832 that the Preston society should adopt a teetotal pledge, he had anticipated Livesey's public adherence to teetotalism by several weeks. But even Teare admitted that in June 1832 he had been personally abstaining from all intoxicants for only 6 weeks, whereas Livesey had been a teetotaler for much longer. Teare also admitted that he had learned that all intoxicants contained alcohol as their intoxicating principle from Dr. Harrison.² Such controversies are futile: Preston's adoption of teetotalism was a communal affair, and by May 1832 several committee-members were abstaining for a trial period.³ Clearly, teetotalism was forced by practical considerations upon many of the Society's members simultaneously.

Teare, unlike Livesey, did not make any theoretical contribution to the transition from anti-spirits to teetotal

1 Preston Chronicle, 26 & 29 Jan. 1883; J. Finch, Teetotalism, p. 6.

2 Alliance Weekly News, 22 June 1861, p. 1224; J. Teare, Origin & Success, pp. 16, 19; J. Stephenson, J. Dearden, & G. Toulmin, Origin & Success of Teetotalism, Preston, 1864, p. 20; see also the heated controversy, in Alliance News, 1863, pp. 277, 293, 301, 309, 317, 325, 334, 341.

3 Preston Temperance Advocate, Dec. 1837, p. 92.

association. Livesey's Moral Reformer in May 1832 published an unsigned article claiming that all intoxicating drinks contained alcohol, and citing Franklin's Autobiography, favourite reading for aspiring working men. Teare admitted the importance of Franklin's influence on the Preston teetotalers, and it was from Franklin that Livesey "got the first hint as to the trifling amount of nutrition contained in malt liquor".¹ Livesey combined Franklin's hints with information provided by a brewer named Darlington, whom he met at Chester fair, and from these sources created the famous Malt Lecture first delivered in Preston in 1833.² The scientific demonstrations which lent the lecture such popularity may owe something to Benjamin Barton, a Blackburn chemist, who was giving scientific demonstrations of brewing processes in Preston and Blackburn during the same year. But the Malt Lecture was not delivered outside Preston till February 1834.

It emphasised that a large proportion of barley was destroyed in brewing processes; bread was a cheaper and more healthy food. Before audiences athirst for scientific knowledge, Livesey evaporated a quart of ale to show how

1 J. Livesey, Autobiography, (Ed. Pearce), p. 81.

2 T. Lythgoe, Biographical Key, p. 84; Moral Reformer, 1 Apr. 1833, p. 124; J. Pearce, op. cit., p. lxxxix.

small a quantity of barley had survived the brewing process. He also set fire to about 4 oz. of proof spirit, collected from the evaporated ale, to show "to the surprise and conviction of many who saw it" that it contained the same intoxicating ingredient as spirits.¹ He reinforced the lesson by emphasising the religious, medical, and economic blessings of teetotalism. His lecture helped establish teetotalism in the North of England in 1834-7 and even in America, but its teachings took many years to gain general acceptance and were not fully recognised by parliament till the 1870s.²

Before spreading the new doctrine, Livesey had first to win over the Preston anti-spirits society. On 23rd August 1832, John King, Methodist and captain of one of the districts into which the temperance society had divided Preston, complained to Livesey that ale-drinking greatly obstructed the cause. Livesey, fearing to offend important elements in the society, suggested that they should both secretly sign a teetotal pledge.³ At a temperance meeting on 1st September,

1 J. Livesey, Malt Lecture, Ipswich Temperance Tract, No. 133, pp. 14-15; there are many other editions; see Appendix, Plate 27.

2 Preston Temperance Advocate, Supplement, April 1836, p. 6; W. Livesey, Earliest Days of the Teetotal Movement, 1900, privately printed, unpaginated copy in author's possession. J. Livesey, Malt, Malt Liquor, Malt Tax, Beer, & Barley, n.d., p. 12; U[nited] K[ingdom] A[lliance] 23rd Annual Rept. 1874-5, p. 24.

3 T. Lythgoe, op. cit., p. 84; cf. Alliance News, 10 Oct. 1863, p. 325.

the "Seven Men of Preston" publicly took the pledge experimentally for a year.

The grouping was casual, many of the leading Preston teetotalers being absent; their significance was later exaggerated and John King even claimed that two of the seven recanted on the night of signing. Livesey was the only prominent teetotaler among them, but they also included the Methodist plasterer Richard Turner who first applied the word "teetotal" to total abstinence from all intoxicants, and Thomas Swindlehurst later entitled "King of the Reformed Drunkards"; the others are of small significance. But the professions of the "Seven" - cheesemonger, carder, clogger, roller-maker, plasterer, shoemaker and tailor - show how strongly the teetotal movement appealed from the first to the labour aristocracy.¹

The Preston teetotalers' innovation in doctrine forced them also to innovate in propagandist techniques. The reformed drunkards were insulated from temptation by a round of singing, tea-parties, continuous meetings and counter-attractive recreations. Working men henceforth became increasingly prominent in the agitation. Livesey found them far more efficient as temperance workers than the temperance

¹ J. Teare, Origin & Success, p. 19; J. Dearden, Brief History of the Commencement & Success of Teetotalism, Preston, n.d., p. 20; W. Pilkington, Facts, p. 28; T. Lythgoe, op. cit., p. 84.

societies' original respectable patrons.¹ Far from concealing their humble origins, teetotal advocates carried the symbols of their trades on to the temperance platform, and dressed accordingly. Teetotal advocates, like many Primitive Methodist ministers, owed much of their success with working men to their dialect.²

Again, only the reformed drunkard could secure on the temperance platform that sense of identification between exemplar and reprobate which is essential to conversion. Such production of living testimony to theological truth seemed later, to Taine, a "thoroughly English notion", but it performed a severely practical purpose. Not only did it secure recruits: it also, by deepening their public commitment, helped provide reformed drunkards with a new framework of life and responsibility.³

Teetotalism now only required a name: Preston provided this too when Richard Turner told a meeting of the Preston Temperance Society in September 1833, amid great cheers, that he would "be reet down out-and-out t-t-total for ever and ever".⁴ Preston was now fully equipped to embark on its most

1 See below, pp. 185 ff.

2 T. Whittaker, Life's Battles, p. 130.

3 Moral Reformer, 1 Jan. 1833, pp. 12-19.

4 See Appendix, Plate 29; the origins of the word gave rise to frequent controversy in Notes & Queries, 1853, 1858, 1876, etc. J. Livesey, Autobiography (Ed. Pearce), p. 65; J. Teare, Origin & Success, p. 37.

remarkable achievement - the education of the whole country in teetotal principles. In July 1833, several Preston teetotalers including Livesey travelled in a cart round the leading towns of Lancashire, spreading their Gospel.¹ In the same year, Livesey sent a copy of his Malt Lecture to every M.P. Livesey's teetotal periodicals, tracts and lectures helped convert the North; in 1834 he began the Preston Temperance Advocate, a model for all future teetotal periodicals. Unlike anti-spirits periodicals, it was designed primarily for the movement's beneficiaries, and included details of teetotal social functions, doctrinal discussion, "varieties" and a woodcut.²

Though John Giles of Mile End was probably the first London teetotaler,³ Livesey in 1834 was the first vigorous teetotal propagandist there. Like Collins in 1830, he found London apathetic about new reforming crusades. He was obstructed by the B.F.T.S. and daunted by London's lack of community sentiment. Preston's methods of summoning a meeting were inappropriate in London, and serious teetotal

1. Moral Reformer, 1 Aug 1833, p.254-8; for illustrations of the Preston Temperance Advocate, see Appendix, plates 90 & 91. For Turner, see plate 29.

2. For the Preston Temperance Society's Speaker's Plan, see Appendix, plate 31, and for one of Livesey's temperance posters, plate 28.

3. H. Freeman, History of the Total Abstinence Pledge Question, pp.6ff.

activity did not begin there till 1835.¹

Exaggerated claims were made by teetotal societies, based on reports by John Clay, chaplain of Preston gaol, for the moral revolution teetotalism had wrought there. In truth, the Preston teetotalers did not succeed in reducing the number of local beershops, nor did they ever number more than 1,500 individuals in a population of over 40,000. Preston was not a den of vice before 1832 nor a paradise of virtue afterwards.² Preston teetotalers are more important for their innovations in doctrine and missionary techniques than for any local transformation in morals which they produced.

The early teetotalers displayed great energy in their propagandism - an energy which, like that of many reformers, owed something to childhood sufferings. Joseph Livesey and Father Mathew were both sensitive as children, teased for their effeminacy.³ Like several other working-class movements of the early 1830s⁴ the early teetotal societies displayed an

1 Preston Temperance Advocate, July 1834, p. 53; W. Logan, op. cit., pp. 94-5; W. Pilkington, Facts, pp. 37ff.; J. Livesey, Autobiography, p. 70; cf. Northern Star, 21 Dec. 1850, p. 4.

2 Preston Chronicle, 12 Dec. 1835; for membership figures, see Preston Temperance Advocate, Suppl. for 1835.

3 cf. H.D. Lasswell, Psychopathology & Politics, Chicago, 1930, p. 125.

4 W.H. Oliver, 'The Consolidated Trades' Union of 1834', Econ. Hist. Rev., Aug. 1964, p. 82.

almost millennial faith in the completeness and rapidity of the social transformation which their efforts would produce. They were inaugurating what they often described as a "temperance reformation" which would produce social consequences quite as striking as the religious consequences of Luther's activities in the 16th century. Like many reformers battling to mould public opinion, they likened themselves to the early apostles;¹ but they were soon to discover the power of the Scribes and the Pharisees.

III

Teetotalism brought schism in its wake. For several reasons, moderationists objected to teetotalism, and their arguments deserve more attention than they have received from previous historians of the temperance movement, who have all been biassed by being themselves teetotalers. Firstly, moderationists disliked the style of proletarian teetotal advocacy. Lacking the time and education necessary for the polished and reasoned argument, and sharing the Puritan's belief in the significance of personal witness, teetotal working men publicly recounted their personal histories, embellished with scraps of doctrine and with anecdotes

¹ e.g. C.N.D. New Statesman, 1 Jan. 1965, p. 14; cf. J. Livesey, Malt Lecture, p. 29; Preston Temperance Advocate, Sept. 1835, p. 65.

to ward off suspicions that they possessed a sour temperament. When more experienced, they often adopted a music-hall style involving repartee between speaker and audience; John Hockings, the "teetotal blacksmith", was a master at this approach, which did not enter political oratory till the days of Lloyd-George. Others, like John Cassell, had to overcome their fears of public speaking by learning addresses parrot-fashion.¹ Working men who ventured into the more abstruse aspects of teetotal advocacy, such as the Bible Wine Question, could easily damage the cause through their blunders.²

The teetotal movement certainly uncovered much hidden speaking talent among working men; it encouraged them to step out of their station and triumph over the "suspense, terror, and ... awe", which beset any working man who ventured to speak in public at this time.³ Teetotal advocates were far more effective in reclaiming the drunkard than their more respectable anti-spirits predecessors, and not only because of their advanced doctrine. Abstract notions need to be personalised for consumption by the under-educated, and the

1. H. Vizetelly, Glances Back Through Seventy Years, 1893, II, p. 51.

2. e.g. Richard Turner, Preston Temperance Advocate, Oct 1837, p. 79.

3. J.C. Farn, in Reasoner, 21 Oct 1857, p. 235.

teetotal "experience meeting" had itself to rival the public-house "free and easy" as a source of popular recreation. The teetotal movement was not the only 19th century reforming movement to begin with a burst of irrational enthusiasm and then to be forced to follow it up with many years' educative persuasion.¹

Humour and/or pathos lent attractions to the early teetotal lecture. Cobden himself admitted the propagandist value of humour in his anti-corn-law agitation. The teetotal Harry Anderton resembles the modern popular entertainer more closely than the subsequent respectability of teetotalism might lead us to anticipate. At a Bolton meeting in 1834, he "flung his arms about, stamped with his feet, butted with his head at the audience, tossed forward one shoulder, and then the other, striking...the palms of his hands as hard as he was able against one, or both thighs together, and twisted a body, naturally unusually flexible, into many uncouth attitudes".² Other teetotal advocates sang and danced on the platform, or attracted attention by dressing eccentrically.

1 cf. Robt. Lowery on Chartism, in Weekly Record of the Temperance Movement, 19 July 1856, p. 139.

2 Sir G. Head, op. cit., p. 413; cf. Preston Chronicle, 4 Oct. 1834.

The pathos which characterised many teetotal addresses indicates genuine emotion at a theme suffused with drama and tragedy for working people. Teetotal speeches were delivered before audiences far less reluctant to display emotion than is now fashionable. When Thomas Worsnop, wool-comber, made his début on the teetotal platform with the pronouncement "I have begun to abstain; I will have no more SWILL", tears were rolling down his cheeks and falling at his feet.¹ Carlyle noted that working men discussing this topic spoke "evidently from the heart".² Whether this constant harping on one sin was the best means of eliminating it is another matter; a certain fascination attaches to the sin one has been taught most to abhor.

Modern organisations countering alcohol addiction together with evangelical sects such as Moral Re-Armament, rely on public confessions as a form of spiritual purgation; sins not publicly nailed down cannot be dealt with.³ Some teetotalers rivalled each other in inventing imaginary sins⁴

1 F. Butterfield, Life & Sayings of Thos. Worsnop, Bingley, 1870, p. 15.

2 Extract from a letter printed in an unidentifiable periodical in Mr. Henry Turney's collection of material on Chelsea Temperance Society. See also Appendix, Plates 100-103.

3 H. Webster, Taboo. A Sociological Study, 1942, p. 311. Alcoholics Anonymous, New York, 1950 Edn., p. 35.

4 T. Whittaker, Life's Battles, p. 49.

so as to create a greater impression, and looked on their past sins almost as though they had been committed by another being. While reformed drunkards were free to confess to the utmost enormities committed in the past, their audiences remained sympathetic; but persistent sin would have been punished, except by the most enlightened liquor restrictionists, with ostracism.¹ When safely rooted in the past, recitations of sin held all the attractions of the horror film.

To the more cultured moderationists, whose religion was less emotional and corybantic, these recitations seemed shameless. To rational radicals anxious to raise the self-respect of working people, they seemed degrading. Yet rational persuasion was not the only means of recruiting for the 19th century labour aristocracy. Only through emotional or humorous advocacy could teetotal orators secure the essential transition in their audiences from "recognition" to "realisation" of the evils of drink.²

Not all teetotal advocacy, however, was conducted in this way, and reformed drunkards were always in a small minority in teetotal societies though they were often given places

1 cf. M. Rutherford, Autobiography, p. 32; cf. G.W.E. Russell, Evangelical Movement, p. 83.

2 J.G. McKenzie, Psychology, Psychotherapy & Evangelicalism, 1940, p. 23.

of prominence in teetotal processions.¹ Several analyses of temperance society membership in the 1840s suggest that only one in ten teetotalers was likely to be a "reformed character",² and reformed drunkards were often given their own special "experience meetings". Several advocates concentrated on more rational types of advocacy: F.R. Lees was prepared to engage in public argument for 13 hours with a pertinacious moderationist adversary,³ and marathon but inconclusive public debating contests were frequent. Again, Drs. Grindrod and Mingaye Syder argued the physiological case for teetotalism.

Many moderationists regarded teetotalers' public confessions as "calculated rather to disgust than to persuade".⁴ To encourage the poor to set an example to the rich was to

1 See Appendix, Table 34.

2 1 in 8, (British Temperance Advocate, 15 Aug. 1841, p. 85); 6,495 of 62,092 members of temperance societies affiliated to the B.A.P.T. in 1844 (National Temperance Magazine, Sep. 1844, p. 395); 82 of 942 members in Devon in 1840 (London Teetotal Magazine, Nov. 1840, p. 378); 100 of 973 Suffolk members in 1845 (National Temperance Chronicle, Mar. 1845, p. 340); The National Temperance Society claimed that only 738 of its total membership of 52,241 in 1849 were reformed characters (National Temperance Chronicle, Aug. 1849, p. 506).

3 Discussion with Rev. J. Bromley, British Temperance Advocate, Dec. 1840, advertisement sheet.

4 B.F.T.S., 6th Annual Rept., 1837, p. 40; cf. Preston Pilot, 4 & 11 Oct. 1834.

reverse the customary Evangelical process of moral reform. Furthermore "enthusiasm" among working people still smelled of social subversion, and teetotal addresses displayed many of the qualities which Coleridge isolated as characteristic of the demagogue.¹ Working men who spoke in public meetings were stepping out of their appointed station, and fears that once trained on the teetotal platform they might espouse less reputable causes, were not entirely unjustified.² Worse, teetotal advocates were often wanderers by temperament, or drifted into itinerant speechifying when unemployed.³ 19th century England, aided paradoxically by the temperance movement itself, brought increasing pressure on working men to settle in one place, by urging them to acquire property or a house.⁴ In fairness to the teetotalers however, their movement like many successful evangelical movements, was often discredited by "false Christs" like the bogus Magnus Klein in the North and "Father Moore" in the West.⁵

1 S.T. Coleridge, 'Lay Sermon...on the Existing Distresses & Discontents', 1817, in R.J. White (Ed.), Political Tracts of Wordsworth, Coleridge & Shelley, 1953, p. 70.

2 Several became Chartist speakers.

3 See Appendix, Plates 37 & 38; for wandering temperance advocates, see Anon, "Take Ye Away the Stone", passim; F. Butterfield, op. cit., p. 22.

4 E.J. Hobsbawm, 'Tramping Artisan', Econ. Hist. Rev., 1950-1, p. 316.

5 Star of Temperance, 23 Apr. 1836, p. 135; T. Hudson, Temperance Pioneers of the West, p. 243; M. Klein, Brief

The second complaint urged against teetotalers by moderationists centred on their extremism. Too frequently the strength of opposition led teetotalers who had departed from conventional standards into actually defying convention.¹ Evangelicals, though themselves obsessed with the insidiousness of sin, did not always recognise the need for working men to shun the drinking place, and moderationists were exasperated by teetotalers who informed them that the temperate were "the chief promoters of drunkenness" in that their example was more likely to be followed than the drunkard's.² Teetotalers drew together with the cry "he who is not with us is against us" and divided the world into simple black-and-white contrasts. Extremist panaceas and austere religions appeal to the underprivileged, and in the 1830s the working man's environment encouraged them.³ Foreign visitors were strongly impressed by the vividness of the contrast between the lives of rich and poor,⁴ but the gulf between respectable

Footnote 5 on previous page contd./...

Outline of the Life of Magnus Klein, 1837, p. 23; cf. W.G. McLoughlin, Modern Revivalism, 1959, p. 448.

- 1 H.D. Lasswell, Psychopathology & Politics, Chicago, 1930, p. 176.
- 2 London Temperance Tracts, 1839, unpaginated; cf. B.F.T.S. 10th Annual Rept., 1841, p. 62.
- 3 S.M. Lipset, Political Man, 1960, pp. 120-1.
- 4 e.g. H. Taine, Notes on England, p. 38.

and unrespectable poor was even more formidable.¹

Tangible devils, moreover, are easier to attack, and it was tempting to find in the nature of intoxicating drink the demon which brought social damnation, for this shielded the existing economic system from discredit and freed the unrespectable from blaming themselves for their plight. Furthermore, for individuals possessing an almost prurient curiosity about life after death, drinking habits constituted a convenient yardstick by which qualifications for entry to Heaven could readily be determined here below. The working man's life at this time was poised between dramatic alternatives, and if teetotal tracts were wrong in always blaming drink for the dramatic social decline,² drink often played an important part in the story. If improved housing and better diet were aids to sobriety, teetotalers argued conversely that sobriety was the best way to obtain them.

Teetotal extremism was often a mere response to the intensity of opposition. Publicans did not shrink from the crudest expedients for retaining their customers. They often organised "anti-teetotal demonstrations", as at Huddersfield after a visit from Father Mathew in 1843. Local brewers gave 360 gallons of beer for the occasion which, according to a

1 T. Wright, Our New Masters, 1873, pp. 2-3.

2 See Appendix, Plates 42, 43, 46, 47.

teetotal source, ended in "filthy and disgusting scenes".¹ In summer 1841 a teetotal picnic in Wychwood Forest, largely composed of women, began well with an opening hymn, addresses, and tea. During tea-time, however, "drunkenness, ignorance, and brutality in the shape of bands of men from the surrounding village...surrounded the platform, and perhaps never did vice and ignorance appear in a more degraded and disgusting form"². Urged on by a carbunkled Charlbury doctor, the mob broke up the idyllic scene. Sometimes these affrays actually benefited teetotalism. On Whitmonday at Preston in 1833, the teetotal forces marched with band and banner to their meeting in an orderly fashion and contrasted very favourably with the procession of "anti-hypocriticals" which had preceded them.³

Some teetotalers, however, made a virtue of their extremism: "truth was always extreme", said the veteran F.R. Lees in 1895: "a thing was either truth or falsehood, never in the middle. Virtue was virtue, not half vice".⁴ Extremism lies partly, of course, in the eye of the beholder; most reform movements in their earliest days, including the Anti-Corn Law League, were accused of it.⁵ It accompanies that psychological instability which is often the reformer's special strength and weakness. The purpose of oratory is to persuade, and teetotal orators were less concerned to shed light on

1. National Temperance Advocate, 16 Oct 1843, p.129.

2. British & Foreign Temperance Intelligencer, 26 June 1841.

3. Preston Pilot, 1 June 1833.

4. quo. in F. Lees, Dr. Frederic Richard Lees, 1904, p.236.

5. I. Taylor, Fanaticism, 1843 edn., p.283.

the problem of drunkenness than to gain acceptance for their remedy; they therefore dramatised the choice before each member of their audiences.¹ Few great campaigns have been mounted without propagating some error. In a controversy in which , by one's very conduct, one could not avoid taking sides, bitterness was endemic.

Some advocates of unpopular causes, like G.J.Holyoake, and even some liquor restrictionists like Wilfrid Lawson and Samuel Bowly² managed to present their case moderately. Bowly and Lawson , however, were not reformed drunkards, and therefore felt no need to redeem a drunken past by impassioned attacks on their former sin. 19th century religious groups displayed shrewdness when they exploited the talents of former apostates like Thomas Cooper and Joseph Barker.

Secondly , Bowly and Lawson had no need to earn their living by their tongue, and were not therefore tempted to buttress their reputation by courting applause. Thirdly , Bowly and Lawson were not working men , and could never therefore share the excitement of the unaccustomed appearance on a public platform , and the exhilaration of feeling that their class had discovered a remedy for drunkenness which had eluded

1. See Appendix, plate 45.

2. For Lawson , see below, pp. ; Bowly was a prominent and wealthy Quaker who specialised in attracting support for temperance in educated circles. Prominent in the Peace and Anti-slavery movements, and in Gloucester banking, gas and railway companies. See Weekly Record, 2 Nov 1861, p.416.

the educated and the wealthy. The delight experienced by many working men at the transformations wrought by teetotalism is unmistakeable. Richard Turner told a meeting in 1837 that "his heart felt more than his tongue could express; his heart leaped for joy, and he had reason to feel thus elated. Think what I was and what I am".¹

The shrewdness of the moderationist critique of the teetotal movement has hitherto been obscured, largely because teetotalers have hitherto been solely responsible for temperance historiography. To label mere abstinence from intoxicants as "temperance" was unduly to simplify a complex situation. Again, if drunkenness resulted from some psycho-social disorder, the mere association of former drunkards was hardly likely to transform the former victim into a balanced human being.² Teetotalers too readily assumed that abstinence necessarily led to a positive gain in character, too easily ignored the lesson now driven home by social anthropologists and psychologists that "sin will out". The notion that Christianity was a quality superadded to the life of the individual rather than an influence suffusing the whole, was all too common among Evangelical Christians despite Wilberforce's warnings.³ It was fear of "that subtlest of sins,

1 Leeds Temperance Herald, 1 Apr. 1837, p. 54.

2 H. Jones, Alcoholic Addiction, p. 175.

3 W. Wilberforce, Practical View, p. 195.

spiritual pride" which kept Charles Kingsley out of the teetotal movement.¹ Certainly, despite its origins, the later temperance movement lent itself to the related dangers of moral and social exclusiveness.²

Biblical arguments were frequently used by both sides: every "creature of God" was good, said the moderationist, to which the teetotaler replied that all things were lawful but not necessarily expedient. Teetotalers, like opponents of dancing, sought textual support in the Bible.³ Defending themselves against the doctors by pointing to animal drinking habits, they admitted physical affinities between humanity and the animal kingdom which they violently repudiated when faced with Darwin's Origin of Species; similarly, in defending themselves against the moderationists, they engaged in elaborate forms of Higher Criticism which they were the first to abhor in other spheres.⁴

The orthodox were shocked when teetotalers in Cornwall, Lincolnshire, and elsewhere insisted on the use of Beardsall's

1 Quo. in Judge Parry, Drink & Industrial Unrest, 1919, p. 5.

2 cf. R.W. Dale, The Old Evangelicalism & the New, pp. 33-4.

3 cf. E.P. Thompson, Making of the English Working Class (1963), p. 408.

4 A. Sinclair, Prohibition, 1962, p. 60.

or Wright's specially manufactured non-intoxicating wines at communion.¹ Furious animosities were aroused within congregations, and there were several cases of reformed characters sent back to their vice by a taste of communion wine.² Were these Biblical arguments sincere? Great energy certainly went into them, but John Dunlop may well have been correct in claiming that he "never knew an objector to Teetotalism, who had only an objection professedly derived from the Bible". Fear for one's pocket, one's friends, for health or of ridicule were "the real obstacles, not the pretended Bible objections".³

Other moderationists maintained that virtue could only flourish when the will-power was being continuously tested by temptation, and revealed the completeness of their divergence from the socialist response to the effects of environment on morality when they declared that it really was "consistent with the economy of Providence, to surround man with temptations to excess, and leave to his moral and religious feeling, the victory of triumph".⁴ Teetotalers had

1 British Critic, cited in the Times, 3 Oct. 1839; P.T. Winskill, Temperance Movement & its Workers, I, p. 128; II, pp. 163-165.

2 T.P. Newbould, Pages from a Life of Strife, 1910, pp. 21-3.

3 J. Dunlop, Autobiography, p. 288.

4 Bradford Observer, 10 Nov. 1841, p. 3;

no sympathy with such arguments which, carried to their logical conclusion, would convert every religious institution into a bar-parlour.¹

One teetotal argument which many found unanswerable, however, was the "weaker brethren" argument, which attracted supporters as prominent as Henry Solly and Samuel Morley. Both with nations and with individuals, the privileged were expected to set an example to the underprivileged, and unless the respectable lent their support, membership of a teetotal society would be equivalent to admitting past intemperance. The texts "let no one put a stumbling block in another's way" and "it is good neither to eat flesh nor to drink wine whereby a brother is offended" were much exploited. Temperance speakers found their efforts were effective if they themselves practised what they preached. Like many Evangelicals, teetotalers were often more afraid of causing others to sin than of sinning themselves, and in adducing the "weaker brethren argument" allowed the vicious to infringe the liberties of the virtuous.²

To turn from the general controversy to the particular schisms it provoked, the history of the anti-spirits societies in the manufacturing towns of Northern England reveals an

1 Alliance, 19 May 1855, p. 364.

2 E. Gosse, Father & Son (Penguin Edn.), p. 94.

affinity between extremism and low social status. The early Preston and Rochdale temperance societies were supported by their local M.P.s and by some of the leading men of the locality. Moses Holden at Preston and Benjamin Barton at Blackburn linked the early temperance movement to local schemes for adult education; Livesey, James Harrison and T.B. Addison besides supporting the anti-spirits society were all prominent supporters of the Preston Institution for the Diffusion of Knowledge. The first committee of Preston Temperance Society consisted principally of "ministers, doctors, and moneyed men".¹ Members of the local Philosophical and Literary Societies and of the urban intelligentsia, such as Bright in Rochdale and C.T. Thackrah in Leeds, were closely connected with the early anti-spirits societies. The meeting which created the Leeds Temperance Society was chaired by Newman Cash, railway promoter and merchant, in the presence of Marshall the leading flax manufacturer.² These inventors and manufacturers were precisely the social groups which fostered the parliamentary reform campaign in the

1 J. Finch, Teetotalism, p. 6.

2 Leeds Temperance Society Minute Book, & information from Biographia Leodiensis, 1865, & Supplement, 1867 (Ed. R.V. Taylor). For Preston, see Preston Pilot, 30 Mar. 1833; For Blackburn, W.E. Moss, op. cit., pp. 8-11.

Northern towns.¹

But as soon as emphasis switched from preservation of the sober to reclamation of the unsober, the movement outgrew its original respectable basis of support. The drunkard needs constant attention if his cure is to prove permanent, and this the original supporters of the anti-spirits societies were not prepared to give. Their respectability was accompanied by caution, lack of drive and insensitivity to the working man's needs. "If they would work", said Livesey, "there is no objection to men of rank or wealth, but THEY WILL NOT".²

Teetotal association, by demanding active participation from all, enhanced the democratic aspect of a movement which already, in its anti-spirits phase, made the democratic assumption that all classes were subject to the same temptations, and therefore needed to take the same pledge.³ Like most movements with which Evangelicals were connected, the 19th century temperance movement helped remove double standards in morality not only between men and women but also between rich and poor.

¹ e.g. in Newcastle, see R. Lowery, Weekly Record, 24 May 1856, p. 69.

² Moral Reformer, 1833, p. 253; London Temperance Intelligencer, 3 June 1837, p. 232.

³ British Critic, reprinted in The Times, 3 Oct. 1839, complained of this.

When an anti-spirits society adopted the teetotal pledge, gentility usually departed. The rise of teetotalism represents in effect a coup of the temperance movement by the labour aristocracy in alliance with Quakers and nonconformists. "I speak the sentiments of a large class of society", said the moderationist Flint at the Leeds debate of 1836: "not ours" retorted his teetotal hecklers.¹

The first of the schisms occurred at Warrington in 1830, where the anti-spirits vicar clashed with the humble teetotal pioneers of the local movement from the Independent Methodist Chapel in Stockton Heath.² Trouble resulted from the introduction of teetotalism into the Preston Temperance Society in 1832, and there were many complaints at teetotal open air Sunday meetings on Preston Moor, and at teetotal speeches tinged with Radicalism.³ While upper-class secession at Preston was gradual, at Leeds it was sudden. At the 1836 meeting, the moderationists objected to being forced to settle "nice and intricate questions" in a large assembly.⁴ The

1 Rept. of the Public Meeting of the Leeds Temperance Society, p. 36; cf. ibid., p. 17.

2 A. Mounfield, The Beginnings of Total Abstinence. The Warrington Societies of 1830, Warrington, 1902, pp. 23-7.

3 Preston Pilot, 18 May 1833; Preston Chronicle, 17 Jan. 1835.

4 Rept. of the Public Meeting, p. 37.

decline in social status accompanying the Rochdale Temperance Society's move from anti-spirits association to teetotalism is strikingly reflected in its minute book.¹ Surviving teetotal registers show members being recruited from craftsmen and from the very humblest levels of society.²

Schism at both local and national levels did not necessarily weaken the temperance movement in the short run. The schismatic's need to prove himself generated energy. Furthermore, the prevalence of schism within the temperance movement in the 1830s was in some ways a sign of strength, since it could only occur among individuals whose views were passionately held. Those who first embrace novel crusades are necessarily individualists whose spirit of inquiry cannot be halted at any one point. Anti-spirits men progressed to teetotalism and vegetarianism as easily as free-traders progressed to pacifism and attacks on primogeniture.

Self-interest and self-assertion were not always absent from such schisms. Emotional commitment to particular policies frequently obstructed rational compromise. The humbler members sought cheap doctrinal victories over their social superiors. The creation of new societies brought new posts to a class whose exclusion from public life made them

1 See Appendix, Plates 32 & 33.

2 See Appendix, Plates 35 & 36, and table 15.

thirsty for dignities.¹ Furthermore even when they recognise the superiority of a new principle, few officials will resign before they have to. Again, a movement so dependent on public speaking was naturally dominated by rival orators; the temperance movement was like most reform movements "an all-star cast".² And in addition to these organisational sources of schism there were the religious and class divisions which could prompt a Unitarian alignment with teetotalism in the Kendal Temperance Society³ and a bourgeois affinity with moderation in Leeds.

The meeting of the teetotal Thomas Whittaker in his fustian trousers and check shirt with the moderationist from Penrith wearing a gold-chain and carrying a silver-topped cane epitomised the social gulf between teetotalers and moderationists.⁴ Although the teetotalers in their histories later boasted of their humble origins, the temperance movement in its widest sense lost as well as gained from these

1 cf. B.G.M. Sundkler, Bantu Prophets in South Africa, 2nd Edn., 1961, p. 100.

2 W.B. Munro, Personality in Politics, New York, 1925, p. 14.

3 Kendal District Society for the Suppression of Intemperance, Full Rept. of the Proceedings, ... 1836, n.d., passim.

4 T. Whittaker, Life's Battles, p. 97.

schisms. Even the Chartists could not prosper without local middle class support,¹ and the temperance movement after the moderationists' departure was left with little wealth save that of its Quaker supporters. Such schism made the temperance movement even more unfashionable, so that a strong sympathiser like Jane Welsh Carlyle shrank in 1843 from taking its pledge, for fear that her action would appear in the newspapers.²

The removal of upper-class restraining influences and funds encouraged the teetotal movement to seek an alternative source of strength in the extremist speech; a gulf therefore opened up between moderationist B.F.T.S. and teetotal working men similar to that between Anti-Corn Law League and Chartists. Indeed, many teetotal working men became Chartists, just as many Chartists became teetotalers. Teetotalism, and a fortiori the long pledge, killed for a generation any close co-operation between rich and poor in the temperance movement. It was left to the Church of England Temperance Society to rediscover in the 1870s that ^a "dual basis" of moderation and teetotal pledges could unite all

1 B.M. Addit. MSS. 34,245A, General Convention of the Industrial Classes, 1839, Vol. 1, f. 108: T.C. Salt to W. Lovett, n.d. (postmark 8 & 9 Mar. 1839).

2 Rev. Father Augustine, Footprints of Father Mathew, Dublin, 1947, p. 293.

classes in the campaign against drunkenness, and could also secure the funds required for an effective counter-attractive policy.

IV

From schism at the local level to schism among the national societies. The first national teetotal organisation was the British Association for the Promotion of Temperance.¹ Lancashire in 1833 contained about a third of the membership of the whole British movement, and Livesey advocated a gathering of local temperance society representatives. This occurred in September 1834; the meeting urged societies to raise an agency fund, concentrate on personal visitation, and supplement moderation with a teetotal pledge. In 1835 the second conference, chaired by Rev. Joseph Barker, followed the advice of the Manchester delegates and formed itself against Livesey's wishes into a national society, the B.A.P.T. Livesey, the lifelong opponent of temperance sectarianism, sensed danger in these developments. There were several signs by 1835 that the teetotal movement was becoming sectarian in outlook. In its itinerant advocates, particularly in James Teare, it was acquiring charismatic leadership and,

1 The various temperance organisations discussed in this chapter are outlined in a "genealogical tree" in Appendix, diagram 9.

with the formation of the B.A.P.T., some degree of central control.¹ Bradford Temperance Society provided an important precedent by founding a temperance hall in 1838,² and there were strong feelings that advocacy should not be left to proletarian and emotional amateurs,³ so that, by the 1850s the teetotal movement had gained many of the attributes of the established denomination.

The B.A.P.T. aimed at first to avoid clashes with the moderationists and to negotiate for union with the B.F.T.S. on a teetotal basis, but was sufficiently zealous for teetotalism in 1836 to adopt the "long" pledge forbidding the offering as well as the drinking of intoxicants. In 1835-6 it despatched as teetotal missionaries Thomas Whittaker to the North and James Teare to the Midlands and West - two Lancashire working men, the first of many seeking to stir up self-reliance among working men in the South.

In many respects they complemented the missionaries sent off by the L.W.M.A. at this time. When the Chartist radicals Lowery and Duncan visited Cornwall in 1839, they

1 H.W. Pfautz, 'Sociology of Secularization: Religious Groups', American Journal of Sociology, 1955-6, pp. 121-8.

2 See Appendix, Plate 97.

3 J. Dunlop, Autobiography, p. 288.

found the teetotal societies founded by James Teare officially hostile. Yet both teetotal and Chartist missionaries were in fact engaged in the same task of exporting urban ideas to the country. Lowery found that many of those who came to him secretly like Nicodemus, to imbibe the new Chartist doctrines, were teetotalers.¹

19th Century teetotal lecturers, like 17th century sabbatarians, were trying to impose progressive urban values on backward rural areas, the striking contrast being that in 17th century England the "dark corners" had been in the North and West, whereas in 19th century England they were primarily in the rural South and East.² 19th century teetotalers, in bringing new ideas to remote rural areas, resembled 18th century Methodists, with whom, indeed, they were sometimes confused by their rustic audiences. "You are a methodist, I thought your sort had had enough of coming here", said one of J.C. Farn's opponents in a mining village at a teetotal meeting in the 1830s.³ A reading of Thomas Whittaker's autobiography shows that teetotalers in the 1830s endured a degree of opposition in some rural areas which was quite as virulent as any faced by John Wesley's followers.

Teetotalism took some time to establish itself in London.

1. Weekly Record, 25 Oct 1856, p.250.

2. J.E.C.Hill, 'Puritans & the Dark Corners of the Land', Trans. Roy. Hist. Soc., 1963, passim.

3. Reasoner, 21 Oct 1857, p.236..

A meeting held in August 1835 in the Regent Street rooms of Mr. Grosjean a master tailor led eventually, with the aid of lectures from Preston's teetotal zealots, to the formation of the teetotal New British and Foreign Society for the Suppression of Intemperance. Here again working men were enthusiasts for the new development; the first South London teetotal auxiliary was founded by William Morris, typefounder, with a few mechanics and labourers to aid him.¹

In 1836, however, the new society bartered its exclusive long pledge for money and influence.² Despite friendly professions, it aimed, through moderate advocacy, to absorb the whole B.F.T.S. membership. Without tolerating the short pledge, it could never have attracted from the B.F.T.S. wealthy Quakers and prominent nonconformists like Dr. Pye Smith and Richard Barrett. Thus, while the B.F.T.S. now obtained most of its funds from the £1 - £5 group, the N.B.F.S.S.I. obtained most from the £5 - £99 group, and never suffered as severely as the Northern societies from lack of money after moderationist secession. Neither society, however, raised much from donations under £1.³ They probably found, like other early

1 Weekly Record, 3 Oct. 1857, p. 347.

2 Journal of the New British & Foreign Temperance Society, 1 June 1839, p. 198.

3 See Appendix, diagram 11.

Victorian reform movements, that dependence on small working-class subscriptions did not pay.¹

London and the South provided funds for the N.B.F.S.S.I., which profited considerably from its central position.² Most of its leading donors were Quakers. Joseph Sturge gave £20 in 1836, and between 1836 and 1842 Robert Charlton gave £82 and R.D. Alexander £125. At least half the society's annual income came from donations over £5 and its total donations rose from £300 in 1836-7 to over £3,500 in 1840-1. The N.B.F.S.S.I. like the B.F.T.S. spent half its funds on administrative expenses and salaries, half on propaganda.³ By 1840, it employed seven agents, of whom at least four had learnt their teetotalism from Lancashire advocates. Lord Stanhope, a disciple of Bentham and an enthusiast for Greek and Polish independence, became president. From 1836, the N.B.F.S.S.I. issued the London Temperance Intelligencer, filled with details of domestic temperance advocacy and recreational activities. In 1838 it changed its name to "New British & Foreign Temperance Society".

1 B.M. Addit. MSS. 43677 (Cobden Papers), Cobden to C.D. Collett, 28 Aug. 1853, f. 31.

2 New British & Foreign Temperance Intelligencer, 26 May 1838, p. 172.

3 See Appendix, diagram 12.

Many outsiders reported sympathetically on their activities: the Times in 1839 watched N.B.F.T.S. excursionists embarking in the rain for Herne Bay and bearing the jeers of a London dockside crowd "with perfect placidity".¹ Hetherington's Odd-Fellow felt that compared with the impressive teetotal procession through London in 1839 the coronation procession was "a mere bauble".²

Nevertheless, the widespread feeling that teetotalism was not progressing sufficiently rapidly strengthened the position of the long-pledge men. John Dunlop in 1837 felt that the movement had hitherto "done little with respect to ...the dregs of society" who probably drank more than they had previously, though it had "done a great deal" for "the respectable portion of the working classes" and had been "the means of considerable advantage" to the middle classes.³ The Preston society insisted on the B.A.P.T. holding to the long pledge, and thus helped prevent the union of the two teetotal national organisations in 1838. Attention then focussed on the N.B.F.T.S. annual meeting in London in 1839.

1 Times, 24 July 1839, p. 5; Journal of the N.B.F.T.S., 27 July 1839.

2 Odd-Fellow, 2 May 1839, p. 82; Times, 9 June 1840, p. 4.

3 Parl. Papers, 1837-8, xx (658), Q. 8056.

A majority of the N.B.F.T.S. committee, the North London and many country auxiliaries agreed with three visiting American temperance reformers in favouring an exclusive long pledge. But the Bristol Temperance Herald, and the East London and City auxiliaries headed by Earl Stanhope wanted the society to allow both long and short pledges. The long-pledge men were defeated in small private preliminary meetings and the extremists once more trusted to the mass meeting as at Leeds in 1836. They staked their all on the annual meeting and, before an audience of 4000 in Exeter Hall, demanded reversion to an exclusive long pledge.

Edward Grubb, a Preston-trained nonconformist working-class teetotal advocate stood before Lord Stanhope, the chairman, "as the representative of a great body of teetotalers in the North" and "as the unflinching and uncompromising enemy" of the short pledge. Discussion grew so heated that Lord Stanhope could only preserve his dignity by vacating the chair. For some time, pandemonium reigned, and someone began to play the grand organ amid the confusion. John Dunlop eventually restored order, and the long-pledge was carried; thus ended, after seven hectic hours, "the most lengthened and tumultuous meeting...ever held within the walls of Exeter Hall".¹ The short-pledge men including Stanhope and some

¹ Journal of the N.B.F.T.S., 25 May 1839, pp. 182-4.

wealthy Quakers seceded to form the British and Foreign Society for the Suppression of Intemperance - the "Suppression Society" - based on the short pledge, but allowing its members to go further if they chose.

Why such bitterness? "The real cause of a quarrel", said the Temperance Spectator, describing the incident 20 years later, "rarely appears on the surface".¹ The pledge controversy was far more than a simple clash between rival remedies for intemperance. Apart from personal antagonisms, struggles for office and the self-interest of those lodging- and coffee-house keepers whose livelihood would suffer if they were forbidden to offer intoxicants to their guests, four interlinked sources of conflict lay behind the pledge controversy. They were antagonisms of class, region, organisation and personality.

Broadly speaking, short-pledge men were of a higher social grade than long-pledge men, and were therefore more hostile to American innovations. The short-pledge men did not wish to dismiss servants who refused to work without alcohol, or to deprive their guests of intoxicants. Only the long-pledge could force wealthy teetotal city bankers and peers to cut themselves off from friends and relatives and

¹ Temperance Spectator, Dec. 1859, p. 181.

form a self-contained abstaining sect, as working men had long been forced to do. "Alas, for Lords Stanhope and Bexley, and their hospitable boards!" exclaimed the British Critic in 1839, "What is a peer without wine on his table?"¹

To say that the pledge controversy also embodied a contest between London and the Provinces, especially between London and working men from the Northern manufacturing towns, is virtually to repeat what has already been said; artisans from the North were among the most self-confident members of the working classes in the 1830s, and the most willing to express their distrust of upper-class temperance supporters in London. In the 1839 pledge controversy, as with the controversy over the American Civil War in the early 1860s, Lancashire defended the democratic and London the aristocratic cause. The long-pledge men wanted a limit placed to the number of Londoners who could sit on the executive committee, whereas the executive committee of the short-pledge Suppression Society, formed after the schism, consisted of not more than 30 persons all "resident in or near London".² Northern long-pledge men regarded London as the modern Babylon - as a centre of vice and temporising whose consistency could never be relied

1 Times, 3 Oct. 1839.

2 British & Foreign Temperance Intelligencer, 18 May 1839, p. 186; 15 June 1839, p. 226.

upon¹ and whose inhabitants failed to distinguish between sociability and mere gregariousness.²

Thirdly, the pledge controversy was partly a disagreement over the organisation of the temperance campaign. At the 1838 annual meeting, Lord Stanhope brushed aside a working man's suggestion that members of his class should be voted on to the committee; only men of leisure could conveniently hold such posts, he said.³ The long-pledge men of 1839 were enthusiastic democrats: their American ally Delavan declared at the annual meeting that "there could be no aristocracy of principle in the temperance cause".⁴ They therefore wished to carry their democratic principles into teetotal organisation. Thus after the 1839 schism the short-pledge Suppression Society contrasted with the N.B.F.T.S. in taking care to prevent any democratic coup through its annual meeting such as had occurred in 1839; it entrusted legislation entirely to its annual meeting of delegates. Nevertheless, working men were still denied entry to

1 See my review in Oxford Magazine, 21 Jan. 1965, pp. 164-5.

2 J. Dunlop, Universal Tendency to Association in Mankind Analyzed and Illustrated, 1840, pp. 188-93, 225-7; cf. Nonconformist, 15 Nov. 1843, p. 777.

3 New British & Foreign Temperance Intelligencer, 26 May 1838, p. 171.

4 Journal of the N.B.F.T.S., 1 June 1839, p. 198.

N.B.F.T.S. committees even after 1839.

Finally, the pledge controversy represented a schism between contrasting personality types. Several delegates favoured the short pledge because they felt that it would attract into the teetotal movement individuals who would otherwise stay away. Once attracted, they could be educated to more consistent conduct. The long pledge, they said, was too exclusive. Like the opponents of the teetotalers in the early 1830s and of the prohibitionist Alliance after 1853, the short-pledge men in 1839 denounced Transatlantic attempts to coerce rather than to persuade individuals into teetotalism. They were tolerant gradualists.

Ranged against them, however, were the uncompromising dedicated enthusiasts, fearless of offending their friends and convinced that success would or should be rapid. The long-pledge enthusiast Grubb emphasised at the Exeter Hall meeting that the present difference of opinion was "not a difference of opinion merely, but, with a certain party.... a compromise of truth."¹ Like many other sectarian bodies, the rival London teetotal societies of the 1830s devoted their energies to poaching on each others' preserves instead of crusading among the intemperate; but all of course claimed

¹ British & Foreign Temperance Intelligencer, 1 June 1839, p. 214.

superior efficiency in the war against drunkenness.¹

Though the pledge controversy must have confused and even antagonised the outside observer, it actually increased aggregate teetotal resources. The funds of the two London teetotal societies more than trebled in 1840; but although their resources increased between 1838-9 and 1840-1 by £1,300, only £800 of the increase was spent on extended propaganda. The net effect of schism was thus to increase the funds spent on salaries and office expenses. As with the B.F.T.S. before 1834, the funds of the two teetotal societies rose very steeply for two or three years after their foundation, but by 1841 were rapidly declining.²

Neither society was anxious to co-operate with non-religious working class teetotal societies in London. The Suppression Society was less wealthy but under Lord Stanhope's lead showed greater enthusiasm for Father Mathew and for co-operation with the London Roman Catholics. Apart from their contrasting pledges, however, these two teetotal societies did not differ markedly, and in 1842, the Quakers, by threatening to cut off their donations to both societies, succeeded

1 B.G.M. Sundkler, op. cit., p. 127; cf. B.R. Wilson, 'An Analysis of Sect Development', Amer. Sociological Rev., Feb. 1959, p. 10.

2 See Appendices, diagrams 10 & 12.

in amalgamating them in the pledgeless National Temperance Society.¹

The Northern teetotalers were unimpressed: "we have little faith in London societies, unless well watched, and founded upon correct principles", said the National Temperance Advocate.² The National Temperance Society, dependent on a small number of wealthy donors, chiefly Quakers, always remained somewhat timid. Earl Stanhope objected to its high membership fee and refused to join. John Dunlop maintained that it seriously obstructed London teetotalism by failing to work closely with surviving auxiliaries and with London working men's societies.³ Thus after the disturbing events of the late 1830s, London teetotalism settled down to a decade of unobtrusive existence punctuated only by Father Mathew's visit to London in 1843.⁴ The movement was only jolted out of its routine of tract distribution and public meetings⁵ in the 1850s, with the importation from America of

1 J. Dunlop, Autobiography, p. 325; Teetotaler (Ed. G.W.M. Reynolds), 12 June 1841, p. 60; 25 Sept. 1841.

2 National Temperance Advocate, 16 Jan. 1843, pp. 7-8.

3 J. Dunlop. Autobiography, pp. 320, 325.

4 See Appendix, Plate 55.

5 See Appendix, Plates 23, 37, 38, 50, 51.

a new principle and a new personage: but the arrival of the Maine Law agitation, and the reception of J.B. Gough must be reserved for later discussion.

V

Why, after 1835, did the moderationist B.F.T.S. enter into a continuous decline? Enquiry into the reasons for its failure sheds light not only on the relationship between Evangelicalism and the temperance movement, but also on the links between teetotalism and secularism, because in its prolonged death-agony, the B.F.T.S. sought to destroy its teetotal foes by branding them as infidels.

After the failure of attempts at union with the teetotalers, its secretary Owen Clarke darted about the country trying to obstruct or undo the work of teetotal missionaries. The B.F.T.S. periodical, the Temperance Penny Magazine, regularly attacked teetotalism, and though some teetotalers like Silk Buckingham tried to keep a foot in both camps, most of its supporters seceded, including several crucially important wealthy Quaker donors. Some teetotalers ridiculed moderation and interrupted B.F.T.S. annual meetings, at one of which, in 1844, a teetotaler named Miller made "signs of the most marked insult" while the Bishop of Norwich pleaded for a spirit of Christian conciliation. Some teetotalers, like Dr. Pye Smith, deplored such proceedings. But in 1845-6,

the B.F.T.S. lacked the courage to hold any annual meeting at all.¹

Income steadily declined, and by 1847 had sunk to just over £100. This was not for lack of appeals for cash: their frequency and ingenuity aroused teetotal ridicule. The B.F.T.S. began to use its indebtedness as a spur to further donations, and in 1840 emphasised its divergence from the teetotalers by abolishing pledge-signing as a membership qualification. Although other Evangelical charities in the early 1840s were booming, the B.F.T.S. continued to decline.²

As a last resort, it tried to link its teetotal opponents in the public mind with infidelity and socialism, and to pose as sole champion of "Christian Temperance". In this the B.F.T.S. was on safe ground, since in denouncing spirits only, it was denouncing a post-Biblical invention and could not therefore be accused of criticising Christ's conduct at the Cana marriage feast. "Teetotalism and Socialism go hand in hand", declared Owen Clarke at Bath in 1840³ - a damaging

1 B.F.T.S., 10th Annual Rept., 1841, p. 11; 13th Annual Rept., 1844, p. 22; 14th Annual Rept., 1845, p. 3; 16th Annual Rept., p. 11.

2 See Appendix, Table 13.

3 Bristol Temperance Herald, May 1840, p. 37.

accusation in the peak year of teetotal Chartism, and at a time when no philanthropic body could prosper without the support of the religious public.¹ As Place had realised, anti-spirits societies were more concerned with the soul than with the body; as soon as teetotalism seemed to threaten the soul, they had no qualms about attacking the new doctrine and rejecting its ancillary worldly comforts. Their attitude is hardly surprising at a time when even Liberals were not primarily concerned with living standards.

Others echoed the infidelity accusation, and Owen Clarke was able to sympathise with the Evangelical Alliance when in 1847 it gave vent to the same suspicions. Such rumours probably helped discredit Teetotalism with the Wesleyans at their annual meeting of 1841.² How valid were these accusations? Two prominent teetotalers certainly were suspected of unorthodoxy: the Owenite John Finch split the Liverpool teetotal society by objecting to the singing of the doxology at temperance meetings in 1836. Although friendly with Owen,

1 Manchester Reference Library, Anti-Corn Law League Letter Book, Vol. II, f. 247: letter dated 7 Mar. 1839.

2 M.S. Edwards, 'The Teetotal Wesleyan Methodists', Proceedings of the Wesley Historical Society, Sep.-Dec. 1961, passim; cf. J.H.S. Kent, 'The Clash Between Radicalism & Conservatism in Methodism 1815-1848', (Cambridge Univ. Ph.D. Thesis), pp. 367-368.

he was never a convinced atheist, but was nonetheless excluded from temperance platforms, and the moderationist John Edgar when attacking teetotalism made much of his conduct.¹ Revd. Joseph Barker's drift towards infidelity via Unitarianism in the 1840s also caused schisms in local teetotal societies.² Robert Chambers of Edinburgh, author of the unorthodox Vestiges of Creation, and friend of George Combe the phrenologist, was also a strong supporter of teetotalism.³

In branding the whole teetotal movement as infidel, the B.F.T.S. was exaggerating. Holyoake himself complained that teetotal societies, by excluding men like Finch and Barker from their platforms, had so narrowed the sphere of temperance advocacy that it had become "the cause of a small number of people, when it ought to be the cause of the great majority of the population".⁴ Yet there undoubtedly was some affinity between atheism and teetotalism: the Westminster Review in

1 P.T. Winskill & J. Thomas, op. cit., p. 39; cf. Northern Star, 28 July 1838, p. 6.

2 e.g. J. Boyes, op. cit., p. 14; cf. T. Whittaker, Life's Battles, pp. 80-1.

3 British & Foreign Temperance Intelligencer, 27 July 1839, p. 288.

4 G.J. Holyoake & G.E. Lomax, Rept. of a Discussion on the Maine Law, 2nd Edn., Blackburn, 1858, II, p. 20; cf. J. Lawson, Progress in Pudsey, pp. 111-112; Northern Star, 24 Feb. 1844, p. 3.

1852 noted the appearance of a new form of puritanism - "physical puritanism" or the puritanism of the body - and that cleanliness and temperance had become "the very religion of the materialist".¹ Bradlaugh himself learnt his atheism in the temperance hall.² Why the connexion?

In some respects, temperance zeal was no more than an incidental accompaniment of atheism: the time and resources required before a working man could equip himself intellectually for atheism could normally only be husbanded through abstinence.³ Again, the atheist, forced onto the defensive felt obliged to show himself at least as moral in his conduct as the Christian; the 19th century rationalists were not ethical revolutionaries,⁴ and the secularist's faith in rational discussion made him the natural opponent of a drink which so obviously impaired this.⁵ Yet there were more fundamental links between teetotalism and "infidelity" than this: the defence of teetotalism almost drove physical

1 Westminster Review, Apr. 1852, pp. 409, 419.

2 H.B. Bradlaugh, Life of Charles Bradlaugh, 1902 Edn., I, pp. 12, 30.

3 H.U. Faulkner, Chartism & the Churches, 1916, p. 15.

4 N. Annan, Leslie Stephen, 1951, pp. 157ff., 198; cf. J. Morley, On Compromise, 1891 Edn., p. 184.

5 W. Godwin, Political Justice, pp. 62, 68-9.

puritans into conflict with orthodox theology. Certainly the indifference shown by many religious leaders towards teetotalism pushed Joseph Barker into infidelity.¹

Apart from the widespread and justified suspicion that once a man differed so obstinately from his fellows in diet, he would soon be diverging in more important respects, there were three prime reasons for religious suspicions of teetotalism in the late 1830s. Firstly, any belief that human health could be brought under human control conflicted with religious superstitions that disease was divinely ordained, could not be evaded by human effort, and was even to be welcomed as a sign of divine favour.² The secularist doctrine, shared by phrenologists and to some extent by teetotalers, that human health was governed by natural laws which every individual could perceive for himself, and that ill-health could therefore be avoided by taking care, naturally appealed to labour aristocrats.³

Many of them realised that ill-health, like poverty, was removable. Health precautions became almost as reliable as thrift in distinguishing the labour aristocrats from the

1 P.T. Winskill, Temperance Standard Bearers, I, pp. 83-4.

2 E. Gosse, op. cit., pp. 39, 47, 50; J. Lawson, Progress in Pudsey, p. 53.

3 National Reformer, 7 July 1860, p. 1.

"unwashed". In both instances the aim was to prevent sudden disasters from pushing the working man into a lower social grade. Stewardship of the body became as important as stewardship of the purse, since ill-health interrupted that regularity of work which distinguished the labour aristocrat from his social inferiors; disease could rapidly absorb the savings of a lifetime.¹ The human body, the sole capital of many working men, was increasingly regarded as a machine which must be kept in working order. If inanimate machines worked so well with constant attention, asked Owen, "what may not be expected if you devote equal attention to your vital machines, which are far more wonderfully constructed?"²

Easily understood by all, teetotalism attracted radicals especially because, like mesmerism, it constituted a threat to the entrenched medical profession.³ It promised to enable the labour aristocracy to emancipate itself from that trustfulness in quack doctors which long characterised the lowest grade of working man.⁴ Teetotalers, usually sceptical of

1 Lady Bell, op. cit., pp. 88-9, 130.

2 R. Owen, A New View of Society (1927 Everyman Edn.), pp. 8-9.

3 cf. R.K. Webb, Harriet Martineau, pp. 238, 240; W. Godwin, Inquirer, p. 227.

4 C. Thompson, Autobiography of an Artisan, pp. 214-9; M. Kerr, The People of Ship Street, 1958, pp. 133-4; R. Hoggart, The Uses of Literacy, 1960, Pelican Edn., p. 17.

medical skill,¹ often set up as amateur local doctors, and Livesey could often be seen in Preston carrying his hydropathic bath to administer a cure to some humble sufferer.² Those religious critics who complained that teetotalers were reviving Catholic asceticism were entirely mistaken: teetotalism flourished not on contempt for the body but on zeal for health.

Secondly, teetotalism was linked to an optimistic view of human capacities scarcely compatible with orthodox doctrines of original sin. The promotion of moral reform for secular purposes without appealing for Divine aid closely approached heresy at a time when many Christians regarded works as "filthy rags" and human beings as too wicked to be capable of pleasing God.³ To this objection, teetotalers replied that there was no need to add to man's corrupt propensities the damaging qualities of alcohol.⁴

More dangerously - teetotalers tended to blame intemperance on the peculiar qualities of the drink and on an environment studded with drinkshops. This ignored what the B.F.T.S. considered the true cause - "the corrupt and

1. W. Lawson, Wit & Wisdom, 2nd. Edn., 1886, p. 98; A. W. Hutton, Cardinal Manning, 1892, p. 248; A. A. Reade, Study & Stimulants, 1883, p. 111.

2. J. Pearce, op. cit., p. cxlvii; cf. J. F. Rutter, 1890: Jubilee of the Mere Temperance Society, Mere, n.d., p. 24.

3. J. Lawson, Progress in Pudsey, Stanninglen, 1887, p. 71; London Temperance Intelligencer, 11 Feb 1837, p. 101.

4. B. Parsons, Anti-Bacchus, p. 1.

depraved state of man's heart".¹ As soon as environment could be blamed for drunkenness, it had to be treated as a disease rather than as a vice;² and as soon as alcohol was recognised to paralyse the will, it had to be banned as a poison, rather than tolerated as a means of enjoyment and of exercising the willpower.

Thirdly, to those who did not accept that the Bible recommended teetotalism, teetotalers seemed to be declaring Gospel morality inadequate, and engaging in a meliorism incompatible with orthodox theology.³ Not all temperance reformers went as far as F.W. Newman in explicitly rejecting the Bible and conventional Christian morality as a guide to present-day life,⁴ and in wanting it superseded by state legislation based on scientific discovery; most contented themselves with advocating teetotalism on more pragmatic grounds, thus tacitly admitting a conflict between science and the Bible literally interpreted. A few, however, notably

1 Temperance Penny Magazine, Jan.-Feb. 1841, p. 54; cf. G. Combe, Moral Philosophy, 1840, p. 259.

2 W. Godwin, Political Justice, I, p. 394.

3 G. Osborn, Letter to Rev. W.J. Shrewsbury, 1841, p. 14; cf. Bird, in G. Bird & P.W. Perfitt, Public Discussion... Whitehaven, 1847, 3rd Edn., p. 11.

4 F.W. Newman, Miscellanies, II, p. 171; cf. N. Annan, Leslie Stephen, p. 201.

Francis Beardsall and F.R. Lees, tried to maintain that the Bible at no point praised intoxicating drink and therefore, by implication, favoured teetotalism; but this involved them in Higher Criticism of a most abstruse type, for which their customary audiences were often not prepared.

Does analysis of the teetotal controversy support the view that Early Victorian infidelity stemmed in the 1840s from "a sensed incongruity between a vigorous and hopeful meliorism and the doctrinal legacy of the Christian tradition",¹ rather than from the effects of scientific discovery and the Higher Criticism? Certainly meliorism lies behind teetotal activity, and early teetotalers alienated religious support by claiming that God desired mankind to be happy,² and lent ammunition to the B.F.T.S. by adding that "it is not God, but man, has made [the world] into the hell it is".³ Nevertheless such an interpretation ignores the conflict between George Combe and the Evangelicals, makes a false distinction between meliorism and science, and forgets that Christians in the 1840s tested every new development by its conformity to Bible wit-

1 H.R. Murphy, 'The Ethical Revolt Against Christian Orthodoxy in Early Victorian England', Amer. Hist. Rev., July 1955, p. 801.

2 Livesey's Progressionist, No. 4, p. 50.

3 Quo. by Temperance Penny Magazine, Sept. 1847, p. 130; cf. H. Solly, These Eighty Years, II, p. 94.

ness. Meliorism, Bible Criticism, and science went hand in hand at this time.

The Early Victorians gave the prestigious title "science" to the most bizarre subjects of study, and many teetotalers, like political economists, were fully confident of the scientific character of their discipline; for them it was a branch of physiology and chemistry.¹ So strong was the respect of some teetotalers for science that they closely approached the atheist's belief that science would in the foreseeable future "go far towards making vice an impossibility".² For dissenters who regarded science as a revelation from God, this involved no necessary conflict between science and religion; Paley indeed had proved the truth of religion by scientific methods.³ But for some convinced teetotalers of the early 1840s who believed also in literal interpretation of the Bible, there was a clear conflict between science and religion which anticipates the more famous conflict of the 1860s.

1 Rechabite Magazine, Preface to Vol. for 1845-6; W.J. Shrewsbury, Alcohol Against the Bible, & the Bible Against Alcohol, 1840, p. 34.

2 National Reformer, 20 Oct. 1860, p. 1.

3 E.A. Payne, Free Church Tradition, 1944, p. 112; cf. Finney, in W.G. McLoughlin, Modern Revivalism, 1959, p. 120.

During a long controversy in 1840-1 between the Bristol Temperance Herald and F.R. Lees in the National Temperance Advocate, Lees claimed that he "could adduce scores of instances in which prophets and inspired men....evidently spoke in opposition to the now known laws of astronomy, geology, physiology, natural history, and mental philosophy - though in the language, which alone would be intelligible, of their own day". To deny this, he said, would be to reject Newton's Principia together with "the facts of natural history, and the evident results of anatomical experiments".¹ Lees even maintained that if the Bible, properly interpreted, conflicted with teetotal principles, he would reject the former and cleave to the latter.² In F.R. Lees' works of Biblical commentary, we can see an apparent conflict between science and the Bible literally interpreted being resolved through the exercise of a teetotal Higher Criticism. Some working men even taught themselves Hebrew for the purpose of defending their dietary habits.³

The whole controversy awakened many teetotalers to the need for Biblical scholarship,⁴ whereas the B.F.T.S. - often

1 National Temperance Advocate, 15 Feb. 1841, p. 21.

2 J. Bromley, Observations on Totalism, 2nd Edn., Sheffield, 1841, p. 39.

3 J. Dunlop, Autobiography, p. 120.

4 e.g. G. Clarke, Clarke Versus Osborn, 1841, p. 17.

told by teetotalers that Christ in failing to recommend teetotalism "did not live in Shoreditch in the nineteenth century" - claimed that to Christ at Cana "the actual circumstances of our country at this day were as fully present as those by which he was surrounded".¹ Lees himself did not abandon his own peculiar form of Christianity, since he felt that teetotalism and the Bible, rightly interpreted, did not conflict. But not all were convinced by his arguments. A writer in the Reasoner in 1854 held that the Bible's failure to censure Noah for his drunkenness was "only one of the numerous instances of the imperfect and perverted morality of the Bible".² J.C. Farn in 1858 noted the existence of "a deep undercurrent....tending towards Free-thought" in the temperance movement.³

The B.F.T.S. was not the only body to express alarm at the direction which teetotal Bible criticism was taking. "Interpret a few other texts on the same principles as you have interpreted those which relate to wine and strong drink" said George Osborn, in 1841, "...and you can take no more effectual means for converting a believer.....into an infidel".⁴

1 Temperance Penny Magazine, Jan. 1839, pp. 3-4.

2 Reasoner, 17 Sept. 1854, p. 182.

3 Reasoner, 24 Feb. 1858, p. 63.

4 G. Osborn, Letter to Rev. W.J. Shrewsbury, 1841, p. 39.

J. Angell James urged that teetotalism be recommended only on the safe ground of self-preservation and Christian charity.¹ But here again the B.F.T.S. did the teetotal movement an injustice, since Lees' conduct of the controversy was frowned upon even by the editor of the National Temperance Advocate, and many teetotal societies refused to allow Lees to speak at their meetings.²

In attacking teetotalism so vigorously, the B.F.T.S. showed perceptiveness. Behind the "cries of 'shocking' and confusion" with which its members greeted statements about a teetotal hymn which spoke of the teetotal star coming "like redeeming power"³ - there lay a shrewd suspicion that the teetotal movement was turning religious techniques to secular purposes, and overturning Evangelical Christianity in the process. Though the B.F.T.S. was destined to be on the losing side, it quite rightly saw in teetotalism an elevation of works over faith, and a turning away from emphasis on doctrine towards emphasis on moral reform.

The spread of teetotalism among late-Victorian religious

1 Temperance Penny Magazine, Feb. 1844, p. 29; cf. Bishop Lightfoot, in G.W.E. Russell, Basil Wilberforce. A Memoir, 1917, p. 56.

2 Holyoake, in G.J. Holyoake & F.R. Lees, op. cit., II, p. 27.

3 B.F.T.S. 10th Annual Rept. 1841, p. 62; cf. W.J. Conybeare, Essays Ecclesiastical & Social, 1855, p. 409.

denominations, far from exposing the folly of moderationist opposition to teetotalism, reveals their shrewdness. For they knew that a religion which could campaign for worldly amelioration would have greatly changed its nature; the churches, when they adopted teetotalism and other schemes for worldly amelioration after the 1860s, did change their character. Late-Victorian orthodoxy would have embraced many of the "infidels" of the 1840s.¹

Furthermore, the B.F.T.S. recognised, like J.H. Newman three decades later,² that the teetotal movement was gradually removing the supervision of popular morality from religious control. As proof, they could point to the eagerness with which teetotal advocates gratuitously assumed the title "Revd." and appropriated religious hymns for their own purposes.³ Thus although many teetotalers managed to combine their practice with theological orthodoxy, their movement remained identified in the public mind, until the 1860s, with dangerous theological notions.

Even in its moderationist phase, the temperance movement received far less support from the Christian community than

1 See below, pp. 571 ff.

2 See below, p. 318

3 E. Grubb, op. cit., p. xxxi.

it had originally anticipated. Teetotalism was positively shunned by most clergymen and ministers, who feared that teetotalers wished to substitute morality for the reliance on divine grace in curing intemperance. Bishop Stanley of Norwich was the only Anglican bishop prominent on teetotal platforms. Teetotalers could always rely, however, on the support of a small minority of Anglicans. Thomas Beaumont claimed in 1841 that no ministers of any denomination had more heartily espoused the teetotal cause.¹

Among the notable teetotal Anglicans before the 1860s were Rev. Thomas Spencer, a zealous believer in self-help, whose attempts to root out pauperism in the parish of Hinton Charterhouse led him to sign the teetotal pledge in 1839, and who eventually became editor of the National Temperance Chronicle;² Revd. Henry Gale, another resolute personality, and like Spencer one of the earliest Anglican supporters of the Anti-Corn Law League; Revd. W.W. Robinson of Chelsea, and William Caine. At Keighley, the local vicar, Theodore Dury, chaired the teetotal meetings denounced by Robert Heys, a local dissenting minister.³

1 British Temperance Advocate, 15 July 1841, p. 81.

2 National Temperance Chronicle, Mar. 1853, p. 33: he was uncle to Herbert Spencer, the philosopher.

3 Star of Temperance, 14 May 1836, pp. 157-8; cf. J.G. Shaw, William Gregson, p. 10.

In most areas, however, the boot was on the other foot. "They thought it a sin to look at us", recalled James McCurrey of Anglican attitudes to early London teetotalers.¹ Anglican rejection of teetotalism in Clitheroe led the future temperance orator William Gregson, who had been brought up as an Anglican, to turn nonconformist.² A glance at the lists of ministerial teetotalers drawn up in 1837 and 1848 shows the nonconformists overwhelmingly outnumbering the Anglicans. Of the 285 ministers listed as teetotalers in 1837, 26% were Calvinistic Methodists, 23% Congregationalists, 21% Baptists, 10% Wesleyans, 8% Wesleyan Association, 5% Anglican, 4% Primitive Methodist and 2% Wesleyan New Connexion. The lists were not exhaustive, but they give some indication of the relative balance of teetotal enthusiasm between dissenters and Anglicans; the predominance of dissenting ministers is noteworthy, particularly when the relatively large number of Anglican clergy is recalled.³

This impression is supported by information on early teetotalism in biographies and periodicals. Although Congregationalism was officially reluctant to support teetotalism

1 J. McCurrey, Life of James McCurrey, n.d., p. 67.

2 J.G. Shaw, William Gregson, Blackburn, 1891, p. 16.

3 See Appendix, diagram 13 & table 14.

in the 1830s,¹ there were important individual exceptions - notably James Sherman of the Surrey Chapel, John Angell James, a supporter of moderate Birmingham teetotalism, and W.R. Baker, who wrote the important books The Curse of Britain and The Idolatry of Britain. The Congregationalists provided about a quarter of the ministers attending the 1848 and 1857 temperance congresses, and a similar proportion of the total signing the teetotal ministerial declarations of 1837 and 1848.

The Baptists were prominent in supporting early London teetotalism.² The Baptist Rev. W. Balls seems to have been the first dissenting minister to defend teetotalism there, and two Baptist ministers were active in the Drayton Temperance Union in 1836.³ In Manchester, Francis Beardsall was one of the leading teetotalers of the 1830s, and did much to rejuvenate the Baptist denomination in his locality.⁴

While Wesleyan ministers were hostile in London and, in proportion to their total numbers, remarkably apathetic in the country as a whole, there were prominent exceptions. In Preston, the Wesleyans produced many of the early teetotalers,⁵

1 A Peel, These Hundred Years, 1931, p. 106.

2 J. McCurrey, op. cit., p. 67.

3 London Temperance Intelligencer, 1837, pp. 15, 55, 92.

4 ibid., p. 160.

5 See above, pp. 151 ff

and in Robert Gray Mason they produced a teetotal lecturer who at one time seemed almost as successful in Scotland as was Father Mathew in Ireland. The official Wesleyan condemnation of teetotalism in 1841 was never unanimously accepted in the denomination; G.B. Macdonald, Richard Tabraham and Rev. W.J. Shrewsbury remained prominent Wesleyan teetotalers.

As for the several offshoots of Methodism, the Calvinistic Methodists from Wales showed a marked enthusiasm for teetotalism, which had been closely associated with successful revivals promoted in the late 1830s. Wesleyans in Cornwall were sufficiently attached to their teetotalism to defy the Conference in 1841 and to form a sect of their own. The Primitive Methodists had always been enthusiasts for teetotalism. Their Conference recommended temperance societies as early as 1832,¹ and their leader Hugh Bourne often displayed his teetotal zeal in the temperance press.² Primitive Methodist chapels were often the only chapels open to the teetotalers in the early days,³ and in 1841, the year when the Wesleyan

1 W.J. Townsend, H.B. Workman & G. Eayrs, New History of Methodism, 1909, I, p. 465.

2 e.g. Star of Temperance, 8 Oct. 1836, p. 324; cf. T.P. Winskill, Temperance Movement & its Workers, III, p. 7; E.C. Urwin, Methodism and Sobriety, 1943, pp. 36-7.

3 J. McCurrey, op. cit., p. 67; cf. J. Boyes, The Early History of the Temperance Movement in Pudsey, Pudsey, 1893, p. 8.

Conference declared against teetotalism, the Primitive Methodist Conference gave orders for unfermented wine to be used at communion.¹

A mere counting of heads would cause the importance of two smaller denominations to be neglected: the Unitarians produced John Finch, one of the most energetic of teetotal propagandists. And though Henry Solly was less prominent in teetotal circles, he attended the 1848 conference, and performed important temperance work in later years.² It was extremely difficult for Unitarians to co-operate in any temperance association which specialised in religious advocacy. Thus Kendal teetotalism in 1836 stumbled on the question whether teetotalism was a religious or a secular duty. Mr. Rhodes, arguing for retention of the Unitarians within the Society, "had always contended, and would contend, that that Society had nothing to do with religion, it was neither Trinitarian, nor Unitarian, nor anytarian....". But the local Anglican parson, Rev. H. Calderwood, said that "as a minister of Christ, [he] could not consent to advocate the cause of temperance as a question of mere political economy: it was a religious question, else he would have nothing to do with it.

1 P.T. Winskill, Temperance Movement & its Workers, II, p. 156.

2 H.Solly, These Eighty Years, II, p.256.

If he was permitted to tell men of their disease, he must be allowed to tell them also of the only remedy. He could only do this by pointing them to the Lamb of God".¹

Finally, the Quakers made up for their lack of numbers by their energetic and early support for the teetotal movement. If nowhere else could be found for teetotalers to meet, their meeting-houses were seldom closed. Their prominence in financing and running the London-based national teetotal societies cannot be overestimated. Joseph Livesey feared that "a great vacuum" would soon appear in the temperance movement when, in the late 1860s, it seemed that the younger Quakers were not following their fathers in teetotal zeal.² Despite the relative enthusiasm for teetotalism among non-conformists, however, a majority of most denominations were hostile to the movement. Only in small denominations like the Bible Christians and the Evangelical Union was there any teetotal unanimity. American dissenting visitors were shocked at the willingness of English dissenting ministers to consume alcohol.³

1 Kendal District Society for the Suppression of Intemperance, Full Rept. of the Proceedings...February 8, 1836, pp. 6, 11.

2 Quo. Western Temperance Herald, 1 July 1868, p. 100.

3 H. Ausubel , In Hard Times, 1960, p. 46.

Despite the vigour of its attacks on teetotalism, and the lack of enthusiasm in religious circles for the teetotal cause, the B.F.T.S. continued to decline. In 1842, the Bishop of Norwich regretted that the annual meeting had to be held in so small a room.¹ The Society's organ the Temperance Penny Magazine degenerated from an illustrated monthly with popular pretensions to a drab report for subscribers like the Anti-Slavery Reporter. Among the donors, the Hanburys, Crewdsons, Gurneys and Priestmans remained faithful, and in 1845 gifts arrived from Queens Adelaide and Victoria; yet the B.F.T.S. was now, according to its teetotal enemies "busily engaged in doing nothing at all".² The secretary Owen Clarke was forced by other duties and by "very severe affliction, both personal and domestic" to resign in 1848.³ For some years, the society had advertised in vain for a clerical secretary. Owen Clarke handed over his post to a Mr. Thomas Reynolds, "earnestly recommending" him to the Divine blessing" and the enlarged support of the Christian public".⁴ But the Christian public did not oblige, and in

1 See Appendix, Plate 48; & B.F.T.S. 11th Annual Rept., 1842, pp. 14, 18.

2 e.g. Star of Temperance, 5 Nov. 1836, p. 355; cf. Herzen, quo. in M. Tichter, Politics of Conscience, 1964, pp. 299-300.

3 Temperance Penny Magazine, Dec. 1848, p. 177.

4 ibid.

December 1848, the Temperance Penny Magazine, Mr. Reynolds and his Society, disappear from view.

Why this failure? The B.F.T.S. retained to the last its aristocratic and even royal supporters, repudiated extremism, pledges and working-class advocacy and held to the Bible. The reason was partly that the whole anti-spirits movement was tainted in Evangelical eyes by the extremism, vulgarity, and even atheism of many teetotalers. Furthermore the Evangelical movement first appeared partly as a reaction against 18th century emphasis on moral conduct, and maintained that the latter could only follow from theological orthodoxy. Evangelicals therefore always remained suspicious of a movement which did not concentrate on preaching "the Word". Christianity, wrote William Wilberforce, "calls on us....not merely in general, to be religious and moral, but specially to believe the doctrines, imbibe the principles, and practise the precepts of Christ".¹

The B.F.T.S.'s illogical position from the scientific viewpoint, moreover, and its failure to identify itself with social amelioration, probably helped drive leading Quakers into teetotalism. Once they had departed, with the zeal and wealth, upper class support alone could not generate sufficient

¹ Practical View, p. 16; R.W. Dale, The Old Evangelicalism & the New, 1889, p. 29.

momentum, especially when the B.F.T.S. had discredited itself with working men by frowning on teetotalism. Nor had the Evangelicals in the 1830s the same incentive to throw in their lot with the working classes as had Manning and other religious leaders in the 1860s.

Teetotalers had no difficulty in explaining the decline of the B.F.T.S.: for them it had failed to follow truth to the fountainhead. But teetotalism now appears in a harsher light than when the temperance histories were being compiled, and the B.F.T.S. may claim more indulgence. It never sought so narrow a function as the reclamation of drunkards, and did at least seek to unite all classes behind the attack on drunkenness. Its methods now appear unscientific and inadequate, but at least it avoided some of the worst aspects of sectarianism. It did at least introduce the temperance movement into Britain, distributed large quantities of propaganda, and helped sensitise Britain to the existence of a drink problem.

The moderationist principles of the B.F.T.S. did not die in 1848; they reappear in the "dual basis" of the Church of England Temperance Society, which prospered in the 1870s. Perhaps Henry Carter in the 1930s, seeing the point at which the temperance movement had taken the wrong turning, should have pushed back beyond the controversy between prohibition and moral suasion in the 1860s, back to the struggle between

moderationists and teetotalers which occurred only a few years after the movement had appeared. If Carter's assumption is accepted that liquor restriction was the best means of tackling the problem, it was at this point that the door was widely opened for sectarianism and all its evils to enter in.

VI

The generation of teetotalers who took the pledge in the 1830s formed the backbone of the liquor restrictionist movement between 1828 and 1869, even in its prohibitionist phase. Thus before describing later phases of the movement, the character and background of teetotalers between these years must be considered.

It would be most interesting to investigate the background of rank-and-file teetotalers; but although reclaimed characters recite their past misdeeds at length in many early teetotal periodicals, they seldom give precise biographical details. Attention must therefore be confined to the leading teetotalers described in temperance biographical temperance dictionaries. Of 303 leading teetotalers in these years whose birth-dates are known, 246 were born between the years 1785 and 1824. The 122 leading teetotalers who signed the teetotal pledge in the 1830s came from all generations, and included several youths.¹

¹ See Appendix, table 17.

Although the liquor restrictionist campaign derived its energy primarily from urban areas, and although Yorkshire and Lancashire gave birth to many more prominent teetotalers than any other county, 52 of the 178 leading teetotalers whose birthplaces are known came from counties South and East of a line from the Wash to the Severn.¹ Furthermore, the dichotomy between urban industrial life and rural life hardly existed at the time when many teetotal advocates were children. There are also several instances of prominent teetotalers, such as Christopher Hodgson, James Gaskell and George Howlett, who in youth moved away from rural areas and migrated to towns in search of better conditions - conduct which is perhaps not surprising in persons with enough individuality and initiative later to defy existing social customs and to lead an agitation against them. A glance at the biographies of leading teetotalers conveys an impression of energetic self-cultivation.

Thus although the liquor restrictionists spent much of their energies in promoting teetotal missions in rural areas, their movement may have been at least partly designed to recapture for populations in industrial areas certain characteristics of rural life which leading teetotal advocates recalled from their childhood; while the domesticity which

¹ See Appendix, table 18.

the temperance movement fostered had never been widespread among the rural poor , the latter had often displayed a self-respect deriving from possession of grazing rights and plots of land, despite their servility to local clergymen and land-owners. Temperance reformers, like many Victorian Liberals, sought to recover or preserve this self-respect through schemes for democratising land ownership - notably through the Freehold Land Movement.

By promoting missions in urban slums and by forming mutual improvement societies, teetotalers seem to have been trying to re-create the community sanctions on individual conduct which had been weakened by migration from country to town . Thomas Guthrie was only one of several teetotal leaders impressed by the contrast in morality between working people in country and town : the contrast between his Edinburgh parish and the country parish of Arbirlot where he had worked till 1837, could be compared, he said, "to nothing else than the change from the green fields and woods and the light of nature , to venturing into the darkness and blackness of a coal pit".¹ But the teetotal movement did not seek to restore rural society in all its aspects: it wished to preserve individual morality while at the same time eliminating the social servility and political conservatism which characterised country life.²

1. J.L.Watson, Life of Thomas Guthrie, 1880, p.31.

2. See above, p.59

Much pledge-signing was no more than a semi-secular "conversion experience" which stemmed from a conscience moulded by childhood religious influences. Of 168 leading teetotalers whose religions on or after taking the pledge are known, all but 23 were nonconformists. Quakers, with 50 names, were by far the most prominent; they were followed by 25 Wesleyans and 22 Congregationalists. Of the 168 names, Anglicans contributed only 19.¹ As with so many revivalist movements, the temperance movement succeeded primarily in preserving or restoring the morals of the religiously-educated, rather than in prompting any real headway with irreligious sections of the population. Pious nonconformist mothers and Sunday school teachers often feature in the biographies of leading teetotalers.²

Many early 19th century children were brought up on vivid descriptions of hellfire torments.³ Dissenters did not give different types of instruction to children and adults; the child's whole education was designed to produce sudden conversion.⁴ Reared on Fox's Martyrs, many children later prominent as teetotalers were deprived of sleep like Thomas Okey by a fear of having "unwittingly committed that mysterious

1. See appendix, table 19.

2. See appendix, table 16.

3. e.g. T. Whittaker, Life's Battles, p. 16.

4. S. Fleming, Children & Puritanism, Yale, 1933, pp. 60, 160-1.

undefined, unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost, and that hell fire were my portion".¹ Jabez Tunnicliff, founder of the Band of Hope, recalled his remorse at the age of 7 or 8 because he had told a lie. He woke up at night while the family were talking below: "I thought that Satan was hurrying to my bed to carry me away. I screamed for help, and urged my sister, who ran to my assistance, to make haste, lest I should be seized before she could prevent his doing so".²

Autobiographical fragments of two teetotal advocates Charles Bent, who became a teetotaler in 1852, and of Robert Gray Mason, the prominent Wesleyan teetotal advocate, reveal an almost oppressive childhood training which must have influenced many other teetotalers. During his unregenerate days as a prize fighter, Bent often recalled the advice of his father, a Wesleyan shoemaker and local preacher. "Many a time, when I have been going into the ring to fight, my father's advice has flashed across my guilty mind, when he told me always to keep company with those that were better than myself, and these impressions have caused many feelings of anguish and bitterness to me, on account of my being what I then was".³

1 T. Okey, A Basketful of Memories, 1930, p. 7.

2 Rev. H. Marles, Life & Labours of Jabez Tunnicliff, 1865, p. 8.

3 T. Lythgoe, Biographical Key, p. 7.

But perhaps the most dramatic instance of the effect of childhood training in prompting a prominent teetotaler to change his ways is Robert Gray Mason's moment of conversion; one night he was acting as doorkeeper at a Cambridgeshire ball: "the more I gazed on that frightful picture before me at that ball, I felt it to be a sort of hell upon earth. So deep was the lesson on my mind, and the impression on my heart, that I was afraid that God, in his righteous vengeance, would swallow up the wicked multitude with an earthquake. Under this alarming conviction I rushed from the inn without the utterance of a single word to any one, and at an hour or two past midnight ran off as fast as if the Devil was intent to stop me. Indeed I made a physical effort, for hearing a tempting uproar behind me to allure me back, I gave a kick at the Enemy of souls, after the manner that one horse would kick at another - and away I ran till I became breathless, and the bond was broken, I trust for ever. To God alone be all the praise...."¹

The effect of hellfire teaching on reformed characters did not cease with their pledge-signing. Teetotalers' frequent emphasis on the fact that no drunkard would enter the kingdom of Heaven was often linked to the remarkable energy they displayed in trying to reclaim the intemperate. Not only were

¹ W. Logan, Early Heroes of the Temperance Reformation, pp. 7-8.

they remorseful, in the case of teetotal "reformed characters", at past cruelties to relatives and friends; they also repented that they had lost so many opportunities for reclaiming the drunkard.¹ This even affected liquor restrictionists who had no reason to repent of their past: "how many souls might have been saved, who are now lost, if I had but begun this blessed work earlier!" exclaimed Mrs. Wightman in 1858.² Liquor restrictionists were oppressed with the size of their task and the shortness of their time in which to tackle it.

Have leading teetotalers any personality traits in common? By no means all had once led dissolute lives; many joined the movement from motives of benevolence or religious proselytism. Although engaged in a movement seeking to promote social harmony, teetotal advocates often displayed aggressive-^g~~ag~~ness in their speeches; for them, life was undoubtedly conceived as a battle. Their combativeness displayed itself not only in vehemence of expression and in fractiousness within teetotal organisations - it could even cause them to resort to violence. Speaking at Clitheroe during the 1847 general election, Edward Grubb was seen to inflict two black eyes on an opponent who was distributing beer to his audience, and

1 Ipswich Temperance Tract, No. 40 (The Schoolmaster), p. 20.

2 Mrs. C.L. Wightman, Haste to the Rescue!, p. 46.

then immediately to continue talking politics "like an inspired man".¹ To an opponent who called him "a bloody liar", the teetotal advocate Robert Dransfield retorted "I am for God. You are for the worst devil in hell, and, if you pull me down while I am speaking, I'll give you what Paddy gave the big drum!"²

Generalisations from these few instances are dangerous; a gentler temperament than that of Joseph Livesey or Father Mathew, for instance, could hardly be imagined. Without a comparative sample from the contemporary general public, it is impossible to discern peculiarities in the temperament of teetotal advocates. Prima facie, however, one might expect the leaders in any reforming movement to possess more combativeness than most of their contemporaries. The problem is similar with ill-health. Several prominent teetotalers, such as T.H. Barker, Benjamin Parsons, Harry Anderton, F.R. Lees and Robert Lowery, suffered from bad health. Furthermore it is likely that ill-health would be common among enthusiastic advocates of a dietary reform which was largely advocated on valetudinarian grounds. Ill-health, moreover, may itself be one factor fostering reforming zeal: "if anything ails a man

1 J.G. Shaw, William Gregson, p. 19.

2 J.A. Hammerton, Robert Dransfield, p. 71; cf. T. Whittaker, Life's Battles, p. 231.

so that he does not perform his functions , if he has a pain in his bowels... he forthwith sets about reforming the world"¹. But here too , the lack of a control inhibits generalisation.

As for the social origins of leading teetotalers, the scarcity of Anglicans and aristocrats is noteworthy. Few squires supported the movement , with the notable exceptions of Joseph Tucker of Pavenham and R.I.Shafto of Bavington Hall. Teetotal advocates were almost invariably engaged, like their parents, in some form of "trade", and some advocated teetotalism while on business trips. The overwhelming majority were men. Several later became prominent in local government , and most were active in other reforming campaigns - notably those favouring parliamentary reform , hydropathy and vegetarianism, and against the corn laws, slavery and war. Many were eager supporters of the Liberal party.

Many teetotalers favoured the transition which occurred within the movement after 1853 towards emphasis on the need for state intervention. With the formation of the Alliance, the temperance movement took a course whose wisdom is even more questionable than the transition from anti-spirits association to teetotalism. The early history of this organisation, of great interest to those concerned with the move from individualism to collectivism, from moral reform to social amelioration , must now be considered.

1. Thoreau, quo. in R.R.Mathison, Faiths, Cults & Sects of America, Indianapolis, 1960, p.36.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE PROHIBITIONIST CAMPAIGN: 1: THE ORIGINS OF THE UNITED KINGDOM ALLIANCE, 1853, & THE RESORT TO STATE INTERVENTION¹

The foundation of the United Kingdom Alliance in 1853 marks an important stage not only in the history of the temperance movement, but also in the history of Victorian attitudes to state intervention. Why, in 1853, in the midst of a period conventionally identified with laissez faire policy, should a group of liquor restrictionists move from moral suasion to legislative compulsion? Why, in Manchester, in the heart of the laissez faire camp, should nonconformists, hitherto prominent in agitating against state regulation of education and factory hours, suddenly abandon their prejudices when faced with the problem of drunkenness? The fact that Alliance supporters were usually devout free-traders in other spheres makes their attitude to the drink problem after 1853 in some ways a more important landmark in the advance of state intervention than the factory legislation of 1833 and 1847. Clearly, the links between 19th century moral crusades and the resort to state intervention deserve investigation.

¹ I am most grateful to Miss Gillian Thomas of Nuffield College, Oxford, for making several useful suggestions towards improving this chapter.

Why, then, did nonconformist liberty-lowers favour so drastic an infringement of individual liberty after 1853? The answer must be pursued through three areas of inquiry: first, into the origins of the Alliance and its relationship with the moral suasionist societies; second, into the arguments for and against the Permissive Bill, which show that through this measure the Alliance could attract support from Liberals on grounds quite distinct from the temperance question; and third, into the peculiar nature of the drink problem, which almost demanded infringement of laissez faire principles, and which provoked four prominent Victorians into an awareness of Political Economy's several inadequacies.

I

Was the Alliance founded simply in response to the failure of moral suasion? Was it simply an attempt by temperance reformers to obtain through legal enforcement what they had failed to obtain through rational persuasion? Unfortunately although the names and dates connected with the origins of the Alliance are well known, the motives inspiring this "new move" in 1852-3 are very obscure: we know little of the personality of the founder of the Alliance, Nathaniel Card, and still less of the attitude of early Alliance leaders to the teetotal or "moral suasionist" campaign. Since they

depended largely on the existing temperance societies for their recruits, Alliance leaders had to be discreet in their criticisms of the teetotal movement.

F.R. Lees, however, was seldom discreet, and several of his unguarded statements show that at least one prohibitionist was dissatisfied with the results of moral suasion. Furthermore there is sufficient evidence from contests between Alliance auxiliaries and temperance societies at the local level, and between the Alliance and the National Temperance League at the national level, to show that the resort to state intervention after 1853 sprang at least partly from internal problems within the teetotal movement.

Teetotalers from Livesey to Father Mathew were certainly disappointed that their movement had not attained more permanent or rapid results. An intelligent champion of moral suasion in the National Temperance Chronicle for 1846 was by no means confident in his opposition to legislative compulsion.¹ Only a small proportion of temperance society membership consisted of reformed drunkards.² There were complaints of poor attendance at temperance meetings in the late 1840s, and the foundation of the Band of Hope at that time owed much to the belief

1 National Temperance Chronicle, Oct.-Dec. 1846, 3 leaders.

2 See above, p.174

that the existing generation could never be reclaimed and that the only hope lay with the children.¹ Even the patriarchs of teetotal campaigning were disillusioned by the early 1850s. Thus Joseph Livesey complained that in many places the temperance crusade had become a mere sect , with its temperance halls and paid agents.² John Dunlop at this time felt that "there is , and always will be a prodigious amount of drunken vis inertiae to be counteracted among the Millions; which cannot be effected by mere moral suasion".³

The hopelessness of moral suasion without state assistance seemed to be demonstrated by the collapse of Father Mathew's campaign. His efforts in their early stages constitute the culmination of moral suasionist crusading; he was said to have enrolled nearly six million teetotalers during his campaigns in Ireland during the early 1840s. But the Famine seriously obstructed his efforts and by 1853 his movement had collapsed; he himself was stricken with paralysis, too poor to follow unaided the advice of doctors who urged him to move to a warmer climate.⁴

Temperance reformers did not conclude from his failure that universal abstinence was not feasible in the existing

1. See appendix, plate 49.

2. Livesey's Progressionist, I, No. 15, p. 222.

3. J. Dunlop, Autobiography, p. 361.

4. Brougham MSS. Father Mathew to Brougham, 27 July 1853. I have not discussed Father Mathew's campaign in this thesis because it is already well covered in Father Augustine's Footprints of Father Mathew, Dublin, 1947, and also because he made a greater impact on Ireland than on England.

social system, but simply that the moral suasionist campaign had been too loosely organised and that the state had allowed hindrances to be placed in its path. Father Mathew himself encouraged such ideas when he maintained in 1853 that "the efforts of individuals, however zealous, were not equal to the mighty task", and that the Alliance struck "at the very root of the evil".¹ Once again thwarted liquor restrictionists, instead of reconsidering the whole basis of their agitation, as Thomas Hodgskin felt they should do,² blamed unforeseen and removeable hindrances for their failure. Thus with the Alliance as with the National Education League,³ the failure of voluntary effort led to the demand for state compulsion.

A sense that moral suasion was an inadequate remedy for drunkenness was not the sole reason, however, for the resort to prohibition. The Alliance was not founded at the time when liquor restrictionists were at their most depressed. Indeed, in the early 1850s the temperance movement was showing signs of renewed vigour; the worst years seem to have been,

1 Quo. in Archbishop Manning & the Permissive Bill, U[nited] K[ingdom] A[lliance], 1871, concluding quotation. I am not convinced by Father Augustine, Footprints of Father Mathew, Dublin, 1947, pp. 529-31.

2 Economist, 10 Nov. 1855, p. 1235.

3 J.A. Smyth, 'The National Education League 1869-1877', (Birmingham Univ. M. Comm. thesis 1963), p. 8.

with the temperance movement as with the sabbatarians, the years 1844-7. From 1847 onwards, the press paid increasing attention to the temperance movement.¹

Even before Alliance propaganda had influenced public opinion, articles on temperance were appearing in the quarterlies - in the Westminster Review, April 1852; in Blackwood's for April 1853, and in the Edinburgh Review for July 1854. Though these were not entirely favourable, they at least show that public attention was focussed on the temperance movement before the Alliance agitation got under way.

Again, the Exeter Hall meetings patronised by John Cassell in 1849, the temperance demonstrations accompanying the 1851 exhibition, and the subsequent foundation of the London Temperance League, show that there were signs of life among the liquor restrictionists before 1853. J.B. Gough, who was largely responsible for the revival of the National Temperance League during the 1850s, first visited England in 1853 before the inauguration of the Alliance. But although the temperance movement would have revived in the 1850s without the aid of the Alliance, it is unlikely that the leading moral suasionist organisations - the B.A.P.T. and the National

¹ National Temperance Chronicle, Oct. 1847, p. 153; Oct. 1848, p. 345.

Temperance Society - could ever have succeeded as thoroughly as the Alliance in attracting public attention to the temperance question.

Dissatisfaction with the results of teetotal campaigning in fact derived short-term reinforcement from three outside influences. Firstly, nonconformists were becoming more aware during the early 1850s that parliament could help or hinder their interests. The education question had greatly enhanced the self-confidence of "combative dissent" during the 1840s. In the year the Alliance was founded, the Anti-State Church Association significantly changed its title to the more positive "Liberation Society". By the early 1850s, Quaker inhibitions against engaging in political activity had begun to break down. The sabbatarian controversy with the Post Office in 1850 again directed attention to parliament, and petitioning was vigorous in the early 1850s for Sunday closing and against beershops. Sabbatarians and temperance reformers combined in 1853 to secure the Forbes-Mackenzie Act which introduced complete Sunday Closing into Scotland, and in 1854 to secure the Wilson-Patten Act, which curtailed Sunday opening hours in England.

From 1853-4, however, an important parliamentary committee was investigating the licensing system, and it seemed likely that parliament might revert to the free-trade policy which teetotalers considered had been so harmful since 1830. Again,

in 1855, parliament by extending public-house opening hours solely in response to Hyde Park riots, showed that it could completely ignore temperance opinion.¹ Even the National Temperance League on this occasion admitted that no M.P. had defended the liquor restrictionist case. Since Buckingham's failure in 1834, the liquor restrictionists had not been heard in parliament, and licensing debates had centred entirely on the free-trade issue. So ignorant of temperance principles were M.P.s in 1852, that if Cobden had not championed the teetotal argument against cheap beer during the Malt Tax debates of 1852 their case would have been entirely ignored.²

The extensive influence of drinksellers in the constituencies was partly responsible; only by formidable extra-parliamentary agitation could temperance measures be forced through parliament in the 1850s.³ Despite the 1853-4 committee's formidable indictment of the existing licensing system, the only ambitious attempt at licensing reform to survive publican attack between 1840 and 1871 was Gladstone's

1 For a full discussion of these riots, see my 'Sunday Trading Riots of 1855', in Historical Journal, 1965.

2 See below, pp. 474 ff.

3 Lord R. Cecil, 'Theories of Parliamentary Reform', in Oxford Essays, 1858, p. 56.

wine licence scheme of 1860, and even that would have succumbed but for its links with the French commercial treaty.

A second short-term influence: American precedents. English liquor restrictionists suggested a parliamentary temperance movement and even prohibition long before 1853, but such proposals came to nothing.¹ In 1851, however, the state of Maine introduced prohibition. But an American precedent was irresistibly to many nonconformists, and especially to those who knew how generously Americans had contributed to the foundation of the British temperance movement and who listened to the lectures of F.W. Kellogg in Scotland in 1852 and to the Beecher Stowes in 1853. In 1851-3 as in 1826-9, the Americans did not need to exert much pressure in English religious circles for their example to be eagerly followed. The American connexions of the Alliance were very evident between 1853 and 1857, when its policy was to institute the "Maine Law" or prohibition in England. The subsequent campaign for the local veto, though it removed Maine from the forefront of the agitation, did nothing to weaken these American connexions.

The Alliance in its first quarter-century always felt a close kinship with American prohibitionists; prominent

¹ e.g. New British & Foreign Temperance Magazine & Monthly Chronicle, June 1841, pp. 161-4; Alliance, 11 Nov. 1854, p. 149.

American puritans like Neal Dow were invited to lecture in England. This American allegiance attracted English radical and nonconformist support; the National Education League and the Liberation Society were as eager as the Alliance to look to American precedents.¹ But Americanism repelled English aristocrats and Anglicans, who asked themselves "Can there any good thing come from Nazareth?"

F.W. Newman claimed in 1865 that English political parties were so closely balanced that they had nearly lost the power to originate a reforming movement, and that American ideas therefore had to fill the gap.² English Alliance supporters often spoke of American prohibitionists in what now seem exaggerated tones of adulation.³ So closely was the Alliance identified with American temperance ventures that hostile M.P.s in the 1870s found that the best way to discredit prohibition in England was to visit America and dilate upon the infringements of the liquor laws there. Thus H.A. Bruce felt that Plimsoll's revelations in 1872 dealt the Permissive Bill "a more deadly blow than it had ever before received".⁴

1 cf. W.H. Mackintosh, 'The Agitation for the Disestablishment of the Church of England in the 19th Century' (Oxford Univ. D.Phil. thesis, 1955), pp. xiv. I am most grateful to Dr. Mackintosh for allowing me to consult and to cite his thesis.

2 U.K.A., 13th Annual Rept. 1864-5, p. 38.

3 e.g. M.H.C. Hayler, Vision of a Century, 1953, p. 58.

4 Plimsoll, 3 Hansard 211, c. 477 (8 May 1872); Bruce, 3 Hansard 212, c. 958 (11 July 1872).

Thirdly, response to prosperity: the relative prosperity prevailing in the 1850s diverted public attention to problems of social pathology: the problem of hunger temporarily gave way in public interest to the problems of drunkenness and crime. Events in 1848 helped to attract attention to questions of social reform, and the Alliance always maintained that political parties should appeal to the electorate primarily on questions of social reform.¹

One of the objectives of the Alliance was to modify consumption patterns in such a way that the working people could profit from and even promote continuous prosperity. John Clay, chaplain of Preston gaol, had long maintained in his prison reports that summary offences increased during periods of prosperity and declined during strikes and depressions because at these times the working classes had insufficient funds to consume drink in excess. Much to the disgust of Hodgskin and the People's Paper, Clay proceeded to generalise from criminal behaviour about the habits of the working classes as a whole.² His findings seemed confirmed in 1853 when summary offences fell and when Preston's weekly expenditure on drink declined by £1000 during the strike. Clay had long admired the Preston Temperance Society, and the Alliance, whose members were anxious to insulate prosperity

1. See below, pp. 384 ff.

2. Economist, 21 June 1856, p. 673; 15 Mar 1856, pp. 280-1; 29 Mar 1856, p. 336; People's Paper 30 Sep 1854; J. Clay 'On the Effect of Good or Bad Times on Committals to Prison', J/Statistical Society, XVIII, Sep 1854, p. 74.

against the waste and misery resulting from increased expenditure on drink, found much of value in his reports.

The Preston Strike convinced Cobden that principles of political economy must be more widely diffused if the nation was to acquire "the ability to bear a temporary prosperity".¹ Similarly, the Alliance secretary, Samuel Pope, ridiculed Preston strikers who claimed that their class lacked capital: "the working classes have the capital", he said, "but they pour it down their throats".² According to the Alliance, the fall in alcohol consumption and in the crime rate during the Cotton Famine of the 1860s vindicated Clay against Hodgskin: "why cannot these things be in prosperous times?" it asked; "the right answer is, they can be. If it were not for the liquor-traffic, they would be".³

A glance at the relations between moral suasionists and legislative compulsionists from 1853 to 1869 reinforces the suspicion that the resort to prohibition resulted partly from dissatisfaction among liquor restrictionists at the effects of moral suasion. The founder of the Alliance, the Quaker

1 Sussex County Record Office, Cobden MSS. No. 20, Cobden to Rev. W.R. Arthy, 7 Feb. 1854.

2 Alliance, 30 May 1855, p. 397, at an Exeter Hall meeting.

3 U.K.A. 10th Annual Rept., 1862, p. 3. See also Appendix, Plates 77 & 78.

Nathaniel Card, was a nephew of George Birkett the Quaker who had helped establish some of the earliest English anti-spirits societies. Card was born in Ireland in 1805 and had been connected with Irish philanthropic movements before business considerations caused him to move to Manchester in 1836.

He was a shy man , who disliked speaking in public and since he died in 1856 he exerted little influence on the development of the Alliance. But his idealism and persistence were certainly responsible for initiating the prohibitionist campaign. After witnessing the squalor of Angel Meadow, a Manchester slum district, in the early 1850s, he is alleged to have returned home "sorrowful and musing". Then, "falling down in his closet before the throne of grace, he earnestly besought the Lord to open a way of amelioration, and to change the habits of the morally and physically depraved people , of whom so large a portion of the population is composed".¹

After preliminary soundings in the philanthropic world in 1852 , he secured offices in Manchester and in October 1853 the first aggregate meeting, chaired by the Gloucester Quaker Samuel Bowly, launched the Alliance on its long career.

Explicitly condemning disputes over matters of opinion, and encouraging all to unite in a crusade for social reform, the initial declaration of the Alliance held that the state must not be expected to protect or regulate harmful trades, that total and immediate prohibition of the liquor traffic was

1. T. Lythgoe, Biographical Key, p. 22.

"perfectly compatible with rational liberty" and that it would foster "a progressive civilisation".¹ All who approved of Alliance objectives and who contributed to its funds were to be members. The General Council, consisting of several hundred members, was to meet each October and elect presidents and ornamental vice-presidents, together with the real managers of the Alliance campaign - the Executive Committee.

Most of the early Alliance leaders were nonconformists and teetotalers; several had been founder-members of the Manchester and Salford Temperance Society, designed in 1851 to co-ordinate local temperance work.² The first Alliance president, Sir W.C. Trevelyan, educated at Harrow and Oxford, was a distinguished naturalist, a generous art patron, and an enthusiast for any scheme designed to advance knowledge.³ Between 1853 and 1869 he gave £6150 to Alliance funds. He was a prominent agriculturist, and in this he resembled another landowner who supported the Alliance in its earliest days - Sir Wilfrid Lawson, senior, a leading Cumberland Liberal educated at Cambridge. A son-in-law of Sir James Graham, Sir Wilfrid was a keen railway promoter, a nonconformist, and a landowner who enjoyed hunting and shooting but who was also prominent in reforming

1. U.K.A. Public Inauguration Proceedings, 1853, passim; 1st. Annual Rept. 1853, pp. 1-3.

2. See the first three annual reports, 1851-4, in Manchester City Library.

3. D.N.B. Vol. 57, p. 210; Temperance Society Record, II, p. 282, (Dec. 1831).

causes. Deeply religious, he financed the Christian News, organ of the Evangelical Union. He had been connected with the temperance movement since 1831 and early tipped the family spirits into his fishpond.¹ Sir Wilfrid gave £100 to the Alliance in 1856-7 and gradually increased his donations until for the last four years of his life he was contributing at the rate of £500 a year. His son was to perform still greater services to the Alliance. The only other prominent titled Alliance supporter in the 1850s was the Earl of Harrington, formerly Earl Stanhope.

Of the Alliance officials, Samuel Pope, the first Alliance secretary, was a son of a Manchester merchant and came from a radical Baptist family; he was engaged in chemical manufacture but later took up law.² His successor as secretary, the energetic and dedicated T.H. Barker, son of a cabinet maker, was an accountant and commission agent who had taken the pledge at the age of 19 from John Cassell in 1837; his opposition to the use of intoxicating wine in his Lincoln Wesleyan chapel during the 1840s provoked a rebuke from the ministers and he left the church.³ Thomas Beggs,

1 Alliance News, 22 June 1867, p. 192; cf. T. Whittaker, Life's Battles, pp. 115-6; B.F.T.S. 4th Annual Rept., 1835, p. 63.

2 Methodist Times, 7 Aug. 1868.

3 T. Lythgoe, op. cit., p. 6; P.T. Winskill, Temperance Standard Bearers, Manchester, 1897, I, p. 84; W.E. Adams, Memoirs of a Social Atom (1963), I, p. 387.

another early supporter, had been connected with several reform movements of the 1840s and advocated prohibition in Viscount Ingestre's second set of essays on social reform entitled Meliora, published in 1853.

Funds as well as leadership came from nonconformists, especially from Quakers. Joseph Sturge gave £100 in 1854, and generous donations came from James Simpson of Accrington, from Robert Charlton and from the Cadburys, Backhouses, Crewdsons, Priestmans, and Peases. Charles Jupe, the Congregationalist silk manufacturer of Mere, Wiltshire, gave over £4000 to the Alliance between 1853 and 1873, and Richard Barrett preserved the anti-slavery connexion by giving £200 in the 1850s. Unitarians gave important intellectual aid, notably the Unitarian minister S.A. Steinthal and the Recorder of Birmingham, M.D. Hill. F.W. Newman, who joined the Alliance in the late 1850s, and who defended it with great originality and intelligence, was also a Unitarian. Two former Scottish Chartists supported the early Alliance: Rev. Patrick Brewster, the Presbyterian minister of Paisley and John Fraser, formerly editor of the True Scotsman.

In its inaugural declaration, the Alliance emphasised that although it invited all temperance reformers to join "in their individual capacity", it was completely distinct from existing temperance societies. Unlike its late 19th

century American counterpart,¹ it never promoted moral suasionist campaigning. It sought rather to complement the existing temperance societies: the two movements were "as the two poles of a galvanic battery, neither being powerful without the other".² Since the Alliance attacked only the trade in intoxicants, it felt that temperance societies were still required to discourage their domestic manufacture and consumption.

Non-teetotalers were admitted to membership. This enabled the Alliance to profit from the services of Professor F.W. Newman; and like the prosperous Church of England Temperance Society in the 1870s, it could attract funds from several comparatively wealthy non-abstainers whose sympathy with the attack on drunkenness would never otherwise have benefited the temperance movement. Henry Brougham, for example, was a non-abstainer who refused to support teetotal societies, but who gave valuable aid to the Alliance.³ Wilfrid Lawson, Alliance parliamentary leader in the 1860s, though personally a teetotaler, was famed for the wines at his table⁴ - a fact

1 J.H. Timberlake, Prohibition & the Progressive Movement, 1900-1920, Harvard, 1963, p. 144.

2 Alliance, 28 Apr. 1855, p. 342.

3 Weekly Record, 30 Nov. 1861, p. 450.

4 3 Hansard 232, c. 1926 (14 Mar. 1877).

which would have shocked the long-pledge men of 1839 and which led many moral suasionists to condemn the Alliance as inconsistent and even hypocritical. The majority of Alliance supporters, however, were former moral suasionists.

Friction soon arose between prohibitionists and moral suasionists. The latter feared that the energetic Alliance might supersede their own societies. Indeed, Alliance supporters in some areas assumed that this would happen. The leading temperance advocates Teare, Grubb and Lees all supported the Alliance though not Thomas Whittaker. Centralised moral suasionist activity in Manchester collapsed after 1853, and Joseph Livesey complained in 1857 that Alliance agitation had caused the real foundation of the temperance movement - teetotal advocacy - to be neglected.¹

Disputes were rife during the 1850s, especially in Scotland. The divergence is best epitomised, however, in two English disputes - the most bitter and spectacular between Gough and Lees, the most significant between Livesey and the Alliance.

The two protagonists in the Gough-Lees lawsuit contrast so strongly in personality that they might have been born for conflict.² J.B. Gough was an American reformed drunkard

1 David Morris, Alliance Weekly News, 25 July 1857; Livesey, Weekly Record, 25 July 1857, p. 258.

2 See Appendix, Plates 56 & 57.

commissioned by the National Temperance League to lecture throughout the British Isles during the 1850s. Though unimpressive in physique, he could play upon the emotions of his largely female audiences like a musician with an instrument, modulating the tone of his voice to suit the mood. His graphic accounts of delirium tremens thrilled Exeter Hall. He could work up an emotional tension which forced shouts of applause from his hearers, who "wept, laughed, cheered, shivered alternately, sometimes the tears choking the laughter".¹ Shaftesbury in 1854 described him as "a marvel - a real marvel", and George Howell half a century later had never heard his equal on a platform.² But Gough was no scholar, and could not speak successfully on subjects outside the temperance question. His appeal lay solely to the emotions, not to the intellect.

Unlike Gough, Lees had no sordid past to draw upon. He had made his name in the temperance world by an impromptu defence of teetotalism at the famous Leeds meeting of 1836, and had obtained a doctorate from Geissen university for his

1 Bishopsgate Institute: Howell Collection, No. 4114, 'A Busy & a Strenuous Life', p. 55; cf. Sheffield Public Library, H.J. Wilson Collection, MD. 2477-11; W.E. Adams, op. cit., II, p. 617.

2 E. Hodder, Life & Work of the Seventh Earl of Shaftesbury, 1888, II, p. 483; G. Howell, 'Autobiography of a Toiler', Howell Collection, No. 4114, p. 63.

attacks on Owenism. After engaging in teetotal journalism and public debate during the 1840s, sometimes alarming the theologically orthodox, he became one of the leading Alliance spokesmen in the 1850s. Interested in many other radical causes, he stood for parliament several times. Like Gough he was physically unimpressive: "a little thin-faced, thin-bodied man, volatile as water, and as easily agitated".¹ His speeches completely contrasted with those of Gough: they were uncompromisingly didactic. He made no concessions to his hearers, and sometimes unintentionally caused his audience to sympathise with his opponents, so mercilessly did he wield his logical powers. He must have bored many an audience and certainly stultified many a press controversy by his zeal for semantic precision and by his refusal to concede the most trivial point to his critics.

But there was a more sympathetic side to Lees' character. He was utterly dedicated and amassed vast quantities of temperance "facts" for which, like Gradgrind, he had an exaggerated respect. With his turgid, over-documented, unduly vehement and fractious writings on the physiological and Biblical aspects of temperance advocacy, he made himself the foremost temperance scholar for half a century. He hated pomposity, and his belief that he enjoyed personal access to

1 F. Lees, Dr. Frederic Richard Lees, 1904, pp. 81, 118.

Truth filled his life with bitter controversy. Even his burial service was appropriately disrupted in 1897 by noisy sectarian disputes. Truth, for him, was "always extreme", and he displayed the philosopher's childlike simplicity in personal relationships. Absent-minded, absorbed in philosophy, unpractical, he possessed the self-educated man's tendency to dogmatise. In his old age, with his long beard and experience, he became an almost patriarchal figure.¹

In 1857 these contrasting personalities were sucked into a public dispute much larger than themselves, between the London-based moral suasionist National Temperance League and the Manchester-based United Kingdom Alliance. Prohibitionists were exasperated when Gough claimed that the Maine Law was "a dead letter"; moral suasionists were furious when Lees hinted that Gough had not entirely abandoned the use of stimulants. The Quaker network which ran the National Temperance League came into action, Gough sued Lees, and Lees had to apologise publicly.

Many temperance reformers regretted the unnecessary expenditure, bitterness and consequent discredit shed on their movement by the incident.² But the effects of the Gough-Lees

1 For Lees' personality see F. Lees, op. cit., passim.; "J.N." 'Frederic Richard Lees 1815-1897', in Alliance News, Mar. 1915; Reasoner, 1 Apr. 1855, p. 1.

2 e.g. Samuel Bowly, M. Taylor, Memorials of Samuel Bowly, Gloucester 1884, p. 41; & Whittaker, Weekly Record, 27

dispute lasted for years. They helped produce an absurd situation in the Exhibition Year of 1862, when rival temperance bodies sponsored two national temperance congresses in London, each refusing to recognise the other.¹ Yet the League and the Alliance differed about means not ends. A League spokesman in 1863 said that he and his colleagues felt that the people in every town "ought to have, by some board or otherwise, the power of licensing...houses according to the supposed requirements of the place".² They did not deny the desirability of complete prohibition: they simply felt that it was not feasible in the existing state of public opinion.

Of more lasting significance was the dispute between Joseph Livesey and the Alliance, between moral suasionists and legislative compulsionists. It was a division between contrasting personalities, between extremists and politiques similar to the division in the secularist movement between

Footnote 2 from previous page contd./...

Feb. 1858, p. 69. On the whole dispute, see Anon, Impressions of the 'Gough-Lees Controversy'...by An Outsider, 1858, passim.

1 Dawson Burns, Temperance History, I, p. 414; Anon, A Chapter of Temperance History; being an Account of the Proceedings Preliminary to the International Convention, 1863, passim.

2 Weekly Record, 7 Feb. 1863, p. 66.

Bradlaugh and Holyoake. Livesey at first supported the Alliance, but the Hyde Park riots against sabbatarian restriction in 1855 seem to have reinforced his fears that prohibitionist agitation would be fruitless unless preliminary teetotal advocacy prepared public opinion for restriction.¹

In 1857 Livesey publicly doubted whether the two complementary agitations for prohibition and teetotalism really required two separate organisations.² In 1862 he voiced his complaints at the annual meeting of the Scottish Temperance League, and published them. He had little faith in a temperance agitation which sought sobriety through the debaucheries of the parliamentary election. Preston elections had impressed him with the unsuitability of electoral agitation as a means of obtaining temperance reform.³ He felt, moreover, that the local veto would be adopted last by those areas which needed it most, would provoke dissension, and would never prevent domestic manufacture and consumption of intoxicants. Lastly, many of his friends "so soon as this Permissive Bill was launched, slid away from our meetings,

1 British Temperance Advocate, 1 Sep. 1855.

2 Alliance Weekly News, 25 July 1857; cf. ibid., 22 Mar. 1856, p. 139.

3 Brougham Papers, Livesey to Brougham, 15 July 1864.

and declared that their attendance was unnecessary, as everything would be done by a coup d'état, and that if we insisted on that law the work would be done".¹ For Livesey, prohibition remained an ultimate rather than an immediate objective.

Instead of treating Livesey's criticisms as a moderate and constructive contribution to discussion of the temperance question, the Alliance rebutted them as a threat to its existence. It claimed that a just cause must inevitably prevail, that the arguments provoked by local veto would educate the nation, and that such struggles would rapidly build up "a righteous and godly people".² In 1870, T.H. Barker returned to the attack, and urged Livesey to "atone" for his remarks by giving his blessing to the Alliance. Livesey said that he retained his former views, and was then accused by Barker of refusing to trust the people. In 1870 the Alliance, with its mounting parliamentary support, seemed about to grasp success; but Livesey shrewdly claimed that it was "time, not argument....that is to arbitrate betwixt us", and retained

1 H. Carter, English Temperance Movement (1933), pp. 103-111. Carter discusses the whole controversy at length; cf. J. Pearce, op. cit., p. clii.

2 U.K.A. Vindication of the Principles & Policy of the United Kingdom Alliance in reply to recent Objections, 1862, p. 40 & U.K.A. True Policy Vindicated: A Friendly Correspondence Between Mr. Joseph Livesey & Mr. T.H. Barker, Manchester, 1870, pp. 2-4.

his views until he died.¹

Though Livesey disliked internal squabbles within the temperance movement and avoided them whenever possible, his name was influential in the movement. He wanted the Alliance to imitate the Anti-Corn Law League, in which he himself had played a prominent part - to concentrate on educating the public rather than on coercing parliament. But the Alliance felt that the best way to educate the public was to parade the Alliance case at the hustings and in the House. Livesey deplored the vast Alliance expenditure of money and energies which could have been better applied to teetotal propaganda; whether such funds could ever have been raised for moral suasionist campaigning he did not stop to ask.

Livesey's attitude sprang naturally from his personality. He had always preferred personal visitation to the "philanthropy by proxy" characterising the great and ostentatious London charities.² Once again this was a dispute about means not ends, yet it seriously damaged the Alliance: Livesey's arguments were quoted by its enemies even in parliament.³

1 True Policy, p. 11.

2 cf. H.J. Hanham, Elections & Party Management, 1959, p. 119.

3 e.g. in 3 Hansard 229, c. 1824 (14 June 1876); 3 Hansard 244, c. 664 (11 Mar. 1879); 3 Hansard 303, c. 386 (10 Mar. 1886).

The eager reception given to Livesey's criticisms within the temperance movement shows that moral suasionists had by no means reconciled themselves to Alliance tactics ten years after its foundation. To the end of his life, Livesey found an audience when he complained of the Alliance and its "everlasting teasing of Parliament".¹ It is clear, however, that the Alliance catered for many enthusiastic teetotalers who felt that "moral suasion" was not enough.

II

The resort to prohibition however was more than a purely internal development within the temperance movement. Though the Alliance advocated total and immediate prohibition of the sale of intoxicants, it narrowed its immediate objective after four years by adopting the Permissive Bill, or "local veto" proposal, in 1857. This attracted into the prohibitionist campaign many Liberals who might never have resorted to state intervention from purely temperance considerations. The Bill originated in an anonymous article by the former Charles Buxton which suggested that a majority of 5/6 of the ratepayers in a particular area should be empowered to ban drinkshops from their locality.² In drafting the Permissive

1 F. Lees, op. cit., p. 189.

2 North British Review, Feb. 1855 ('How to Stop Drunkenness').

Bill the Alliance simply reduced the required majority from five-sixths to two-thirds.

The Alliance never felt strongly committed to the details of the Bill and always insisted that its adoption represented a modification in tactics rather than in policy. For its first four years, the Alliance, by concentrating on fixing its principle in the public mind evaded attack on minor questions of detailed application. In 1857 it sought to channel the enthusiasm it had generated by giving its campaign the precise and practicable objective necessary for political success. This was Cobden's recipe.¹

If the Alliance could have obtained complete and immediate prohibition, it would never have resorted to Permissive Bill gradualism. But in the 1850s public opinion was so hostile to nation-wide prohibition, that the Alliance sought to attain its original objective by instalments. It was convinced that prohibition once enacted locally would bring such obvious benefits that other areas would rapidly adopt it. Why should the few areas which already favoured prohibition be prevented from introducing it into their own localities? The Permissive Bill thus represents a means of winning public support more rapidly, rather than a retreat

¹ Mrs. S. Schwabe, Reminiscences of Richard Cobden, 1895, p. 279.

from the platform laid down in 1853.¹

Drafted by M.D. Hill and others two years after the demise of the Board of Health, the Permissive Bill was born into a world where localism was temporarily supreme. The origins of modern welfare legislation are largely to be sought in permissive legislation, and the Alliance regarded the Public Libraries Act as a precedent. Samuel Pope, the Alliance secretary, favoured the application of the permissive principle in other spheres.² Its opponents, however, felt that permissive legislation which bestowed a liberty could hardly be described as a precedent for legislation restricting liberty. Alternatively, for those who accepted that alcohol was a poison, the Alliance could point as precedents to quarantine laws and to legislation against adulteration, the sale of poisons and the production of poisonous fumes.

The Bill attracted Liberal support not only as a remedy for drunkenness but also on account of its "democratic" and "decentralising" aspects. It seemed democratic because it endowed ratepayers with the power to decide whether the

1 Since "local veto" was only a means of obtaining complete prohibition, in the eyes of most Alliance supporters, I have spoken of its advocates throughout this thesis as "prohibitionists". The term "local option", loosely used at the time, I have used only to denote a system of licensing reform which allows several choices of policy to be made by the voters, rather than the simple "prohibition or nothing" choice embodied in the Permissive Bill.

2 Bolton Chronicle, 1 July, 1865, p. 7.

existing licensing system should continue or whether, in their locality, drinkshops should be entirely banned. Although it did not propose the continuous democratic administration of the existing licensing system, it did demand for the people powers hitherto confined to the magistrate and the landowner. For years, J.H. Raper, the Alliance parliamentary agent, used to hold up a sovereign and offer it to anyone who would give him the name of a magistrate who had voted to lease a public house next to his own door.¹

But the Bill was not as democratic as it seemed. Not only did the Alliance fail to show that it genuinely trusted the people by allowing them several alternatives of policy instead of the crude "prohibition or nothing". It also proposed to enfranchise, not the whole drinking population, but only the ratepayers, just as its canvasses catered only for the views of householders. Only a small proportion of the population were ratepayers. Still fewer tended to vote. One critic maintained that to empower a 2/3 ratepayer majority would be to enable 2/15 of the population to dictate to the remaining 13/15.²

Such a vote would clearly maximise the powers of a small but energetic minority, and since the Alliance publicly

1 J.D. Hilton, James Hayes Raper, 1898, p. 29.

2 Goldsmid, 3 Hansard 220, cc. 13-16 (17 June 1874).

admitted that it depended on the Labour Aristocracy for its support,¹ the ratepayer vote was likely to be favourable in many places. Superficially, the genuine enthusiasm of Alliance leaders for franchise extension suggests that they genuinely favoured democratic government. Yet the 1867 Reform Act excluded the "residuum" (which the Alliance knew would seldom support the Permissive Bill) while enfranchising the householders on whom the Alliance felt it could rely. Both with franchise extension and with the local veto the administrative difficulties of constructing a register of all inhabitants were prohibitive, owing to the migratory habits of many working people. The Alliance said that it would be willing to use any such register as the basis for its local veto, but it knew that none could be constructed. Thus the Alliance contented itself with a measure which would consider the views only of an élite among working men. The Bee-Hive, organ of the London trades societies in the 1860s thus felt that advocates of manhood suffrage could not consistently support the Permissive Bill.²

In the eyes of the politician, the undemocratic aspects of the Permissive Bill were a severe disadvantage. Parliament was reminded by the Sunday Trading riots in 1855 that working

1 See below, pp. 334ff.

2 Bee-Hive, 12 Mar. 1864, 4 June 1864.

people in large towns could take drastic action against measures which could be branded as "class legislation"; they therefore feared to antagonise the populace by supporting the local veto. Fear of riot played a most important part in defeating the Permissive Bill, many of whose critics dwelt on the disorder which would accompany local veto polls. Opposition to the local veto founded on fears of an attack on property did not supplant this objection in importance until the 1880s.

Mr. Ker Seymer in 1863 preferred "a certain amount of drunkenness" to the existence of rankling discontent among the masses at class legislation.¹ The argument of "the devil you know..." was often used against temperance legislation, and culminated in the much-quoted speech of Magee, the Whig bishop of Peterborough, for whom liberty was preferable to compulsory sobriety.² Similarly, the Times argued against the Board of Health: "we prefer to take our chance of cholera and the rest, than to be bullied into health".³ Politicians

1 3 Hansard 171, c. 292 (3 June 1863).

2 3 Hansard 211, c. 86 (2 May 1872); cf. D. Nicholls, 'Archbishop Magee', Church Quarterly Review, July-Sep. 1962, pp. 338-9.

3 J.B. Brebner, 'Laissez Faire & State Intervention in 19th Century Britain', Journal of Economic History, Supplement VIII, 1948, p. 64.

realised that the last places to adopt the Permissive Bill would in fact be those which most needed it: the large towns which, if they provided much of the support for the temperance movement, also furnished the publicans with their most damaging weapon - the urban mob.

The ease with which the Permissive Bill could be branded as "class legislation" can be seen from the fact that, like Josephine Butler but unlike the Anti-Saloon League its American counterpart, the Alliance found the trade in vice more abhorrent than the vice itself.¹ The Morning Star described the Bill as "monstrously aristocratic" and opponents of the Alliance noted that the rich would be able to store their cellars with drink whereas the poor would have neither the resources, the space nor the foresight to do so.²

Other Liberals were attracted by the Permissive Bill's "decentralising" aspect, especially F.W. Newman, who was concerned about the overworking of parliament and the decline of local initiative. Much mid-Victorian opposition to state interference was in fact a disguised opposition to centralised control. When the decision to intervene was taken at the local rather than at the national level, the most drastic interference with individual liberty by the public authorities

1 cf. J.H. Timberlake, op. cit., p. 145; A.S.G. Butler, Josephine Butler, 1954, p. 137.

2 Morning Star, 12 Apr. 1860, p. 4.

seemed tolerable.

The Permissive Bill also appealed to those who wanted experimental legislation introduced into particular areas before national legislation was adopted;¹ to those who recognised the clumsiness of uniform national licensing legislation when local attitudes to the drink question varied so strikingly; and to those who admired the decentralised American political system. Yet the very features of the Bill which attracted support in some quarters repelled it in others. The "revolutionary simplicity" of a Bill which granted legislative power to the electorate seemed unconstitutional and even reactionary to those who cast their eyes at the plebiscites which were keeping Louis Napoleon in power.²

How practicable was the Permissive Bill? Three considerations suggest that, in the mid-Victorian period, it was not - the character of the contemporary police force, the nature of the restriction proposed, and the effects of local option when later enacted. First, the mid-Victorian police force. The unpaid rural constable, chosen from local tradesmen and fearful of antagonising local opinion, was described in parliament in the year the Alliance was founded as "particularly

1 e.g. Goldwin Smith, Alliance News, 3 May 1868, p. 148.

2 Leatham, Alliance News, 4 Feb. 1865; cf. Bright, 3 Hansard 175, c. 1405 (8 June 1864).

unqualified to control public-houses and beershops".¹ Even in the towns, drunkenness was widespread in the police force; police constables in the 1870s were still accepting free drinks from the publicans and bottles of drink offered them in the streets by the public.² Manning was not alone among temperance reformers in complaining of police inefficiency in enforcing even the existing licensing laws. F.N. Charrington found lax police enforcement his chief obstacle in promoting sobriety in the late-Victorian East End.³

There were good reasons for the apparent laxness of the police. They were powerless without a favourable public opinion, and in slum districts this favourable opinion did not exist. Furthermore, the police relied on the publican for information about the criminal world: their responsibilities for licensing and control of crime were to some extent contradictory. Again, the police knew that publicans and brewers were often powerful on local watch committees. One of the symbols of Chamberlain's "new broom" in Birmingham in the 1870s was the appointment of five special inspectors to

1 Mr. Rice, 3 Hansard 126, c. 546 (26 Apr. 1853).

2 S.C.H.L. Intemperance, Parl. Papers, 1877, xi (271), qq. 3450, 6443-50.

3 Manning, Parl. Papers, 1867-8, xiv (402), q. 2386; G. Thorne, The Great Acceptance, 1913, p. 69.

enforce better observance of the licensing laws.¹

Thus a police official as distinguished as Sir Richard Mayne could still speak of licensing offences in 1868 as "only an incidental and a police sort of crime".² In some areas liquor restrictionists tried to assist the police by forming "vigilance committees" to enforce the licensing laws; but in this sphere, as with self-appointed unholders of chimney sweeping regulations, voluntary action only succeeded in exasperating the public.³ If the Victorian police force failed completely to enforce the laws against betting⁴ and failed partially in enforcing the laws on liquor licensing, they were hardly likely to be able to enforce prohibition.

A second reason for doubting the practicability of the Permissive Bill lies in the extent of its infringement of individual liberty. However sympathetic the state of public opinion, it could not be enforced without an intolerable infringement of individual liberty. Its opponents played upon fears that on the same principle the persecution of

1 Parl. Papers, 1877, xi (171), Q. 2281 (Chamberlain).

2 Parl. Papers, 1867-8, xiv (402), Q. 275.

3 For examples of voluntary policing, see Parl. Papers, 1877, xi (271), Q. 5240; Parl. Papers, 1878, xiv (338), Q. 3511; for an earlier example, see Leeds Mercury, 19 July 1834; & cf. J.L. & B. Hammond, Lord Shaftesbury, 1939 Edn., p. 213.

4 Lady Bell, At the Works (1911 Edn.), p. 352.

minority religions and the expropriation of property-owners would have been justifiable.¹ The wearisome disputes and problems of "border smuggling" which followed the Forbes-Mackenzie Act of 1853 and the Welsh Sunday Closing Act in the 1880s give a hint of the disputes with which the Permissive Bill would have covered the country. If public-houses had been compulsorily closed during the 19th century, working people might well have been positively encouraged to drink, as a deliberate gesture of self-assertion.² Opponents of the Alliance used the argument employed by Cobden against the factory acts: successful enforcement of such a law required a favourable public opinion: but once public opinion was favourable, the law would be superfluous.³

Thirdly, a glance at the results of prohibition in America and of local option in 20th century Scotland reinforces the suspicion that the Permissive Bill, even if it had been adopted in any locality, would have proved a woefully inadequate remedy for drunkenness. American prohibition actually lent social prestige to drink, caused a lamentable disrespect for the law, and a marked advance of corruption.⁴ It is more likely, however, that the Permissive Bill would have been adopted by only a very few localities. In 20th century Scotland the "no licence" policy was followed only by a few districts,⁵

1. e.g. G.J. Holyoake, in Reasoner, 13 Jan 1858, p.10.

2. cf. E.M. Lemert, Alcohol & the North-West Coast Indians, Berkeley 1954, pp.336ff.

3. Daily News, 6 Oct 1856, p.4; cf. J. Morley, Richard Cobden, 11th. Edn., 1903, p.954.

4. A. Sinclair, op.cit., passim.

5. G.B. Wilson, Alcohol & the Nation, p.121.

generally those in the most remote parts. Lord Salisbury was not entirely wrong in speaking of the "rather Utopian view" that every citizen was eager to look after the morality of his neighbour.¹

Alliance supporters were seldom perturbed by such criticisms. Some regarded their movement simply as a vehicle for the protest against Sin, and questions of practicality were for them irrelevant.² Others regarded prohibitionist campaigning as "a way of expressing their radicalism rather than.... a way of expressing their zeal for Temperance".³

Even those who genuinely saw in the local veto a means of solving many social problems were not always receptive to practical criticism. They did not regard the conduct of drinkers under existing social conditions as any guide to their likely conduct under the New Prohibitionist Dispensation. "The opinion of the drunkard is with us", said Pope in 1856, "his habit is the reverse".⁴ Nor was the Alliance greatly concerned when its opponents claimed that the Permissive Bill

1. 3 Hansard 211, c.89 (2 May 1872).

2. See below, pp. 527ff.

3.. Letter to the author, 13 Apr 1964, from Prof. H. J. Hanham, of Edinburgh University.

4. Pope to Stanley, 26 Sep 1856, in The Stanley-Pope Discussion, Manchester, n.d. (1856).

could not be enforced: "if a law is salutary, when in operation", it declared, "the want of enforcement is not an argument against the law, but a ground of complaint against those who should attend to its execution".¹

Alliance devotees conceived of prohibition in millennial terms; their glowing accounts of the innocence and affluence of Bessbrook and Saltaire,² the liquor-free villages, show how deep is the debt owed by many 19th century moral reforming campaigns to the gradual transference of the nonconformist Utopia from Heaven to Earth. If only drink could be excluded from the surrounding areas, said J.G. Richardson, owner of Bessbrook, in 1877 "we might make a little Paradise of the place".³

Just as the prohibitionist Heaven had become the temperance village, so the prohibitionist Hell had become the public-house with its associations. The energies which had hitherto been directed at portraying the horrors of Hell were unconsciously being directed to attempts at modifying the earthly

1 U.K.A. No Case Against the United Kingdom Alliance & the Permissive Bill, n.d., p. 58.

2 For Bessbrook, 3 Hansard 278, c. 1356 (27 Apr. 1883); W.H. Marwick, 'Some Quaker Firms of the 19th Century', Jnl. of the Friends' Historical Society, 1956-8, pp. 250-1; S.E. Williams, Bessbrook, A Temperance Experiment, n.d. (c. 1908), passim. For Saltaire, see Rev. R. Belgarnie, Sir Titus Salt, 1877, pp. 226-7; see also Appendix, Plates 62 & 63.

3 Parl. Papers, 1878, xiv (338), q. 4607.

influences which smoothed the path to Hell. Free licensing, said Lawson in 1863, had made Liverpool "next door to a very hell on earth";¹ for Manning, public-houses were "the gates of hell".² Hell had almost become synonymous with the economic, social, and physiological miseries associated with drunkenness, listed every week in Alliance periodicals. And the enactment of the Permissive Bill, like Marx's Final Revolution, had become the Golgotha or dividing line between the two eternities: before it, all might be misery, but after it, human nature would be transformed and the former state would pass away.

The necessary accompaniment of such an approach to the drink problem was to regard drunkenness as a disease, not as a sin - as a physiological state rather than as a moral failing, to be cured not by moral exhortation but by removing the physical agent responsible. But such emphasis on the relation between environment and human character constituted a serious erosion of early 19th century attitudes to moral responsibility. The Alliance was beginning to attribute poverty to the socio-economic structure rather than to Original Sin.

1 3 Hansard 206, c. 952 (17 May 1871).

2 Sermon at SS. Mary & Joseph's, Poplar, in Westminster Cathedral Archives, Scrapbook of newspaper articles on Manning.

The Times noticed "a curious dualism and inconsistency" between the temperance and prohibitionist movements: the former paraded the numbers who had been reclaimed through exertion of willpower, whereas the latter dwelt on the hopelessness of such a remedy.¹ Lees claimed that moral suasion was insufficient for most individuals and that temperance reformers must adapt their course "to the moral and sensient nature of man" and must require the nation to deliver itself from temptation.² This was a foretaste of John Morley's defence of the Contagious Diseases Acts in 1870, in which he emphasised the absurdity of "treating prematurely brutalised natures as if they still retained infinite capabilities for virtue".³

III

Yet the resort to state intervention is only partly explicable in terms of the internal momentum generated within the temperance movement and the incidental political attractions of the Permissive Bill. The very nature of the drink problem required the abandonment of laissez faire doctrine, whose inadequacies can best be discussed in relation to the

1 Times, quo. in Alliance News, 7 Nov. 1863, p. 356.

2 Alliance Weekly News, 9 Aug. 1856.

3 J. Morley, quo. in J.L. & B. Hammond, James Stansfeld, 1932, p. 134.

temperance views of four prominent Victorians, J.S. Mill, F.W. Newman, T.H. Green and Cardinal Manning. The last three were devotees of the local veto, and all four expressed pronounced views on the licensing question.

The Alliance, Newman, Green and Manning had many ideas in common, but each concentrated on exposing different defects in contemporary economic attitudes. The Alliance in the 1850s defended its proposals with arguments which later reappear in the writings of its three supporters; its rejoinders to Mill emphasise the absurdity of Political Economy's assumption that all male adults, if given the necessary information, could reasonably be expected in existing social conditions to lead a moral life. The new insights of F.W. Newman centre on the supersession of Bentham's a-moral conception of the state; those of T.H. Green on the "positive" concept of liberty; and those of Manning, on Political Economy's neglect of women and children.

First, J.S. Mill: Alliance supporters were distressed at his consistent hostility to the Permissive Bill. As with Bright, they admired his character and his radicalism and sorrowed to see passages from his Liberty used by publicans for their own purposes. Mill believed that alcohol was necessary to health and that publicans pursued a legitimate trade.¹ He therefore strongly attacked the Alliance in his

¹ A.A. Reade, Study & Stimulants, Manchester, 1883, p. 213.

Liberty, singling out for demolition the arguments used by Samuel Pope against Stanley in 1856.

Mill never gave way to temperance pressure even after the campaign for the Maine Law was supplanted by the campaign for the local veto; when challenged at the 1868 election, he declared the use or non-use of alcohol to be "a subject on which every sane and grown-up person ought to judge for himself under his own responsibility".¹ While most historians would now agree with Mill's conclusions, his mode of arriving at them is more questionable, for he bestowed his own qualities of self-discipline on his more fallible contemporaries and required from them conduct feasible only in a society providing stronger incentives to sobriety and more diversified recreations than were available for the mid-Victorian working man.

Several strands in Mill's thought led him to oppose prohibition. Like Tocqueville, he dreaded uniformity in personal conduct enforced by majority opinion. He feared any policy which would prevent individuals from acting on their own initiative, and which by treating them like children stunted their capacity for self-direction. He tolerated the licensing system only because he felt that society must be protected from the drinkseller interested in "pushing" con-

¹ Times, 10 Nov. 1868, p. 4.

sumption.¹ He feared any form of legislation which might foster a Calvinistic "pinched and hidebound type of human character";² like Arnold he wished to encourage in his contemporaries a Hellenistic self-assertion and spontaneity which would counter-balance the Christian emphasis on humility and self-denial.³

Mill felt that the natural order, if only left alone by meddling humanity, was as self-acting in the field of morals as it was in the field of wealth-production. Just as some reformers opposed the Contagious Diseases Acts because venereal diseases were sent as the Divine punishment for adultery, so Mill opposed prohibition because the poverty and humiliation endured by the drunkard were Nature's warning against self-indulgence. Like Hodgskin, Mill felt that drunkenness was so great an evil that it required "no corrective but its own consequences".⁴ Like Herbert Spencer, Mill thought that suffering often performed useful social functions and that the state by indiscriminately removing it would unnecessarily complicate the task of the moralist. His views

1 J.S. Mill, Liberty (Everyman Edn., 1960), p. 155.

2 Liberty, p. 120.

3 M. Arnold, Culture & Anarchy (Ed. J.D. Wilson, Cambridge, 1950), pp. 145-6.

4 Hodgskin, Economist, 10 Nov. 1855, p. 1235.

constitute a secular equivalent of the Nonconformist's belief that "outward restraint does not regenerate the inward man".¹

Several of the prohibitionists' rejoinders to Mill's Liberty were highly pertinent; four interlinked criticisms of his views can be derived from them. First, prohibitionists were more conscious than Mill that liberty was not necessarily synonymous with lack of government interference. Society's prime aim said the Alliance was "not individuality, but socialism; that is, the maintenance implicitly of the guarantees which have been decided to be common rights".² Many individuals could not enjoy liberty until they had received protection from the state against their oppressors. The Alliance felt that the best form of society was "that which secures the greatest amount of social advantage and protection with the least sacrifice of individual independence".³

Furthermore, the requirements of moral progress often conflicted with the attractions of liberty: morality brought not only material advantages but also long-term happiness, taking into account (as of course Mill could not) the next world as well as this. The Alliance showed far less enthusiasm

1 Nonconformist, 2 Nov. 1853, p. 887.

2 U.K.A. Monthly Papers, Liberty & the Liquor Traffic, 1859, pp. 4-5.

3 ibid., p. 4.

than Mill for mere assertions of individuality. Mankind did not live for the development of self-will, wrote F.R. Lees, but for "the frequent denial of impulsive will for moral will".¹ For many Alliance supporters, progress depended on the subordination of the individual will to considerations of social welfare. To Magee's preference for liberty rather than compulsory sobriety, Manning retorted "I am no believer in drunken freedom".² Liquor restrictionists like F.W. Newman believed that civilisation depended on restraining individual liberty and Mill's temperance critics declared that "in the most barbarous and uncultivated nations, the more is liberty indulged".³

Mill too readily believed that state intervention must infringe individual liberty; that a "liberty fund" existed which caused every increase in the power of the state to produce a corresponding decrease in the power of the individual. The Alliance recognised that state intervention, while it might curtail the liberty of the husband could extend that of the wife and child. And by altering the slum-dweller's

1 F.R. Lees, Alliance Prize Essay, 3rd Edn., 1857, pp. 26-7.

2 H.E. Manning, Speech at the U.K.A. Conference, May 7th, 1872.

3 "Index" [G. Vasey], Individual Liberty, Legal, Moral, & Licentious, 1867, p. 126.

environment, it might perhaps compensate for a small infringement of liberty by creating a wide freedom of action in other directions; few could deny that prohibition would extend the liberty of the confirmed drunkard.

The statement of Mill which aroused most comment from temperance reformers, however, was the assertion that "the only part of the conduct of any one, for which he is amenable to society, is that which concerns others".¹ Prohibitionists' second criticism of Mill was thus that he exaggerated the proportion of human actions which could be described as "self-regarding"; they certainly felt that drunkenness could not be included in any such category. Mill proposed to punish drunkenness only when it caused obvious harm to the public, as when a policeman or soldier incapacitated himself for public duty by drunkenness. But the prohibitionists had their eyes on the drunkard's wife and children, whom he might harm directly, on the acquaintances whom his conduct might lead astray, and even, after late 19th century research into eugenics, on his unborn children. "The excessive drinking of the men", said T.H. Green, "means an injury to others in² health, purse and capability, to which no limits can be placed".

1 J.S. Mill, Liberty, p. 73.

2 T.H. Green, 'Liberal Legislation & Freedom of Contract', Works, III, pp. 383-4.

For the prohibitionist, the individual could no more avoid influencing the social welfare of his fellows by his conduct than he could avoid influencing their morals by his example. The Alliance likened individuals to ninepins - all were endangered if one should fall.¹

Thirdly, prohibitionists showed far more concern than Mill about the casualties of a laissez faire economy. While Mill was anxious to protect the physically weak against the strong, he showed less compassion for the weak in character. Furthermore, he exaggerated the returns which sobriety would bring to mid-Victorian working men; he forgot that barriers of background, clothing, and accent could powerfully hinder even the most self-denying of proletarian aspirants to the white-collar class.²

Thus the Alliance required the state to play a far more protective role than Mill. F.R. Lees foreshadowed Ruskin when he attacked Mill's "policeman theory" of the state and accused it of "enunciating the rights and ethics of Perfect men and Paradise, instead of the practical duties incumbent upon us in this work-a-day world of imperfection and sin".³

1 Alliance Weekly News, 7 May 1859; cf. ibid., 3 Apr. 1858, p. 562.

2 T. Wright, Our New Masters, 1873, p. 118.

3 F.R. Lees, Alliance Prize Essay, 3rd Edn., 1857, pp. 26-7.

While Mill allowed citizens to become drunkards and then punished them when their conduct conflicted with the public interest, the Alliance, by seeking to shield them from temptation, hoped to make punishment superfluous. Alliance arguments resemble those for the fencing of industrial machinery. True, the individual by taking care could avoid danger; but the fact remained that a certain proportion would not avoid it. The only remedy was to fence it off.¹

An ideology which encouraged the individual to blame his failure to rise in society on his own personal failings might actually encourage the resort to drink. Much of the attraction of the temperance and prohibition movements for the mid-Victorians lay precisely in the fact that ideally they sought to reclaim these casualties by restoring their self-respect and providing them with companionship. The Alliance was only distinguished from the moral suasionists in that it wanted to extend this community protection from the small circle of the temperance society to the entire nation. It sought to solve the problem of destitution for society as a whole, whereas the moral suasionist societies too frequently contented themselves with solving it only for their members.

Liquor restrictionists questioned the justice of a society requiring a quota of "drunken Helots"; through their

¹ Lady Bell, op. cit., p. 149.

teetotal experience meetings they reclaimed many of these pathetic individuals, and saw no reason why they and their families should be allowed to remain in misery that the world might be virtuous. Mill's Liberty, on the other hand, held out little hope for the delinquent. While the miseries of drunkenness might educate his fellow-citizens, prohibitionists knew that that they could not inspire reform in the drunkard himself. Mill's analysis of the problem forgot that frequently "wisdom to do [comes] pari passu with the departure of zest for doing".¹

Again, Mill felt that the state should bear the burden of drunkenness as a penance for its failure actively to promote education, and that it should not attempt to evade retribution for former neglect by drastically infringing individual liberty. His critics replied that society must seek to remedy evils as it found them; prohibitionists were no more prepared on the national scale to allow one generation to suffer for the mistakes of its predecessors² than to allow, in the more restricted sphere of the family, the children to suffer for the sins of their parents.

It was not that Mill lacked sympathy for these casualties

1 T. Hardy, Mayor of Casterbridge (Pan Books, 1955), p. 258.

2 G. Vasey, op. cit., pp. 116-7.

of a laissez faire economy: he strongly favoured disinterested and intelligent concern for the welfare of others, and knew well that wives and children suffered from the drunkenness of their husbands and fathers. He simply felt that direct intervention by the state was not the best way to curb this misery; wives and children would gain less by prohibition, he thought, than they would lose through the lack of initiative, individuality and self-reliance which the husband would display under a grandmotherly state. Though there must be some suffering either way, he considered "freedom" preferable to compulsory sobriety.

Liquor restrictionists, on the other hand, denied that there was any simple choice between state intervention and freedom: the choice, for them, lay between drastic punitive intervention and preventive legislation: "social evils", said F.W. Newman, "if not prevented, have to be punished".¹ Lord Harrington, a zealous Alliance supporter in the 1850s, often cited Beccaria's dictum: "preventing justice is far better than punishing justice".²

Finally, prohibitionist critics felt that Mill over-estimated the degree to which individuals were or could ever

1 F.W. Newman, The Right & Duty of the State to Control the Drink Traffic, 1875, p. 2.

2 Earl of Harrington, The Maine-Law, 1858, p. 20.

be influenced by rational considerations. "The predominant error....of Mr. Mill", wrote one critic, "...is that of regarding civilization not only as being in a much higher state than it actually is, but also of being much more widely spread".¹ Mill's prohibitionist critics emphasised that his "applications" betrayed an ignorance of practical affairs. Mill's knowledge, said the Alliance, "as is the case with most closet thinkers, of the special facts of the case on which he is arguing, is at all events as regards the liquor-traffic, sadly inaccurate and scanty".² Mill believed that state protection of the individual was bound to be inept because the individual knew his own needs best. But this was to exaggerate the working man's capacity or desire to follow the demands of long-term interest rather than short-term pleasure. The confirmed drunkard certainly did not know better than the state what was best for his long-term interest, let alone for that of his family.

The prohibitionist, like Ruskin, never underestimated the extent of the gulf between intention and action. He knew, like the phrenologists, that the number of mentally deranged individuals was really far larger than the law

1 G. Vasey, op. cit., p. 25.

2 U.K.A. 7th Annual Rept., 1859, p. 10; cf. Meliora, IX, No. 35, p. 217.

recognised,¹ and that liberty might not promote the welfare of such individuals. For the Alliance, the drunkard was "just like a paralysed man; you may tell him to move his hands, and it is just what he wants to do, but he cannot do it".² Mill did not claim complete liberty for children, for people in a delirium, or for those whose reason was impaired. Indeed, he admitted that in the case of those incapable of judging for themselves, "the foundation of the laissez faire principle breaks down entirely".³ Yet prohibitionists claimed that many working people were themselves "very much in the condition of children".⁴ When surrounded by drinkshops and ugliness, when deprived of food and recreation, working men could hardly be in that rational frame of mind which weighs up long-term benefits; nor were the long-term advantages of sobriety always as obvious to working men as they were to Mill.

Mill's defective vision owes something to his almost exclusive concentration on classroom education as the remedy. Like Robert Lowe, he felt that "if the mind is diseased, it

1 G. Combe, Moral Philosophy, 1840, p. 267.

2 Parl. Papers, 1854, xiv (231), Q. 1954 (Card).

3 J.S. Mill, Principles of Political Economy (Ed. W.J. Ashley, 1909), p. 957.

4 Parl. Papers, 1854, xiv (231), Q. 235: Rev. J.T. Baylee, of the Lord's Day Observance Society.

is to the mind that the remedy must be applied".¹ For many prohibitionists, drunkenness was not an intellectual or moral failing, but even accepting Mill's interpretation it is difficult to see why his argument for compulsory education - "the uncultivated cannot be competent judges of cultivation"² - should not also apply to legislation designed to encourage sobriety.

Furthermore, prohibitionists knew that the mind was as much influenced by its domestic as by its academic environment. Here the Alliance was for once less Utopian than its critics; it always emphasised that education did not cease outside the classroom, and that law itself could educate the people. While Mill fixed responsibility for drunkenness on the drinker, the Alliance had begun to shift it on to the society which placed drinkers in an environment unconducive to sobriety.

Unlike the modern legislator however, the Alliance felt that environment was best improved not by state provision of better housing, parks, and welfare facilities, but by encouraging working people to make the most efficient use of their own resources, and thus to enable them to provide these

1 Robert Lowe, 'The Birmingham Plan of Public-House Reform', Fortnightly Review, 1 Jan. 1877, p. 9.

2 J.S. Mill, Political Economy, p. 953.

facilities for themselves. While the Alliance blamed too much on the proliferation of drinkshops , and expected too much from their abolition, it did at least recognise that drinkshops were different in kind from the shops of bakers and butchers , and that the greater their number the greater the temptation to which passers-by were subjected.¹ And though in combating Mill's arguments the Alliance sometimes made collectivist statements which even now would be considered extreme - "sure when there is any conflict of liberties", it pleaded, "the individual should give way to the state , and not the state to the individual"² - it had a good case against Mill's Liberty , and managed it well.

The ideas of F.W.Newman represent an advance from J.S. Mill towards the conception of the state put forward by T.H. Green , for Newman strongly contested the belief that the state was not responsible for promoting morality in its citizens. A brother of J.H.Newman , F.W.Newman was strongly influenced in youth by Evangelicalism , but realised while on a Christian mission to the Mohammedans that superior morality, rather than emphasis on theological truths, was the best means of spreading Christianity in heathen parts. Gradually and courageously , he began to shed conventional

1. Lady Bell, op.cit., p.349.

2. U.K.A., No Case Against the U.K.A. & the Permissive Bill, p. 69.

religious belief when it conflicted with his belief in human progress, and became a Unitarian.¹ Though many early Victorian Christians regarded him as an agnostic, Christianity has so changed its character in the interval that in the eyes of the modern Christian he never lost his faith.

An oddly-dressed, eccentrically-mannered radical, author of the famous Phases of Faith, Newman in 1846 became professor of Latin at University College, London.² Lords reform, rationalisation of parliamentary procedure, female suffrage, creation of a new Heptarchy, direct accountability of M.P.s to constituents - all these were grist to his mill. "Oh! I am anti-slavery, anti-alcohol, anti-tobacco, anti-everything", he once told an amused dinner-party.³ Like two other leading liquor restrictionists Buckingham and Lawson, he never lost a youthful enthusiasm for reforming causes and expected politicians to accept with aplomb the rational reforms he suggested.

Prohibition was perhaps his greatest enthusiasm. By 1857

1 B. Willey, More Nineteenth Century Studies, 1956, pp. 21-3; cf. H.R. Murphy, 'The Ethical Revolt Against Christian Orthodoxy, in Early Victorian England', American Historical Review, July 1955, pp. 802-6.

2 See Appendix, Plate 65.

3 I.G. Sieveking, Memoir...of Francis W. Newman, 1909, p. 139.

he was impressed by the Alliance case and in 1858 he maintained that franchise extension without the removal of political corruption would produce no benefits; hence temperance legislation must come first.¹ Though more extreme in his radicalism than Cobden and Bright,² he shared their belief that the aristocracy turned taxes and government posts to its own purposes.

For Matthew Arnold, F.W. Newman represented all the aspects of contemporary Liberalism he abhorred - espousing a host of reforming causes designed to break up the traditional society without providing any greater security or grandeur. But if intelligent advocacy is important to a cause, Newman's prohibitionist activity does not support the objection that he "turned his energies against much that needed to be attacked but weakened the attack of others by the absurdity of his own".³ He, Lees and Pope were the Alliance's three most sophisticated advocates between 1853 and 1869.

In his old age, Newman recommended abstinence also from tobacco and meat.⁴ For him as for T.H. Green, progress

1 Addit. MSS. 43669 (Cobden Papers), f. 144: Newman to Cobden, 22 May 1857; People's Paper, 20 Feb. 1858, p. 1.

2 Boston Public Library, U.S.A., Newman-Sargent Letters, (microfilm copy), Newman to Sargent, 30 Dec. 1866.

3 L. Trilling, Matthew Arnold, 1939, p. 172.

4 Newman-Sargent Collection, Newman to Sargent, 11 Feb. 1876.

consisted in the extension rather than in the removal of restraints on individual liberty. The theme running through his whole approach to the drink question is that of the state must promote morality in the citizen: that law must take the place of religion in this rôle.¹

Newman was no blind democrat, and valued forms of government only insofar as they promoted individual morality.² He refused to support Mill at the 1865 election because he rejected Mill's belief that the sole function of the state was to provide protection against violence. "No civil institutions at all can give me self-defence", he said, "except in proportion as my fellow citizens are virtuous".³ Afraid of the urban rabble, he believed that with temperance they might become refined and cultivated, despite their bodily labour.⁴

Newman considered the state's abandonment at the Restoration of its rôle as moral guardian of the citizens "the cardinal heresy of the Liberal party in both continents", and foreshadowed T.H. Green in claiming that man could not be

1 See his 'Moral Influence of Law', in Miscellanies, II, p. 94.

2 I.G. Sieveking, op. cit., p. 84.

3 Alliance News, 6 May 1865.

4 Newman-Sargent Collection, Newman to Sargent, 13 Feb. 1866.

perfected in isolation.¹ The state, he thought, should shelter the weak-willed from temptation just as it should shield the weak in body from attack. Yet Newman combined this positive view of the functions of the state with vigorous opposition to socialism: drink prevented working people from becoming "little capitalists" he thought; like Manning he saw himself in 1868 as participating in a conflict "between the capitalists (chiefly brewers and distillers) on the one side, and the mass of the people on the other".² His attitudes to state intervention form a curious hybrid, and to complicate the picture, while he championed prohibition he strongly opposed compulsory vaccination. Newman's analyses of political situations were sometimes perceptive, often absurdly inept, but always original and vigorous.

F.W. Newman's conviction that Christianity represented but an early stage in man's moral evolution and his rejection of the Bible as a complete guide to life caused him to rely on social institutions rather than on theologians for the defence of morality.³ Jesus' injunctions to indiscriminate

1 F.W. Newman, Lecture on the Action & Reaction between Churches & the Civil Government, 1860, p. 4; 'Moral Influence of Law', Miscellanies, II, p. 94.

2 Reasoner, 6 Jan. 1858, p. 5; Alliance News, 24 Oct. 1868, p. 342.

3 F.W. Newman, 'Moral Influence of Law', Miscellanies, II, p. 94.

charity were a proof, he said, that the New Testament was an inadequate guide to modern living, for such conduct was incompatible with the thrift and industry which alone could raise up the poor.¹

While Bentham himself knew that the state could give "strength and direction to the influence of the moral sanction", many of his disciples felt that the state should abandon all moral functions. Some years before the ideas of T.H. Green became influential, Newman and the prohibitionists reacted strongly against them and saw in prohibition "the turning-point in the new view of the position of governments in the earth".² Although F.W. Newman had been one of the earliest free-traders in Oxford, in 1860 he had jettisoned any notion that free trade was a panacea, and vigorously opposed Gladstone when he tried to apply free trade principles to Drink.³

Even before F.W. Newman joined the Alliance, its spokesmen were using arguments very reminiscent of T.H. Green in defending their organisation against the familiar argument that politicians "could not make men moral by act of parliament". Like the factory reformers of the 1840s, they

1 F.W. Newman, 'The New Testament Inadequate as a Standard of Morals', 1867, (Miscellanies, II, 1887), pp. 160-1).

2 Alliance News, 16 June 1866, p. 190.

3 Alliance News, 24 Mar. 1860, p. 964.

countered laissez-faire clichés with the slogan "what is morally wrong, cannot be politically right". While the non-conformist supporters of the Alliance detested state theology and opposed any state promotion of morality on purely religious grounds, they did not share the view of many Benthamites that the state should abdicate all moral responsibility. They felt that the state could assist morality in two ways - by refraining from increasing the temptation as had been done with the 1830 Beer Act; and by modifying the environment in order to facilitate moral conduct. Just as the gaslamp had curbed theft, said Lees, so local option might curb drunkenness.¹

This led prohibitionists to draw analogies between the state and the individual. Lees vigorously attacked the policeman theory of government in his Prize Essay - the textbook of the Alliance in its earliest years; he maintained that government was "a natural growth from the seed of Humanity, an organism".² The organic metaphor reappears in the Alliance Weekly News of 1857, where the state is described as "an individual organism; a collective individual"; like the individual, the state must ensure that its moral powers regulate its immoral potentialities, and therefore just as

1 F. Lees, op. cit., p. 228.

2 Prize Essay, 3rd Edn., 1857, p. 30.

the individual takes the pledge, so the state must adopt prohibition.¹

Prohibitionists challenged J.S. Mill when he made no provision for moral weaklings, frequently quoted Gladstone's statement that the state "ought to make it easy to do right and difficult to do wrong",² hoped that his belief in a state-conscience would lead him to support prohibition³ and applauded emotionally at Alliance meetings when speakers mentioned the prayer "lead us not into temptation". Thus by the 1850s the temperance movement, which had begun partly to fulfil a need created by the attack on state theology, was now demanding that the state should resume its moral responsibility.

Furthermore, Alliance leaders were well aware from the start that their efforts would have a rejuvenating effect on politics in general.⁴ "We cannot succeed in giving vitality to a great moral principle", Samuel Pope declared, "without effecting more than our immediate object"; Alliance efforts would "infuse a new morality into state-action".⁵ More

1 Alliance Weekly News, 7 Nov. 1857, 20 Nov. 1858.

2 Quo. in W. Hoyle, Our National Resources & How They Are Wasted, cheap edn., 1871, p. 110.

3 U.K.A., 13th Annual Rept., 1864-5, p. 39.

4 See below, pp. 442ff

5 Alliance News, 28 Oct. 1865, p. 337.

important, Alliance leaders recognised the significance of their statements in the history of political theory. "The Whigs and Radicals, since Bentham, have tried to throw away good principles which had been either neglected or perverted", said Samuel Pope in 1865.¹

How far were intellectual influences responsible for the Alliance position? Samuel Pope mentioned only one such authority - Guizot's statement in his History of Civilisation that the progress of society "not only allows, but absolutely depends upon, the subjection of individual wills to the public power".² F.R. Lees quoted Thomas Arnold's Lectures on History in support of the view that the state must have a sense of right and wrong.³ But a glance at Lees' Alliance Prize Essay shows that the prohibitionists could turn Bentham's writings against his own disciples and supports the view that Bentham's works encouraged rather than hindered 19th century collectivism.⁴ In the Alliance, Bentham's influence blends with humanitarianism to produce state intervention in its most extreme form.

1 Alliance News, 28 Oct. 1865, p. 337.

2 Alliance Weekly News, 31 May 1856, p. 178.

3 F.R. Lees, Alliance Prize Essay, 3rd Edn., 1857, p. 31.

4 J.B. Brebner, art. cit., p. 62.

Lees cited Bentham's Principles of Morals and Legislation, his Principles of Penal Law, and his Principles of the Civil Code; liberty, Bentham wrote, "which is one branch of security, ought to yield to general security, since it is not possible to make any laws but at the expense of liberty".¹ More important was Bentham's "greatest happiness" dictum, for which Lees and Washington Wilks shared a penchant. "Bentham says that the true object of all law is the greatest happiness of the greatest number", declared Wilks amid cheers to an Alliance meeting in 1864: "and I want to know how you reconcile with that principle a system which ruins many for the advantage of only a very few, which makes more orphans and widows than the bloodiest campaign".²

Nevertheless, it is probably significant that only a very small proportion of Lees' Prize Essay is devoted to the philosophical justification of prohibition. The vast bulk of the book consists of facts, testimonies and statistics. It was practical day-to-day experience which forced the temperance reformer to support state intervention, not philosophical influence: "here practice, and not theory, is our best guide", wrote Livesey in 1860 justifying his attack on

1 Quo. in F.R. Lees, Alliance Prize Essay, 3rd Edn., 1857, p. 19, from Bentham's Principles of the Civil Code.

2 W. Wilks, The Two Last Speeches ..., U.K.A., 1864, p. 9.

free trade.¹

The moral responsibilities of the state, which F.W. Newman considered so important, were also emphasised by a third eminent Victorian T.H. Green, who like F.W. Newman was an Alliance devotee. He was particularly concerned at the degree to which a laissez faire economy could actually infringe individual liberty. This led him to define liberty in more positive terms than Mill, but here too the Alliance had anticipated him.

A water-drinker in his Rugby schooldays, Green tried unsuccessfully to reclaim his brother from intemperance in the 1860s.² By 1873 Green was publicly defending the Permissive Bill at Oxford against Harcourt's attacks and described temperance as "that question which of all others is of the most pressing social importance in our towns".³ He later engaged in licensing agitation in Oxford, helped establish a coffee-house in St. Clement's and held office in several temperance bodies. He was still enthusiastic for temperance legislation in 1881 - it was "the next great conquest which

1 Alliance Weekly News, 17 Mar. 1860, p. 960.

2 R.L. Nettleship, Memoir of Thomas Hill Green, 1906, p. 45.

3 T.H. Green to W.V. Harcourt, n.d. (presumably reply to Harcourt's letter of 7 Jan. 1873) in Balliol College, T.H. Green Collection, Black Box.

our democracy on behalf of its own true freedom, has to make".¹

Prohibitionists were enunciating many of the doctrines in the 1850s and 1860s which are now conventionally ascribed to T.H. Green. Long before Green's lectures on Political Obligation were delivered, Alliance supporters were outlining three of Green's tenets - an enlarged conception of liberty, the need for legislative aids to morality, and the need for state interference to enable the laws of political economy to function.

The Alliance defined liberty in positive terms - as "the state of a balanced and rational exercise of power, defined by the constitutional limits of the law".² This entailed a positive interpretation of the rôle of the state - it must teach, discipline, and educate its citizens; feed and clothe its delinquents and orphans. Government "must not only resist wrong", said Lees, "but do many things necessary to prevent wrong".³ Utility must be the test of legislation and it was a "vulgar fallacy" to oppose law to liberty.⁴

1 'Liberal Legislation & Freedom of Contract', 1881, in Works (Ed. Nettleship, 1886), III, p. 386.

2 Meliora, II, No. 8, p. 345 (c. 1861).

3 Alliance Prize Essay, 3rd Edn., 1857, p. 30.

4 Meliora, II, No. 8, p. 345.

Alliance supporters felt that if private liberty and the public good should conflict, private liberty must give way. Similarly Green, defending the Permissive Bill at Oxford in 1873, felt that the gulf between Harcourt and the "constructive" Liberals was wider than that between Liberals and Conservatives;¹ temperance reformers, he said, knew "the difference between that liberty of the subject which is compatible with the real freedom of others, and that which merely means freedom to make oneself a social nuisance".²

Unfortunately, neither Green nor the Alliance was able convincingly to define what was the "acknowledged social good"³ with which demands for liberty must not be allowed to conflict; or rather, the public never acknowledged that the prohibitionists' infringements of liberty were compatible with the "social good". Green's parallel between temperance and factory or health legislation was inexact. While the latter had curtailed the liberties of the employing few for the sake of the employed many, the public always felt that the former would curtail the liberties of the sober many for the sake of the drunken few.

1 Oxford Chronicle, 4 Jan. 1873, p. 3.

2 ibid.

3 'Liberal Legislation & Freedom of Contract', p. 386.

Secondly, prohibitionists anticipated Green in his belief that the moral progress demanded by advancing civilisation required not less interference with individual liberty, but more. While state interference might recede from restrictions on trade, wrote one prohibitionist in the 1860s, it was advancing towards restrictions on factory hours and brutal sports: the "cardinal virtue of State action" was "freedom to do right, opposition and loss of liberty in doing wrong".¹ If state intervention had in the past been harmful, wrote F.R. Lees, this was not because state intervention was in itself harmful, but simply because it had hitherto been ill-informed. "It is not necessarily less legislation that we want, but wiser", he argued.² Like Green, Lees felt no presumption against state control: each case must be decided on its merits. After all, without the state, even property itself would not exist.³

It was not that prohibitionists sought to make moral conduct compulsory; like the sabbatarians they merely sought, by modifying the environment, to make it feasible. Green's views were identical: constructive Liberals, he told Harcourt in 1873, were well able to distinguish "between the possibility

1 Meliora, Vol. XI, No. 44, pp. 295, 303 (c. 1868).

2 F.R. Lees, Alliance Prize Essay, 3rd Edn., 1857, pp. 30-1.

3 ibid., p. 30.

of making men moral by Act of Parliament and that of removing positive social obstacles to their morality".¹ The law could not make men good, but it could set men free to make themselves good, and this required housing inspection, provision of allotments, compulsory education and liquor restriction - all infringements of strict laissez faire principle.

The origins of modern welfare legislation can be found in 19th century legislation designed to promote morality as well as in 19th century humanitarian legislation. Considerations of morality lay behind the legislative demands of both the Alliance and T.H. Green. Macaulay cited sabbatarian legislation as a precedent for interference with factory hours.² Even those items of state intervention which are now barely distinguishable from welfare legislation were often inspired by concern for moral progress rather than for material comfort. Thus factory legislation owed much to the Labour aristocrat's desire to inculcate morality and religion in his fellow mill-hands; housing legislation owed much to the desire to prevent sexual promiscuity; and public supervision of the water supply owed much to the desire to curb drunkenness. Hence the close connexion between Evangelicalism

1 Oxford Chronicle, 4 Jan. 1873, p. 3.

2 Speech on the Ten Hours' Bill, Works (Edinburgh Edn., 1897), VIII, p. 368 (22 May 1846).

and social reform in the 19th century.

The attack on poverty is hardly distinguishable from the attack on immorality at a time when poverty was widely regarded as the consequence of sin and when godliness was considered to be great gain . Most mid-Victorians felt that morality was best promoted by fostering self-help, but where self-help seemed inefficient for the purpose , the state must intervene. Self-help was a means , not an end . Those who favoured state intervention in the liquor trade were often the most convinced opponents of state intervention elsewhere.¹

The prohibitionist Green was as convinced as the socialist Owen that individual perfection was impossible in isolation.² All members of the community must be raised up together. Here too the Alliance anticipated Green's viewpoint, in words which might well be used to defend the modern welfare state. Need society be so arranged , asked the Alliance , that "no feeble one shall stand , no defenceless person be protected , no ailing body supported" ? Was there not "a certain amount of care which society should

1. Wakefield Journal & Examiner, 24 Nov 1854, p.5; cf. Birmingham Mercury, 3 Mar 1855, p.5.

2. R.Owen, New View of Society, p.17; T.H.Green, 'Principles of Political Obligation', in Works, II, pp.345-6; cf. M.Arnold, Culture & Anarchy, p.192; F.W.Newman, 'Moral Influence of Law', (1860), in his Miscellanies, II, p.94.

collectively bestow on its weak, its unformed, and its mis-formed members, so that there shall be amongst them as little necessity of failure, as much freedom from temptation....as shall at any rate secure...to every one of them the possibility of standing"?¹

Thirdly, prohibitionists anticipated Green when they invoked state regulation as an aid to the smooth functioning of the conventional laws of political economy. These latter presupposed the existence of the rational citizen making his economic decisions after mature consideration of his long-term self-interest. It is not surprising that drink and education were among the first spheres in which objections to state aid and supervision were jettisoned. State regulation of ignorance could be defended in the same way as state regulation of drunkenness. The Alliance often argued, like George Combe, that as long as men choose to live in society, they must recognise their social obligations; that the state had a right "to train every faculty to the extent to which its action is necessary to enable the individual to discharge his social duties, and no further".² If political economy were the science of maximising wealth, moreover, prohibition was as necessary as education, factory and health legislation.

1 Alliance Weekly News, 7 May 1859, p. 781.

2 G. Combe, Remarks on National Education, 1847, p. 5.

"I wish true political economy had long since been applied to this subject..." wrote Livesey of the licensing question in 1855: "for its verdict must have been to close every distillery, brewery, and drinkshop in the land".¹

Green, the Alliance and J.S. Mill all wished to see the activities of the citizen "freely determined by the idea of a possible satisfaction of himself".² All would have preferred the citizen to be ~~have~~ in this way without state aid; but the Alliance and Green were more aware than J.S. Mill that it was extremely difficult for working men to act in this way unless assisted by the state. Not only must the state act: it must act quickly. Both Green and the prohibitionists had personal experience of slum visiting and of the violence which could issue from these areas. Such experience often weakened the slum visitor's attachment to laissez faire principles.

Thus Green rebuked Harcourt in 1873 for underestimating the seriousness of a vice which produced such "degradation and hopeless waste".³ How could it be right to force a man to educate his children and yet be wrong to prevent him from

1 J. Livesey, Letter to J. Wilson Patten, 1855, p. 11.

2 'Liberal Legislation & Freedom of Contract', p. 386.

3 Green to Harcourt, n.d. (presumably draft of the reply to Harcourt's letter of 7 Jan. 1873), Balliol College: T.H. Green MSS.

degrading them through drink? Education could never benefit the drunken family, said Green; drunkenness must first be checked by legislation which would produce "a dead lift of the national conscience".¹ Moral suasion and education were remedies which acted too slowly: a drunken population, said Green, "naturally perpetuates and increases itself". In reply to Mill's argument that education would gradually cure the evil of intemperance, Green maintained that it was "dangerous to wait".²

Thus a fear of the uneducated mob dominated the attitudes of a Liberal like Green as obsessively as those of that arch-opponent of democracy, Carlyle; it drove them both into enthusiastically supporting the Permissive Bill.³ For Green, as for the Alliance, prohibition was an emergency measure, designed to prevent further decay and to enable other agencies to take effect. Though the idea was seldom expressed, some Alliance supporters, including Samuel Pope, felt that prohibition might be needed only as a temporary measure: "a break in the custom might, in our present state of civilisation, be all that the case requires", wrote M.D. Hill.⁴ A population

1 ibid.; cf. his speech in Oxford Chronicle, 1 Feb. 1873, p. 8.

2 'Liberal Legislation & Freedom of Contract', pp. 375, 385.

3 Carlyle's "most earnest public wishes" went with the Permissive Bill: U.K.A. 20th Annual Rept., 1871-2, p. 62.

4 R. & F. Hill, The Recorder of Birmingham, 1878, p. 276; cf. Pope, in Stanley-Pope Discussion, Pope's letter dated 26 Sept. 1856.

trained under a Permissive Bill might eventually be able to do without any restraint at all.

In three respects, the Alliance and T.H. Green made a false diagnosis. In retrospect it seems that both were too pessimistic: they exaggerated the seriousness of the danger, though the mistake is readily understandable in reformers constantly brought face-to-face with the degrading consequences of "liberty". Aided both by publicans and temperance reformers, society in the 1860s was already beginning to adjust itself to the recreational requirements of industrial society - with organised sport, shorter working hours, railway excursions, and mass entertainment. The state, notably with the health, housing and factory legislation of Disraeli's great ministry, soon showed that it recognised its responsibilities to the new electors.

Too pessimistic in one direction, T.H. Green and the Alliance were too optimistic in another. They exaggerated both the duration and the intensity of the influence of the labour aristocracy over working people as a whole. They could not foresee that the late 19th century mechanisation of the skilled trades and the decline of nonconformity would destroy the Labour Aristocracy on which they both relied as the moral pace-setter to the working class as a whole. By the end of the 19th century, that gulf between the respectable and the "residuum" which lent such vigour to Victorian moral

reform movements was already narrowing.¹ Nor, even in their heyday, did labour aristocrats unanimously support the Alliance.

Finally, Green too readily assumed that a sober working man would never cast a conservative vote, and that if his reason had been undisturbed he would naturally have voted Liberal in 1874. Green was bitterly disappointed by this election result, and by the way in which working people used their new-found Saturday afternoon leisure.² Events in the last quarter of the 19th century were to show that mid-Victorian radicals and liquor restrictionists had underestimated the strength of genuine conservatism among working people.

With J.S. Mill, F.W. Newman and T.H. Green, discussion of the temperance question centred on the relationship between the state and the individual. With Manning, it centred primarily on the relationship between the father and his family. While J.S. Mill certainly wished to civilise the relationship between husband and wife, he relied on education for the remedy. Manning, however, looked to the Permissive

1 E.J. Hobsbawm, 'The Labour Aristocracy in 19th Century Britain', in Democracy & the Labour Movement, Ed. J. Saville, 1954, pp. 228-30.

2 MS. notes by "C.A.F.", p. 5, in T.H. Green MSS.

Bill for assistance. Fortunately, unlike the enigmatic Green, Manning left behind sufficient autobiographical detail to indicate his personal and priestly motives for espousing prohibition. These can first be considered before proceeding to the public motives inspiring his crusade.

It was his public adherence to the Alliance in 1868 and not his work on the 1870 Relief Committee, which first introduced Manning to the philanthropic world. Throughout his lifetime, his attachment to the Alliance brought him embarrassment, hostility and disappointment; yet he signed the teetotal pledge in 1872 and was always proud that he had espoused the temperance cause.¹ When Vaughan his successor failed to follow his lead into the Alliance, Manning deleted his name from the list of his executors.² Why such zeal?

Manning's connexion with the temperance movement began when an Alliance deputation in 1865 persuaded him to read Lees' Prize Essay and the 1853-4 public-houses report. In the latter he "read such a tale of horror that it reminded

1 J. Oldcastle [pseud. for W. Meynell] (Ed.), 'Sayings of Cardinal Manning', in Merry England, March 1892. See Appendix, Plate 64 - Manning's notes for a temperance speech.

2 A. Chapeau, 'Cardinal Manning & his Social Work' (thesis for Diplôme d'Etudes Supérieures, Sorbonne, 1943), p. 67; I am most grateful to Father Chapeau for granting me access to his thesis; cf. E.S. Purcell, Life of Cardinal Manning, 2nd Edn., 1896, II, p. 604.

him of what they read in the Book of the Prophet Ezechiel"¹
 But it would be superficial to attribute Manning's prohibitionist zeal solely to Alliance pressure, or even to his genuine horror at the consequences of drunkenness , for he was in no way dominated by the Alliance.

He publicly displayed his independence in two respects. He felt that the state should promote improved working-class housing and provide counter-attractions to the public-house,² whereas the Alliance placed greater emphasis on the extent to which these could be obtained through individual self-denial. Secondly , his devotion to the Permissive Bill did not prevent him from showing receptiveness to other remedies: he regarded the Alliance agitation as a salutary educative influence whether its Bill were passed or not , and unlike the Alliance he was ready to support any proposal for licensing restriction, however timid.³ He told Gladstone in 1868 that he favoured the Permissive Bill "but with such riders, or adjuncts as shall make its execution reasonable and not extreme".⁴

1. Cardinal Manning, A National Danger, & its Remedies, 1879, p.1; cf. Alliance News, 26 Oct 1867, p.337; 17 Oct 1868, p.332.

2. Parl. Papers 1867-8 xiv (402), qq.2386, 2408, 2428.

3. V.A. McClelland, 'The Social Work & Influence of Henry Edward Manning 1865-1892' (Birmingham M.A. thesis, 1957), pp.377-8; cf. H. Carter, op.cit., p.142.

4. B.M. Addit. MSS. 44249 (Gladstone Papers) f.66: Manning to Gladstone, 27 Oct 1868.

When he committed himself to supporting the Alliance in 1868, Manning gave three reasons for his action: first, parliament continued to ignore evidence which he regarded as convincing that temperance legislation was urgently needed; second, the 1868 Sunday Closing committee's evidence, to which he himself had contributed, revealed a need to educate the public on the temperance question; and third, franchise extension enhanced the political dangers of widespread intemperance.¹ None of these reasons reveals the roots of his prohibitionist zeal. These are partly to be found in his unusual personality, for like other temperance reformers - F.R. Lees, for instance, or F.W. Newman - he was an extremist by temperament. "It seems to me that some one ought to be extreme", he wrote in 1890, "that is to pursue truth to the utmost, and to hold up in everything the highest standard".² Other roots more accessible to the historian lie in his view of the rôle which the Catholic church should play in British life, and in his fears about the religious and social consequences of industrialisation.

Behind Manning's temperance zeal lay a desire to improve the "image" of Catholicism in England: this could best be

1 Alliance News, 17 Oct. 1868, p. 332.

2 Manning Papers, St. Mary of the Angels, Bayswater, Book 9, (1890 memoranda), p. 119.

done by pursuing two related policies - civilising the Irish and introducing the Catholics into English public life. Both policies drew Manning in a democratic direction: both drew him into temperance activity. An important constituent of English hostility to Catholicism was the notorious drunkenness of Irish immigrants in English cities. English prejudices against the wild Irish from the rookeries had embarrassed his predecessor Wiseman, during the Garibaldi riots, and caused trouble to Manning himself during the Fenian outrages.¹ Manning's prestige within the Catholic church in England could hardly suffer from any increase in the respectability of the Irish working people with whom he allied himself. He therefore spent his life "working for the Irish occupation in England" and found in temperance agitation an admirable instrument for his purpose.²

He seems to have been genuinely attached to his Irish flock, to whose habits he often humorously alluded in his speeches. "If I were an Irish hodman", he once declared, "I should be a drunkard".³ He visited their slum dwellings, sympathised with their problems and felt that in temperance

1 Times, 3 Oct. 1862, p. 6; cf. H.B. Bradlaugh, Life of Charles Bradlaugh, 1902, I, pp. 214-6; E.S. Purcell, op. cit., II, pp. 393, 610.

2 Manning Papers, 'Autobiographical Notes' (Vol. 8), p. 33, 8 Feb. 1887.

3 S. Leslie, Henry Edward Manning, 2nd Edn., 1921, p. 331.

association he had found a remedy. One of his earliest temperance activities was to grant an indulgence in 1867 to all who would keep the "Truce of St. Patrick", or abstain during the three days' Feast of St. Patrick; he wanted to prevent his Church from being disgraced by the drunkenness accompanying its festivals.¹ Manning admired Father Mathew, whose work he felt he was merely continuing; and he worked in close co-operation with the Irish bishops, whose enthusiasm for Sunday closing he greatly admired.

Manning hoped that by promoting temperance he would stop the leak of Catholic slum children into Protestant rescue homes of the Barnardo type.² Not only did drink financially starve the Catholic schools which he was struggling to build. It also minimised the beneficial effects of the education they provided. He saw in his Catholic teetotal organisation - the League of the Cross - a "vigilance society" which would civilise the Irish priests, whose drunkenness caused much trouble in these early years.³ And above all, Manning's temperance activities might bring him into contact with the daily lives of the Irish working people. Manning

1 A. Chapeau, op. cit., pp. 56-7.

2 H.E. Manning, The Temperance Speeches of Cardinal Manning, (Ed. C. Kegan Paul), 1894, p. 88.

3 Manning Papers, 1890 memoranda, p. 100; cf. M.V. Sweeney, in G.A. Beck (Ed.), The English Catholics 1850-1950 (1950), p. 134.

felt that this latter objective had been attained when he claimed at the end of his life that the League of the Cross lay behind his success with the London dockers, many of whom were Irish, in the Dock Strike of 1889.¹

The complementary branch of Manning's policy within the Catholic church was to combat the "club theory" - the introverted and aristocratic character of English Catholicism as he found it. His temperance activity helped achieve this in two ways: it emphasised that the English Catholics' future lay with the working people, with the Irish, and with democracy; and it brought the English Catholics into public life, helped restore their self-confidence after a long period of subjection, and helped combat the view, widespread among Englishmen, that Catholicism was "un-English". Manning told the 1868 Sunday Closing committee that Catholic priests had hitherto been isolated from contemporary events, and added "the more we co-operate in large general work the better: hitherto it has not been possible, but now I am happy to say it is very possible".²

Manning and J.H. Newman could hardly conflict more strikingly than in their attitudes to the drink question. While J.H. Newman shared the attitude of the aristocratic

1 1890 Memoranda, p. 100; cf. E.S. Purcell, op. cit., II, p. 604.

2 Parl. Papers, 1867-8, xiv (402), Q. 2446.

Catholic élite and exasperated his brother by expressing indifference whether there were too many drinkshops or too few,¹ Manning devoted immense energy to a public attack on the drink trade. Manning had always admired Quaker philanthropic energies and knew that a Quaker had been responsible for Father Mathew's conversion to teetotalism. If Anti-Corn Law League history was any guide, the Alliance in the late 1860s bore all the signs of coming success; it therefore seemed ideal for Manning's purpose.

Considered purely from the viewpoint of Catholic internal politics, Manning's adherence to the Alliance in 1868 was therefore a very shrewd move. He was still pursuing the same policy in 1890: "the whole civil and political life of England is open to us", he wrote, "if we know how to enter, and how to bear ourselves".² Shortly before his death he urged Vaughan to mix boldly with the English people: "they will trust you", he said, "but not my brother Benson".³

Yet it would be wrong to attribute Manning's zeal for prohibition exclusively to sectarian motives. He was genuinely concerned at a serious social problem and knew from personal

1 T. Kenny, Political Thought of John Henry Newman, 1957, p. 172, but see below, pp. 317-8

2 Manning Papers, 1890 memoranda, p. 22.

3 Manning Papers: Manning to Vaughan, 13 Feb. 1890.

observation the misery it caused. Two gnawing fears governed his public motives for espousing prohibition - the fear of religious apathy and the fear of political and social **revolution**. The safeguard against both was the contented domestic life, and this, in Manning's view, laissez faire could never obtain for the working classes as a whole.

Manning knew that social and religious conditions interacted. For him, human beings were "soul-bodies", temples of the Holy Ghost: one half could not be improved without the other, and he regarded drink as a barrier preventing the individual from accepting Christian teaching.¹ In 1871 he claimed that society was ceasing to be Christian, though the nation's voluntary religious energies might yet save the situation.² In these circumstances, temperance effort became a means of religious recruiting. Manning, never strong on theology, thus helped promote that turning away from doctrinal and liturgical controversy towards moral reform which characterises late-Victorian religion; his example encouraged his Anglican competitors to do the same.³

J.H. Newman was perhaps more perceptive: his indiffer-

1 V.A. McClelland, op. cit., pp. 56, 80.

2 B.M. Addit. MSS. 44249 (Gladstone Papers), f. 282: Manning to Gladstone, 13 Nov. 1871.

3 Church of England Temperance Magazine, 1 Apr. 1867, pp. 99-100.

ence to prohibitionist agitation sprang, not from unconcern at the drink problem, but from a fear that the Alliance was one of many contemporary movements withdrawing matters of conduct from religious jurisdiction. He complained in 1878 that men were now expected to be virtuous on purely secular grounds. "We are having a wedge thrust into us which tends to the destruction of religion altogether", he wrote.¹ He thus felt that Manning, with all his prohibitionist campaigning, was achieving precisely the reverse of his leading objective; over the perspective of eighty years who can say that Newman was wrong?

One final influence on Manning was his fear of revolution. Like Shaftesbury, he always half-expected direct and catastrophic Divine intervention in human affairs. Only the cultivation of national virtue would, he thought, preserve England's earthly power. Personally of extremely ascetic habits, he felt that the nation was becoming morally soft, and hoped that a dose of abstinence might rejuvenate it. He readily caught at the "modern Babylon" strain which had always been present in temperance advocacy; the great city for him was a threat to civilisation and to religion itself.²

1 T. Kenny, op. cit., pp. 171-2.

2 H.E. Manning, Temperance Reformation: The United Kingdom Alliance & 'Local Option', 1882, p. 16; cf. E.S. Purcell, op. cit., I, pp. 201ff.

The fear of social catastrophe haunted him as persistently as the Last Judgment haunted Newman. Even the best legislation in a corrupt social order was "no more than the beauty of the country lying upon the volcano", he claimed in 1868. "There is beneath it a power so ungovernable, a moral and spiritual power so terrible, that at any moment the justest and best laws may be scattered to ruin".¹

In his attitude to revolution, Manning displayed fears and prejudices very similar to those of the American Progressives.² He feared subversive conspiracies inspired by continental revolutionaries, and after the Commune probably saw himself as the English archbishop of Paris, martyred by London's drunken mob.³ He felt that the decay of religion and the exploitation of the masses by a small group of self-interested drink manufacturers were preparing the way for disaster, and that in the large towns drunkenness had gained the most tyrannous control

Manning's temperance zeal helps to explain his flirtation with socialism late in life. He thought that the drink interest was fattening on the impoverishment of the working classes; it employed a capital greater than that employed

1 Alliance News, 17 Oct. 1868, p. 332.

2 R. Hofstadter, The Age of Reform (1961 Paperback Edn.), pp. 174ff.

3 E.S. Purcell, op. cit., II, p. 469; cf. S. Leslie, op. cit., p. 241.

in iron, cotton, or cloth.¹ Without temperance legislation, he felt that rich and poor would drift ever more widely apart. As early as 1868, he believed that the drink trade was wielding "a tyranny over the country and over Parliament itself".² His fear of drunkenness helped convince him, as it convinced many contemporary Liberals and churchmen, that in certain circumstances, capitalism could infringe the public interest and that laissez faire must be "met and checked by a moral condition".³

It was fear of social catastrophe which inspired Manning's intervention in the Dock Strike: "at any moment", he said, "a drunkard, or a madman, or a fool might have set fire to the docks and warehouses".⁴ He thought the Permissive Bill would minimise the danger by promoting self-reliance in the provincial cities and by insulating them from the drunkenness which he thought might easily cause revolution in London.⁵ A temperate population would be more sceptical

1 'Our National Vice', 1886, in Miscellanies, 1888, III, p. 235.

2 Alliance News, 26 Oct. 1867, p. 337.

3 H.E. Manning, The Rights and Dignity of Labour, 1887, p. 21.

4 V.A. McClelland, op. cit., p. 260.

5 H.E. Manning, Temperance Reformation: The U.K.A. & 'Local Option', p. 20.

of revolutionary ideas and, most important of all, would spend its leisure time at home rather than in the streets or taverns where revolutionary doctrines were disseminated.

Manning complained that no population was less domestic in habits than the poor in the large English towns, especially in London. Since he believed that political order rested on the purity and integrity of family life, he naturally singled out prostitution and drink, the great home-breakers, as the prime objects for attack.¹ Liquor restriction would make the home more attractive in relation to the public-house because it would release funds for the purchase of consumer goods, especially textiles.²

In championing the home against the drinking place, wives and children against husbands, Manning like many late-Victorian social reformers and clergymen was carrying the pursuit of liberty beyond the point where Mill had left it - inside the family itself. One of the few occasions on which a late Victorian wife might legitimately remonstrate with her husband was in trying to keep him from the public-house.³ Manning loved children almost to the point of sentimentality,

1 H.E. Manning, 'Our National Vice', p. 235.

2 H.E. Manning, Temperance Speeches, pp. 86, 144.

3 M.K. Ashby, Joseph Ashby of Tysoe, 1961, p. 140.

and believed that prohibition would follow naturally from female enfranchisement.¹ Rerum Novarum, which Manning himself helped produce, held that it was right for the state to invoke the aid of the law "if circumstances were such as that among the working class the ties of family life were relaxed".² By the early 20th century, Liberals had at last come to concern themselves with the right of the child to protection against parental neglect.³ Prohibitionists had been preaching this message for half a century.

A study of the temperance viewpoints of Mill, F.W. Newman, T.H. Green and Manning thus reveals how obscure Alliance spokesmen, now forgotten, were moving in the 1850s and early 1860s away from individual palliation and towards state prevention of social ills - from individualism to collectivism. Collectivism, that is, not in the narrow sense of state ownership or control over the means of production: Alliance supporters were vigorous opponents of socialism; Lees wrote a tract against it; and there were good reasons why prohibitionists' horror of drunkenness should never lead

1 H.E. Manning, The Temperance Reformation: The U.K.A. & 'Local Option', p. 15; A. Chapeau, op. cit., pp. 27-8, 37, 40.

2 Pope Leo XIII: Rerum Novarum (Catholic Truth Society Edn., 1954), p. 26: I owe this reference to Mr. C.J. Rigby.

3 L.T. Hobhouse, Liberalism, n.d., p. 40.

them, like many Liberals, to embrace nationalisation or municipalisation of the drink trade.¹ The prohibitionist campaign marks a progress rather towards collectivism in its broadest sense - encouraging the state to move away from laissez faire and towards a more protective and less exclusively policing rôle.

The "great names" in the history of this development include two figures, Manning and T.H. Green, whose collectivist ideas sprang largely from their need to defend the local veto which Pope, F.W. Newman and F.R. Lees had been advocating since the 1850s. The history of the Alliance certainly bears out Noel Annan's dictum that in the history of political thought "to cull and admire the finest flowers does not tell us enough of the soil in which they are planted".²

But to return to the beginning: why did nonconformist liberty-lovers seek so drastically to infringe individual liberty through the Alliance after 1853? The contradiction between their attitudes to drink and their attitudes to state control of factories or state regulation of education is more apparent than real. In the field of education, nonconformists

¹ See below, pp. 527 ff.

² N. Annan, Leslie Stephen, 1951, p. 272.

felt no doctrinaire objection to state regulation provided that it could not be turned to the religious and economic advantage of the Anglicans and aristocrats so influential at Westminster. In opposing Graham's educational proposals of 1843, nonconformists feared Anglican proselytism; but no such danger could be anticipated from state prohibition of the drink trade. On the contrary, by recruiting the ranks of the labour aristocracy, prohibition might actually recruit the ranks of nonconformity.

Furthermore, although Baines and Bright never supported the Alliance, the prohibitionist campaign against Drink after 1853 was as much dominated by opposition to Ascendancy as the voluntarist campaign of the 1840s in education. For it branded as futile the whole system of liquor licensing which magistrates, brewers and parsons helped to administer, and attacked the pockets of important sections of the agricultural interest with which Anglican parsons were allied.

Similarly the contradiction between the opposition by many nonconformists to factory legislation and nonconformist support for prohibition is less marked than at first sight it seems. Firstly, both campaigns could only extend the industrial employer's freedom of manoeuvre - the one by emancipating him from government inspectors, the other by disciplining his work force. Secondly, the machinery of state intervention differed in the two cases. While the Factory

Acts created a system of centralised and continuous inspection of industrial relationships , prohibition would create no such system.

Far from envisaging greater and more continuous state control over the actions of the individual citizen, the Permissive Bill proposed to create no centralised machinery from which the ruling classes could profit: indeed, in the shape of the Permissive Bill it would actually promote local self-government. By simultaneously draining off the government's drink revenues and reducing the need for government through promoting rationality and self-reliance in the citizen , prohibition could actually minimise the degree of contact between the state and the citizen.

Thirdly , while the agitation over factory hours produced a conflict between commercial and "higher" considerations, the demand for prohibition , though normally advocated on higher grounds, could hardly conflict with commercial considerations , except with those of the drink manufacturers and traders. Prohibition was eminently reconcileable with the wage-fund theory and with the elimination of unproductive investment; it would actually help to create the efficient and rational industrial employee whose existence political economists tended to assume. Alliance supporters likened their measure most frequently to legisla-

tion aimed at removing a nuisance - to sanitary legislation, or to legislation against poisons and against conduct harmful to the community. It was quite possible - indeed very common - to advocate prohibition of the drink trade together with free trade in almost every other sphere.

But insofar as the demand for prohibition after 1853 does represent a softening of nonconformist opposition to state intervention, the change sprang largely from the incompatibility of free trade in drink with the need felt by an increasingly mechanised and crowded society for rational and peaceable conduct in its citizens. Alliance supporters resorted to state intervention largely because of the practical problems with which they had been faced as moral suasionists. In their desire to extend individual liberty by giving mind greater control over body, they had to resort to ever more drastic expedients.

Thus if most mid-Victorians rejected state intervention in spheres where in retrospect it seems most desirable, an influential mid-Victorian minority favoured a full measure of state intervention in a sphere where it no longer seems required. This emphasises two sources of contrast between 19th and 20th century England - first, the seriousness of the drink problem in the 19th century; and second, the remarkable faith held by many mid-Victorians that the New Jerusalem could be built on earth - the fact that "hidden in every

Dissenter is a Fifth Monarchy man, struggling to get out".¹
The history of the Alliance reminds the 19th century
historian that mid-Victorian nonconformity, like 17th century
Calvinism,² contained two largely contradictory tendencies -
a militant individualism, certainly, but also an authori-
tarian collectivism.

1 A.J.P. Taylor, The Trouble Makers, 1957, p. 170.

2 R.H. Tawney, Religion & the Rise of Capitalism, 1961,
Pelican Edn., p. 226.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE PROHIBITIONIST CAMPAIGN: II:

ALLIANCE SUPPORT, ORGANISATION & METHODS.

How did the local veto become a political issue in the 1870s? Considering the parliamentary strength of the drink interest and the hostility which extreme solutions to the drink problem provoked in members of the class from which parliament was recruited, the position achieved by the Alliance by 1869 was remarkable and by no means inevitable. It was attained largely through organisation and energy which inspired admiration even in its opponents. Alliance efficiency was at once its glory and its weakness, since the agitative skill of its leaders deceived both themselves and the public as to the strength of public support for their policy.

The Alliance, though now less well known than its predecessors the Catholic Emancipation, Parliamentary Reform, Anti-Slavery and Anti-Corn Law movements, represents the culmination - even the reductio ad absurdum - of the techniques these campaigns had elaborated. It certainly saw itself in this tradition of reforming agitations. "The Alliance movement would make the fifth great struggle in this century", said F.W. Newman in 1865, "and it would be as

successful and as triumphant as the others".¹ If energy and resourcefulness alone could have brought political success in mid-Victorian England, the Alliance would undoubtedly have succeeded. Hence the importance of considering in detail the sources of Alliance support, its propagandist techniques and its electoral organisation.

I

Firstly, Alliance sources of support. These can be discussed under three heads - support in parliament, by social class, and by region. Parliament's attitude to the Local Veto cannot be understood without considering the type of campaign which the Alliance tried to organise, for it differed in emphasis from that of the Anti-Corn Law League. While both movements recognised the need to educate public opinion, the League tried to do this directly through public lectures, whereas the Alliance preferred the indirect method of parliamentary discussion; the Alliance thus bears a closer relationship than the League to the modern "pressure group".² Its agitation was designed "not so much to create public opinion, as to create an opinion about public opinion".³

1 Alliance News, 28 Oct. 1865, p. 344.

2 H.J. Hanham, op. cit., p. 119.

3 W.J.M. Mackenzie, 'Pressure Groups in British Government', British Journal of Sociology, VI, 1955, p. 143.

The Alliance came to regard the process of convincing M.P.s and the public as a tedious preliminary to obtaining a measure which, once enacted, would bring blessings patent to all and would certainly make all further propagandist effort unnecessary. Thus the Alliance tried to coerce parliament almost as ruthlessly as the Hyde Park rioters whom it vigorously condemned. Wilfrid Lawson often emphasised that "parliament only does right through fear",¹ and though he never advocated the threats of mob violence which had accompanied the reforms of 1828, 1832, 1867 and 1869, he and his colleagues in the Alliance certainly sought to frighten parliament with the power of their organisation. Like Cobden, they knew that the aristocracy were "afraid of nothing but systematic organisation, and step by step progress".²

Where reformers believed that public opinion correctly elicited favoured their cause, signs of hostility - interruption of meetings, hostile petitions, demonstrations and riots - were interpreted not as indications of the ground yet to be covered but rather as proofs of the corrupt self-interest and unenlightened obstructiveness of their opponents. In this the Alliance did not differ from other zealous Victorian

1 W. Lawson, Wit & Wisdom, 2nd Edn., 1886, p. 58; cf. ibid., p. 25.

2 Addit. MSS. 43649 (Cobden Papers), f. 150-1: Cobden to Bright, 1 Oct. 1849.

pressure-group agitators; the Anti-Corn Law League had been just as anxious to convey the impression of harmony and unanimity at its meetings, and was as exasperated with Chartist interruptors as were liquor restrictionists with publican or publican-inspired interruptors. In some rural areas, where drink was deliberately employed in stifling new ideas, their view of their opponents was probably justified. But in mid-Victorian cities starved of recreational facilities, they should have treated their opponents with more respect.

Firstly, then, Alliance support in parliament. Insulating themselves from recognising the unpopularity of their cause and deeply impressed with the anomalies and corruptions of the existing electoral system, Alliance leaders like the contemporary Liberation Society¹ underestimated the extent to which parliamentary hostility to the Permissive Bill accurately mirrored public opinion. They found parliamentary resistance to their novel proposals in some ways understandable: they knew that parliamentary prejudices were "not as the walls of Jericho, to be laid low by the blast of the trumpet of truth",² and girded themselves for a long extra-parliamentary campaign similar to that waged by the Anti-Corn

1 W.H. Mackintosh, op. cit., p. 378.

2 U.K.A., 11th Annual Rept., 1863, p. 16.

Law League. But they also felt that certain factors gave parliament a "corporate" attitude on the drink question, and distorted its view of public opinion.

Certainly the drink interest, like the attorneys, exercised an undue influence in the constituencies.¹ Small organised groups of electors could wield great influence at a time when the electorate was small and when there was little to choose between the two leading political parties. Within the House, the agricultural members were very influential, and were thoroughly convinced of the importance of barley to the rural economy. The brewers were influential through their wealth and social connexions. M.T. Bass, like his Burton beer, was popular with the House, privately entertained Gladstone and Bright, and encouraged M.P.s to tour his famous Burton breweries. The prestige of the great London brewers in London's social life naturally lent them an influence over most M.P.s while they were in town.

Again, temperance principles could hardly flourish in a milieu where professional success depended on easy relations with large numbers of men, where rigid attitudes were inappropriate, and where the dinner-party was an important means of perpetuating political groupings. Furthermore, in the 1860s alcohol was still thought to lend vigour to parlia-

¹ Lord R. Cecil, art. cit., p. 56.

mentary speeches, and on these, in the age of the private member, parliamentary majorities still depended.¹ Thus in the mid-Victorian period there was never more than a handful of teetotal M.P.s - on 36 even in 1885.² Dalrymple's Habitual Drunkards Bill of 1871 provoked as much laughter from M.P.s as Buckingham's proposal to appoint the "drunken committee" in 1834.³

But the prime reason for the divergence between parliament and the Alliance lay in the class divergence between Alliance supporters and M.P.s. Teetotalism had never been popular with the social classes from which M.P.s were drawn; the concept of majority rule embodied in the Permissive Bill was still more abhorrent to them if only because it set a precedent for more dangerous infringements of minority rights. Joseph Livesey often reminded Alliance supporters of this. "These gentlemen", he said, "have their cellars stored with the liquor, have it daily on their tables....is it likely that they would pass a Bill that aims to prevent others

1 H.J. Hanham, 'The General Election of 1868. A Study in the Bases of Mid-Victorian Politics', (Cambridge Univ. Ph.D. thesis, 1953), p. viii.

2 A.A. Reade, The House of Commons on Stimulants, 1885, p. 8; in 1860, the House of Commons included only 4 teetotalers - see below, p. 402

3 3 Hansard 204, c. 254 (14 Feb. 1871); and see above, pp. 76ff

enjoying the same according to their means?"¹

Secondly, support from particular social groups: this can be considered in terms of class, sex and religious denomination. The Alliance always felt that the poorest sections of the working class in theory supported prohibition, and that if in practice they continued to drink they were "really praying that....temptation may be removed from them".² This belief stemmed rather from the innate optimism of Alliance leaders than from any empirical evidence. In practice, however, the Alliance could not count on the active support of the very poor. Nor did it enjoy the support of the aristocracy; its list of vice-presidents before 1870 was never adorned with the bishops, admirals and aristocrats who had patronised the British and Foreign Temperance Society. Nor could it rely on many wealthy supporters; Lawson often complained that the Alliance, unlike the Anti-Corn Law League, could never rely on regular and large donations from rich businessmen.³ The numerical strength of the Alliance lay with large sections of the labour aristocracy, with "upper class workmen, the humblest of the middle classes, and,

1 Quo. in H. Carter, op. cit., p. 173; cf. ibid., p. 105.

2 Nathaniel Card, Parl. Papers, 1854, xiv (231), Q. 1954.

3 G.W.E. Russell, Sir Wilfrid Lawson. A Memoir, 1909, p. 74; cf. 3 Hansard 196, c. 645 (12 May 1869).

generally speaking , persons below the class of gentlemen"¹, with men like George Howell, John Cassell, William Lovett, George Potter and Thomas Burt.

The Alliance is one of several contemporary pressure groups which flourished on an identity of interest between labour aristocrats, nonconformists and manufacturers. Such bodies appear anomalous only if 19th century English history is regarded as a period of continuous and inevitable conflict between middle and working classes. Alliance propaganda had many attractions for the labour aristocrat. It frequently emphasised that , proportionally speaking , the working classes were no more drunken than any other class: criticised the political parties for indifference to social reform: admired the American political system: praised self-help and vigorously condemned male selfishness, riots, and thriftlessness.

Instead of concentrating , like some pressure-groups, on privately winning over a few influential individuals by stressing the personal gains which they could expect from reform, the Alliance resembled the Anti-Corn Law League and the Anti-Slavery movement in publicly denouncing the oppression of the many by the few, and engaged in a vigorous public agitation of the "democratic" type.² The masses, said Bagehot, were "very difficult to excite on bare grounds of self-interest; most easy of a bold orator tells them confidently they are wronged"³

1. Economist, 7 July 1855, p. 728.

2. cf. B.M. Addit. MSS. 43386 (Bright Papers), ff. 282-3: C.P. Villiers to John Bright, 25 Dec 1859.

3. W. Bagehot, Works, (Ed. Mrs. Barrington, 1915), III, p. 126.

Positioned as they were mid-way between two threatening powers - the aristocrat and the pauper - many labour aristocrats found in the Alliance a vehicle for defending themselves against both. Many prohibitionists seem to have regarded the Alliance rather as Francis Place regarded the Anti-Corn Law League¹ - they supported it not so much because they had complete faith in its panacea, as because they felt that its political success would weaken aristocratic control at Westminster and strengthen the forces of reform.²

Again, the cessation of drink trading seemed likely to reduce the rates by removing what it was easy at that time to regard as an important cause of pauperism. In mid-Victorian England, the division between respectable and unrespectable poor was of greater political significance than that between employer and employee. "The reformers of '32 raised a loud outcry against hereditary legislators and place-holders", said R.W.Dale in 1867; "I ask you to think of the evils inflicted on the state by hereditary criminals".³ The Alliance campaign appealed to those who felt that once aristocratic pensionaries had been dealt with, the problem of pauper pensionaries must be tackled. The prohibitionist William McKerrow adopted a similar stance in relation to compulsory education; no man, he claimed in 1875, had the right to bring up his family "to be pests and nuisances and burdens to his fellow-men....the

1. Place Newspaper Collection, Set 56 (Oct 1840-Feb 1841), Appendix p.61: Place to Vincent, 21 Jan 1841.

2. See below, pp. 442

3. R.W.Dale, The Politics of the Future, 1867, p.14.

industrious and respectable working-people of a neighbourhood have a right to defend themselves against unnecessary rates, and against the offensive conduct of those by whom they are surrounded".¹

To mobilise the support of labour aristocrats, the Alliance favoured a ratepayer franchise both for the Permissive Bill and for parliamentary elections. "Let there be any extension of the franchise", it claimed, "that shall make the registration spoon dip low enough to take up the cream of the working classes, and we shall sweep all before us in the House of Commons".² Many labour aristocrats had raised themselves in society through self-denial, and knew how closely drunkenness and poverty were interlinked. Their sobriety was one of the most important factors distinguishing them from the "residuum", whose members were characterised by drunkenness and wife-beating.³

Labour aristocrats were never unanimous in support of the Alliance however; the Alliance blinded itself to this by dismissing signs of lower class hostility as emanating from "rather the unworking classes.... a crowd of roughs - a congregation of scamps".⁴ Two factors confirmed the Alliance belief that it enjoyed the support of labour aristocrats -

1. J.M.McKerrow, Memoir of William McKerrow, 1881, p.259.

2. Alliance Weekly News, 7 May 1859, p.781.

3. T.Wright, The Great Unwashed, 1868, p.24.

4. Alliance News, 13 June 1863, p.188.

firstly, its Manchester Free Trade Hall meetings which Samuel Pope was so anxious for Brougham to see,¹ and which were always crowded with Lancashire aristans. Secondly, the canvasses conducted in many parts of England in the early 1860s, which seemed to show a greater enthusiasm for temperance restriction the larger the town and the lower the descent in the social scale. These canvasses, which had the incidental advantage of educating the public in temperance principles, seemed to show that most areas, including the large towns, would be able to produce the two-thirds majority needed to secure a local veto.

Several serious criticisms can be made of these canvasses: it was easier to agree than to disagree with the canvasser, nor could a canvass ever indicate the intensity of support for temperance legislation. If there had been any likelihood of immediate enforcement, far less zeal for the Permissive Bill and for Sunday closing would have been registered. These canvasses made no allowance for those pitfalls of the public-opinion poll - biassed questions, insufficient alternatives and patchy geographical coverage.² Most important of all, they went no lower in the social scale

1 Brougham MSS. Pope to Brougham, 14 Oct. 1859.

2 H. Cantril, Gauging Public Opinion, Princeton, 1944, p. 3; cf. L.W. Doob, Public Opinion & Propaganda, New York, 1948, p. 151.

than the householder, and gave no guide to the views of drinkers in the "dangerous classes". Roebuck in 1864 denied that 13,165 Sheffield Sunday Closers represented local working-class opinion and was able to produce a counter-petition signed by 24,000 Sheffield adult manual labourers.¹

The Cotton Famine reinforced Alliance faith in the labour aristocrats. Though Alliance leaders felt the need to distribute leaflets urging sobriety on Lancashire operatives and emphasising that a thrifty population would have no need of relief funds, they were impressed by the decline of insobriety and crime during the scarcity. Furthermore, the prohibitionists invariably supported North against South in the American Civil War and had close links with H.W. Beecher's campaign to prevent English recognition of the Confederates; they were therefore impressed by the relative enthusiasm for the North prevailing among working people.²

In addition to the support of labour aristocrats, the Alliance depended on a small group of manufacturers and merchants, many of them cotton manufacturers and most of them nonconformists and inhabitants of Lancashire.³ Two other groups from which the Alliance sought support were, as with Josephine Butler's campaign⁴, women and nonconformists. It is difficult to know how far women responded to Alliance

1. 3 Hansard 171, c.311 (3 June 1863).

2. W. Farish, Autobiography of William Farish, 1889, pp.117-8; cf. Meliora, IV, No.16, p.384; V, No.18, p.192.

3. See below, pp. **364, 397, 511**

4. J.L. & B. Hammond, James Stansfeld, pp.148-50.

appeals for aid. These appeals were certainly frequent; it was women's "duty and....prerogative to be a Reformer of all that pertains to social morals and manners", said the Alliance in 1854.¹ Not only were women expert fund-raisers, bazaar organisers and tract distributors: they could also bring to the cause a zeal nourished by self-interest, an energy which only the philanthropic world had yet learned to harness, and the leisure required for all propagandist activities.

Although only about 5% of the donors between 1853 and 1873 were women, as compared with 10-15% of National Temperance League donors, female influence was probably responsible for a much higher percentage.² Alliance leaders resolutely upheld the dignity of women and were among the earliest advocates of female suffrage from which, like American prohibitionists, they felt that they had everything to gain.³ The prohibitionist campaign is thus a noteworthy example of that alliance between feminism and middle class opinion of which Shaw complained so bitterly.⁴

1. U.K.A., Address to the Ladies of Great Britain & Ireland, 1854, p.2.

2. All fund analysis derives from subscription lists printed at the end of U.K.A. annual reports. I am most grateful to Dr. David Mayers, Oxford Univ. Computing Laboratory, without whose help I could never processed this mass of data.

3. cf. J.H. Timberlake, op.cit., p.122.

4. G.B. Shaw, 'Epistle Dedicatory to A.B. Walkley', in Man & Superman, (Constable edn., 1930), p.xv.

The prominence of nonconformists and especially of Quakers among early Alliance leaders has already been noted. The Alliance had been founded by a Quaker. Regional analysis of Alliance support¹ shows no complete correlation between industrialisation and Alliance sympathy. Cornish and Lincolnshire enthusiasm for the Alliance, for instance, can only be explained in terms of nonconformist enthusiasm. Some nonconformists had supported liquor restriction since the 1830s,² and during the early years of the Alliance all remaining religious hostility to liquor restriction began to crumble.

By the early 1860s, H.J. Wilson was advocating teetotal farming,³ and about half the intake of dissenting theological colleges had become teetotal.⁴ At Richmond College in the late 1860s, the young Hugh Price Hughes was in a small minority of beer-drinkers, but even he soon found himself defending the Permissive Bill at public meetings.⁵ Samuel

1 See Appendix, diagrams 17, 18, 21, 22.

2 See above, pp. 219 ff.

3 W.S. Fowler, A Study in Radicalism & Dissent. Life & Times of H.J. Wilson, 1961, p. 14.

4 R. Rae, 'Temperance in the English Dissenting Colleges', in Temperance Congress of 1862 (1862), pp. 55-6.

5 Life of Hugh Price Hughes by his Daughter, 1904, pp. 44, 77.

Morley had considerable difficulty in persuading the Congregational Union to support the temperance movement in the 1850s. But he himself took the pledge about the year 1857, and during the same decade two other Congregational ministers were prominent in temperance activity - Newman Hall, who had taken the pledge in 1840, and G.M. Murphy, an energetic prohibitionist. Congregationalists did not form a denominational temperance society, however, till 1874.¹

As for the Wesleyans, Charles Garrett took the pledge in 1837 and in 1868 co-operated with Revs. G. Mander and T.B. Stephenson to found the Methodist Temperance Magazine. Several Alliance leaders were Methodists, but the Methodist conference did not seriously consider the temperance question till 1873.²

Among the Baptists, John Clifford took the teetotal pledge in 1853 and joined the Alliance when training at the Midland Baptist College in the 1850s. Spurgeon became a teetotaler in 1866, and a Baptist minister, Samuel Couling, wrote the first substantial history of the temperance movement. By no means all these nonconformist temperance reformers supported the Alliance. But the Alliance could hardly fail to gain from any increase in nonconformist sympathy with temperance agitation. Only 16% of those attending the ministerial conference organised by the Alliance in 1857 were Anglicans: the rest were dissenters. 33% were Congre-

1. E. Hodder, Samuel Morley, 1888, p. 102; A. Peel, These Hundred Years, 1931, p. 106.

2. W. J. Townsend, H. B. Workman & G. Eayrs, op.cit., I, p. 465.

gationalists, 15% Baptists, and only 6% Wesleyans. 353 ministers attended in all - a sizeable gathering, not unworthy of its Anti-Corn Law predecessor.¹

Thirdly, support from particular areas. Alliance agitation presents the familiar pattern of provincial enthusiasm and relative metropolitan apathy. The "sea of political darkness" in the Home Counties of which Ernest Jones complained in 1852, and which separated London radicals from provincial radical movements, can also be seen in the Alliance subscription lists.² The reluctance of M.P.s from the South-Eastern counties to support the Alliance in Permissive Bill divisions accurately reflects the apathy of their constituents.

Like the Anti-Corn Law League, the Alliance was Manchester-based; but whereas the League moved its headquarters to London in 1843, the Alliance remained in Manchester till 1918. This contrast reflects the relative provinciality of Alliance support, which the Alliance between 1853 and 1869 never did much to rectify. While the teetotalers had sent their missionaries Whittaker, Teare, Hudson and Cassell through the hostile rural areas of England, and while Cobden

1 See Appendix, diagram 13 & table 14; for a detailed discussion of denominational support for the Alliance, see Meliora, II, No. 7, pp. 255-6.

2 People's Paper, 28 Aug. 1852, p. 1; cf. Appendix, diagrams 18, 19, 22, 23 & tables 37-9.

had devoted much energy to winning support for free trade from the agricultural districts, the Alliance resembled the Chartists in contenting itself with its predominantly Northern and industrial basis of support.

Manchester took almost as prominent a part in financing the Alliance as it had taken in financing the Anti-Corn Law League, and far more important a part than London. In 1873-4, Manchester gave more than three times as much as London to the Alliance and between 1853 and 1873 usually gave more than any other city. The two cities championing the rival remedies for the drink problem in the 1860s - free trade and prohibition - were both Lancashire cities: Liverpool and Manchester. Two of the three leading temperance bodies in England were based on the North of England - the Alliance and the British Temperance League. Thus with the prohibitionist campaign, as with other 19th century reforming agitations, the crusade had to be "rolled up to London from the country".¹

Throughout the years 1853-69 the Alliance found London difficult to move. As early as 1854 Nathaniel Card doubted whether prohibition could ever be enforced in London, though he thought it could be enforced elsewhere "in a very short time".² The Hyde Park riots bore out his doubts in the

1 Northern Star, 21 Dec. 1850, p. 4; see also below, p. 359.

2 Parl. Papers, 1854, xiv (231), Q. 1906.

following year. Dawson Burns first tried to rouse London in 1856-7 but he had success only in those radical haunts of the labour aristocracy - Finsbury and St. Pancras; the annual report for the year confessed that London would "never be fused but by the heat of popular opinion in the country".¹ Even the moral suasionist National Temperance League, whose regional pattern of support is largely complementary to that of the Alliance,² was complaining at this time of the difficulty of moving London.

By 1864, an Alliance electoral committee had been established in every London borough, but Manchester remained the source of both subsidies and enthusiasm.³ The law stationer, J.R. Taylor, an enthusiastic Alliance supporter from the East End, an active London radical and a member of the Reform League, greatly admired the enthusiasm of Alliance leaders in Manchester, and campaigned in 1864-6 against flaccid Alliance leadership from the West End. "The question meets you at every corner of the streets", he wrote; "What

1 U.K.A. 5th Annual Rept., 1857, pp. 10-11.

2 See Appendix, diagrams 19 & 20; & National Temperance League, Annual Rept., 1858, p. 14.

3 Alliance News, 28 Apr. 1866, p. 131; as late as 1873, London was receiving a grant of £1500 for the coming year from Manchester. Executive Committee Minute Book (Alliance House), 1871-3, entry for 19 Feb. 1873.

is the London Auxiliary doing? NIL".¹

It was difficult to shelter even Lancashire M.P.s from London's Laodicean atmosphere. Cobden considered it very difficult for a man "however clothed in the panoply of principle, to go through the ordeal of a London season, without finding his coat of mail perforated".² Temperance reformers blamed London's relative apathy on the many distractions existing in a huge commercial metropolis, and on the difficulty of gathering reformers together from different parts of a city so large.³ Place had given a similar explanation to Cobden in 1840 for London's relative inactivity in the Anti-Corn Law League.⁴ In the case of the temperance movement, there may be a further contributory explanation. William Reid wrote in 1853 from Glasgow that "one may be eight days in the metropolis, and see fewer drunk persons than he will see with us in as many hours".⁵

The English prohibitionist movement does not display the

1 J.R. Taylor, The Past, Present, & Future of the London Auxiliary of the United Kingdom Alliance, n.d. [1867], pp. 14, 16, 37.

2 J. Morley, Richard Cobden, p. 279.

3 Weekly Record, 19 Sept. 1863, pp. 412-3.

4 B.M. Addit. MSS. 43667 (Place Papers), f. 53: Place to Cobden, 4 Mar. 1840.

5 W. Reid, Temperance Memorials of the Late Robert Kettle Esq., Glasgow, 1853, p. 13.

simple urban-rural alignment which has been detected in American prohibitionism.¹ Although some of the richest Alliance supporters came from rural areas - the Lawsons from Cumberland, the Trevellyans from Northumberland, and Charles Jupe from Wiltshire - the numerical strength of the Alliance came from the industrial areas of Lancashire and Yorkshire. Almost all the Alliance auxiliaries noted in the subscription lists between 1859 and 1869 were situated North and West of the Wash-Severn line, and there were high concentrations in South Lancashire, West Riding and the North-East coast.² This regional pattern of support bears close resemblance to that of the National Education League.³

The Alliance was correspondingly weak in the South-East. While eight predominantly rural counties Bedfordshire, Dorset, Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Cambridgeshire, Essex, Hertfordshire and Suffolk can produce a total of only 98 Alliance donors in 1867, Lancashire and Yorkshire combined produce 1127.⁴ Nonconformists could seldom establish themselves in the rural areas of England without active support from their co-religionists in some nearby town. Had England possessed a

1 A. Sinclair, op. cit., pp. 29-42; see also above, p. 59

2 See Appendix, table 26 & diagram 34.

3 J.A. Smyth, op. cit., p. 22.

4 See Appendix, diagrams 17, 18, 21, 22 & tables 23-5.

rural peasantry, radical movements like prohibitionism and the Manchester School's attack on feudalism might have attracted greater rural support. As it was, prohibitionists, like all liquor restrictionists, came primarily from the large towns.¹

Thus the Alliance was recruited between 1853 and 1869 from three social groups whose political influence was on the increase - from the urban labour aristocracy who were to be enfranchised in 1867; from women whose agitation for female suffrage was beginning in the 1860s and whose philanthropic influence had recently become obtrusive; and from nonconformists who were at last shedding their political quietism and their inferiority complex. How, then, did the Alliance mobilise the support of these groups? How did it make the local veto into a political issue?

II

Governments require the aid of "interest" groups in the day-to-day conduct of business: they do not, however, require the aid of "cause" groups agitating for social reform. The latter must therefore endeavour to attract government attention by conspicuous displays of their power.

1. See above, p. 59; and below, p. 513

The Alliance showed great skill in conspicuously displaying its numerical strength , the universality of support for its remedy, the urgency of reform , its money power and its wealth in supporting argument.

Conspicuous display of numerical strength was largely attained in the 1850s through the public meeting, the favoured weapon of those with numbers on their side and a far more important political instrument then than now. The Anti-Corn Law League used it against the Anti-League just as the teetotalers had used it against the moderationists.¹ The Alliance recommended towns' meetings, chaired by the mayor, whose resolutions could convey the impression of local prohibitionist unanimity. The public meeting, like the public procession , had the ancillary advantage of assuring those present of the strength and righteousness of their cause.

Ostensibly didactic in aim , public meetings in favour of liquor restriction were often in reality merely expressive. Hence the exasperation displayed at interruptions. Outside the temperance hall , temperance reformers ardently defended free speech; inside, their enthusiasm often led them to infringe it. One publican complained that when recognised at one such meeting , women rushed to scratch his face and that the lecturer had said that there was blood on his head , on his house and on his children and that he would go to Hell.²

1. See above, p. 186, 196, 199.

2. Parl. Papers 1854 xiv (231), p. 3957.

The publican probably exaggerated, but there is no reason to doubt the witness who told the 1853-4 parliamentary committee that there was "no chance of a fair and free discussion at any meeting where religion comes into question".¹

Public meetings could also help emphasise the universality of support for a cause by gathering enthusiasts from all classes, all countries and all parts of England. Exeter Hall specialised in parading supporters of all colours and all classes on its platforms, and although the Alliance had less high-ranking supporters than the Evangelical societies, it did its best. Samuel Pope told Brougham in 1859 that he "would go great lengths" to induce him to attend an Alliance meeting at the Manchester Free Trade Hall; "while we are unwilling to appear intrusive or importunate", he wrote in 1860, "we are convinced that nothing would give so great a stimulus to our year's agitation as your lordship's presence at a great meeting prior to the assembly of Parliament".²

The unanimity of different areas could best be displayed through the congress, bazaar or fête. The 1855 Alliance fête, probably modelled on that of the Anti-Corn Law League, enabled female supporters to give vent to their organising ability and raised £2777 for the funds. More ambitious was

1 Parl. Papers, 1854, xiv (231), q. 3589.

2 Brougham MSS. Pope to Brougham, 29 Oct. 1860; cf. Pope to Brougham, 30 Aug. 1861.

the international convention held by the Alliance in 1862, whose proceedings were published. With this convention , however , as with the international temperance congress of 1846, the delegates were almost exclusively Anglo-American .This instrument reappears in the late-Victorian imperial temperance congresses which heartened English temperance workers by associating them with the more successful temperance workers from the colonies.

Secondly , conspicuous display of urgency. Apart from the large-scale canvass, used to some effect by the prohibitionists and Sunday closers in the early 1860s , the petition was the prime weapon here. Like the Anti-Corn Law League, the Alliance used this to inform parliament, not so much that distress existed, as that something must be done about it. It was a means by which groups which as yet lacked parliamentary support could gain access to M.P.s. Petitioning like canvassing had the incidental advantages of keeping local organisation in trim , giving focus to a campaign , and educating the public. Thus before the introduction of the Permissive Bill in 1869 , 4,000 petitions carrying nearly 800,000 signatures reached the Commons. By 1872 the latter figure had reached 1,388,075.¹

The Alliance usually had the advantage in petitioning

1. U.K.A. 17th Annual Rept., 1868-9, p.7; H.Carter, op.cit., p. 171.

contests, since petition signatures are more easily collected for altering than for maintaining the status quo. Publicans when roused could beat the temperance party at petitioning any day, but they usually concentrated on depreciating the petitions of their opponents. Parliamentary debaters and committee-members investigating the drink question thus often found themselves arguing, not about the validity of the remedies put forward by the liquor restrictionists, but about the reliability of the indications that these remedies enjoyed public support. Publicans conjured up visions of dragooned Sunday school children ignorantly signing petitions put before them by Sunday schoolteachers. Certainly it was difficult to refuse a request for a signature - it seemed such a modest favour to perform - and publicans were right to contest its validity as an index to public opinion. Temperance reformers retaliated by exposing the obscenities and false names which could be detected in petitions against temperance legislation.

Other ways of demonstrating the urgency of reform were the parliamentary question, dependent on the presence in the Commons of a devotee; the Alliance had no parliamentary leader until 1862. The mass deputation was designed to obtain policy statements from ministers; through the status of its members and the weight of its argument the deputation might influence government policy and would often be reported in

the press. The apparently spontaneous constituent's letter to his M.P. was also useful. Temperance circulars and periodicals recommended their readers to impress their M.P.s by delivering "a few simple, earnest words from their hearts".¹

Running through all these techniques for displaying urgency was the opportunist tactic of "improving" disasters. The Alliance kept its eye on the latest tragedies - railway accidents, riots, cholera outbreaks, the Cotton Famine or the Great Depression,² and turned them to its own purposes just as the temperance societies had long made capital out of local disasters. This was a secular adaptation of one of the most effective of religious recruiting techniques: "when the mind is softened by calamity, and alarmed by danger, then may the functions of the Pulpit be exercised with the greatest hope of success".³

Thirdly, conspicuous display of money-power. Large funds were useful not only for their own sake but also for displaying the success of a campaign. Furthermore, fund-raising like petitioning was a good way of spreading knowledge of the cause.⁴ Alliance money-power like that of the

1 3 Hansard 229, c. 1838-9 (14 June 1876); cf. J.D. Stewart, British Pressure Groups, 1958, pp. 121, 138.

2 See Appendix, Plates 61, 77, 78, 85.

3 J. Bowles, Reflections on the Political & Moral State of Society at the Close of the 18th Century, 1800, p. 153.

4 cf. Mrs. Schwabe, op. cit., p. 132.

Evangelical charities was displayed through the published subscription list and the much-advertised "guarantee fund". The Alliance subscription list for 1872-3 occupies 55 octavo pages, nearly half the annual report for the year. Initially arranged alphabetically but later listed by county, these huge lists displayed the charity of each individual to public view.

In the 1860s and 1870s, the Alliance paraded its wealth by grouping together its subscriptions for five years in a "guarantee fund". The first of these began in 1865 with a target of £30,000 later raised to £50,000; the second, aiming at £100,000 began in 1871. Both targets were reached, and for the latter, £90,000 was given or promised within a year. The total level of Alliance receipts rose substantially at the beginning of each of these two campaigns.¹

The Alliance argued that these huge sums, by financing immediate and vigorous agitation, would reduce the ultimate total cost of the prohibitionist campaign. But the size of the Alliance annual income, several times as large in the early 1880s as that of the National Liberal Federation,²

1 See Appendix, diagrams 15 & 16.

2 H.J. Hanham, op. cit., p. 140; cf. R. Harrison, 'The British Working Class & the General Election of 1868', International Review of Social History, V, 1960, p. 452.

inspired hostility in some quarters. Fears of large centralised bodies with access to large funds were hindering the growth even of party organisation in the 1860s. Intelligent observers like Livesey or W.S. Jevons asked whether the huge sums spent by the Alliance were really being used to the best purpose. Alliance fund-raising certainly provoked emulation by the drink interest. Lawson in his memoirs recalled Bass's statement "that for every £1 we could put down, the Trade could put down 100. He might without exaggeration have said 1,000".¹

Who gave this money? With what motive? And how was the money spent? The first thirty years of the Alliance coincided with the heyday of philanthropy: not till the early 20th century did temperance societies find their funds declining.² Beatrice Webb described the decline of personal almsgiving as one of the most striking social changes she had witnessed during her lifetime.³ Shaftesbury often complained that the philanthropic public was "a small knot of chosen

1 G.W.E. Russell, Sir Wilfrid Lawson, p. 74; cf. 3 Hansard 196, c. 645 (12 May 1869); 3 Hansard 278, c. 1283 (27 Apr. 1883).

2 e.g. National Temperance League, 64th Annual Rept. 1919-20, p. 5.

3 B. Webb, My Apprenticeship, 2nd Edn., n.d., pp. 167-8.

persons";¹ these came primarily from the religious public. Cobden quite deliberately employed popular veneration for God in attaining his objectives,² and the anti-slavery agitators found that, in Russell's words, "from the moment that the religious community took up the question, from that moment it was settled".³ By contrast, Robert Owen was powerless after he had alienated the religious public. The Alliance wisely launched itself in 1853 with hymns, prayers and a sermon.

The predominance of Quaker supporters in the Alliance has already been noted. Religious zeal probably also inspired the generous subscriptions of Sir Walter Trevelyan and Charles Jupe. William Gregson in the late 1850s marvelled to see the quantity of food carried away from the Jupe family table for distribution to the poor: clearly this Alliance donor was making a definite effort to model himself on his Saviour.⁴ The Wilfrid Lawsons, father and son, between them

1 E. Hodder, Shaftesbury, II, pp. 250-1; III, p. 177; P. Magnus, Gladstone. A Biography, 1954, p.258; Rev. A. Hume, 'Analysis of the Subscribers to the Various Liverpool Charities', Trans. Historical Society of Lancashire & Cheshire, VII (1854-5), pp. 22-5.

2 B.M. Addit. MSS. 43662 (Cobden Papers), f. 27: Cobden to Villiers, n.d. (endorsed 6 June 1841).

3 R. Cobden, Speeches on Questions of Public Policy, Ed. J. Bright & J.E.T. Rogers, 1870, I, p. 10.

4 J.G. Shaw, Life of William Gregson, Blackburn, 1891, pp. 172-3.

gave nearly £6000 between 1853 and 1873, and by the early 1870s, Wilfrid Lawson junr., like the Manchester textile manufacturer Benjamin Whitworth, was giving at the rate of £1000 a year. Contributions from Anglican clergy were comparatively rare before the 1870s, though Dean Close's subscription of two guineas in 1859-60 heralded a change of heart in this quarter.

Alliance funds rose sharply at first, tailed off slowly between 1855 and 1865, rose again sharply between 1865 and 1872, but declined thereafter till 1875. Thus total receipts of £2004 in 1853-4 had risen to £14,404 by 1867-8, and to £27,449 by 1871-2. A similar prosperity was enjoyed by the Liberation Society at this time.¹ During the same period, the only national temperance organisation even approaching the Alliance in scope, the National Temperance League, increased its total receipts from £1560 in 1857 to £3802 in 1867-8 and to £6131 in 1872-3. The growth of the Alliance, whose total receipts increased thirteen-fold in 19 years, thus easily outpaced that of the National Temperance League, whose total receipts increased only fourfold between 1857 and 1873.²

1 W.H. Mackintosh, op. cit., p. 218.

2 See Appendix, diagrams 14-16.

Between 1853 and 1874, the Alliance obtained approximately one quarter of its funds from donations under £5. After 1863-4 it raised one-fifth from donations between £100 and £499, and one-fifth also from donations of £500 and over. In absolute terms this meant that while in 1859-60 the Alliance raised only £3000 from donations over £5, by 1873-4 it raised over £12,000 from that group. During the same period, the National Temperance League was raising a gradually increasing proportion of its funds from donations over £5. The general impression is thus that both the Alliance and the League between 1853 and 1873 raised an increasing proportion of their total funds from donations over £5.¹

In both societies, however, the donors who produced the largest total, as with the national teetotal societies of the 1830s, were those giving between £5 and £99.² Taking the funds for a random year, 1868-9, three people contributed one-fifth of the total Alliance income: 95% of the total receipts for the year came from those who gave £1 or over and the average donation for the year from 3018 people was £2. 19. 5. Despite this generosity from the relatively rich, Lawson always complained that the Alliance never enjoyed access to the really large donations which had made possible

1 See Appendix, tables 21-22.

2 See Appendix, diagrams 23-25.

the success of the Anti-Corn Law League.¹

Regional analysis of Alliance funds for the two years 1859-60 and 1868-9 shows generous Alliance donations coming from the industrialised counties. Of the cities, the most generous was Manchester. In 1868-9, 277 London donors gave £637 and 244 Manchester donors gave £1,546. In 1873-4, 236 Manchester donors gave £2,900, whereas 382 London donors gave only £981. Thus by the 1860s London was giving a far smaller absolute donation than Manchester and contained far fewer donors per head of population and far fewer donors of large sums. No other city approached Manchester, or even London, in the size of its donations. Thus 123 Birmingham donors in 1868-9 gave only £164, and 27 Sheffield donors only £165.

Of the counties, Lancashire produced by far the largest proportion of the total Alliance subscribers - nearly a quarter throughout the 1860s. Yorkshire normally came second; Northumberland and Cornwall followed some way after. By contrast, the far less influential National Temperance League, propagating moral suasion, drew its donors primarily from the South-East, nearly half from London. In the 1860s its

1. G.W.E. Russell, Sir Wilfrid Lawson, 1909, p. 74; cf. 3 Hansard 196, c. 646 (12 May 1869); 3 Hansard 278, c. 1283 (27 Apr 1883).

funds never approached those raised by the Alliance.

Of the rural counties in 1868-9, Cumberland, Westmorland and Lincolnshire surpass even Lancashire in the number of donors per head of population. Even speaking in absolute terms, Cumberland and Cornwall normally came high on the list of donations. Rural counties in the West of England were far readier to support the Alliance than the rural counties of the South-East. Some of these rural variations between rural counties may stem from the support of key local men, such as the Lawsons in Cumberland and the Trevelyan in Northumberland, for most contemporary nonconformist pressure groups depended heavily on the support of a few outstanding men in each locality.¹ As for the prominence of Cornwall, the strength of nonconformity there may well be a partial explanation.

Many of the subscriptions upon which mid-Victorian charities and political parties relied were not spontaneous but solicited. Rich philanthropists like Samuel Morley were besieged with such requests. Although the Alliance did not obtain the £1000 they requested from him in 1871, they induced many rich men from the mercantile classes in the Northern industrial towns especially in Manchester, Bradford

¹ H.J. Hanham, Elections & Party Management, p. 121.

and Birmingham to contribute to the Guarantee Fund of that year.¹ A more elegant means of soliciting funds was the conversazione at which speeches would be delivered and discreet slips of paper distributed on which those present could state the amount they would subscribe.²

Leading donors formed a small community of their own, and a leading donor could by personal example or personal request induce the smaller donors to increase their gifts. Large lump sums, especially legacies, were highly prized, since these enabled societies to invest and thus to emancipate themselves from the tyranny of fluctuations in public opinion. This helps explain the survival of liquor restrictionist and sabbatarian organisations into the 20th century world which provides them with a woefully inadequate current income.

With what motives was this money given to the Alliance? Ostensibly to eliminate drunkenness, and no doubt the horror inspired by drunkenness did inspire much of the generosity shown to temperance societies. Pressure group leaders do not always pursue their own self-interest, and many examples of the direct contrary could be quoted from the temperance

1 Alliance House, U.K.A. Executive Committee Minute Book 1871-3, minutes for 8 Nov., 20 Dec., 1871; 28 June, 29 Nov. 1871.

2 Brougham MSS.: H. Solly to Lord Lyttelton, 28 May 1864; cf. H. Solly, These Eighty Years, II, p. 215.

movement. Joseph Sturge's abandoned malt business, Samuel Bowly's embarrassment at being unable to serve drink to his customers, G.W. Harrison's discarded spirits and malting business, and the many broken friendships and strained relationships which personal abstinence created make self-interest a rather less common motive for supporting the temperance movement than for supporting other charities.¹

Nevertheless several social gains could be derived from philanthropic activity . Philanthropic societies helped to validate the existing social structure by drawing attention to the charity of the rich while ignoring the generosity of the poor to each other. Again , abstinence and a fortiori the Permissive Bill , were often recommended on the ground that they would enable the poor to support themselves during unemployment or economic crisis; this would have relieved ratepayers of their responsibility for providing poor relief.² As one prohibitionist wrote in 1869, "our work people , were they sober , would be able to put up with short time without inconvenience".³

Furthermore, through charitable activity wealthy men could attain prominence in public life. The sale of honours

1. V.O. Key, Politics, Parties, & Pressure Groups, 2nd. Edn., New York, 1947, p. 179.

2. P.T. Winskill, Temperance Movement & its Workers, I, p. 70: III, p. 122; London Temperance Tracts 1839, N.S., No. 5; cf. G.O. Previlyan, Speech on the Liquor Question... Music Hall, Edinburgh, ... November 27, 1871, p. 6.

3. Inquiry into the Causes of the Present Long-Continued Depression in the Cotton Trade, 3rd. Edn, 1869, p. 12.

was never considered unethical in the philanthropic world, and in 1871 the Alliance offered a vice-presidency to all who would give £1000 to the Guarantee Fund.¹ The chance of co-operating in public activity with the nobly-born, an added attraction of many contemporary charities², was less important in the case of the Alliance which never succeeded in attracting support from many titled donors.

Some donors thought that they would actually profit financially by giving their money away. Alliance supporters with business experience emphasised the industrial advantages of sobriety. Samuel Pope, when contesting Stoke-on-Trent in 1857 emphasised the need for sobriety in British working men if their goods were to compete successfully with American products.³ "In the race for commercial existence with young and active competitors", said M.D.Hill in 1855, "we shall not be first at the goal if we cannot shake off the weight of intemperance".⁴ Similarly Handel Cossam and the Pease family often emphasised that regularity of working and a decrease in accidents resulted from sobriety in a mining population. If Sunday recreations remained sober, the mine-owner could hope for a reduction in the absentee and accident rate on Mondays and Tuesdays.⁵ The Pease family were the

1. U.K.A. Executive Committee Minute Book 1871-3, entry for 6 Dec 1871; cf. K.O. Morgan, David Lloyd George, Cardiff, 1963, p.69.

2. M.B. Simey, Charitable Effort in Liverpool in the 19th Century, Liverpool, 1951, pp.55-6.

3. Alliance Weekly News, 4 Apr 1857 (supplement).

4. M.D.Hill, Remarks in Answer to Objections, 1855, p.21.

5. Parl. Papers 1877 xi (418), Q.8490 (J.W. Pease).

props of the Central Sunday Closing Association.

Apart from the Lawsons and Trevelyan the leading donors came entirely from the commercial classes. Three cotton magnates William Hoyle, William Armitage and Hugh Mason were especially prominent, together with William Euing, Glasgow shipping broker, Charles Watson, Halifax manufacturer of patent ventilators, and Angus Holden, the Bradford wool-comber who was persuaded to give £500 to the Alliance in 1871.

There were subtler ways in which mid-Victorian philanthropy was thought to be profitable. The widespread mid-Victorian conviction that the Lord would hardly allow those who obeyed His injunctions to the exercise of charity to suffer in this world fostered the belief, shared by Gladstone, that a proportion of one's income spent in charity would "bring a blessing on the rest".¹ Furthermore, temperance societies claimed to give more social benefit per £ donation than other charities since their propaganda was designed to encourage working people to conserve their own resources and thus to help themselves.² The parable of the talents applied as much to charity as to other fields, and the

1. F.W.Hirst, Gladstone as Financier & Economist, 1931, p.297.

2. e.g. National Temperance League, Annual Report, 1892-3, p.24.

temperance movement tended to attract donations from those who believed, with Samuel Morley , that "the business of a philanthropist can only be performed satisfactorily when it is done in a businesslike fashion".¹

Thirdly, donors might profit in a religious sense from their donations: they might seek consolation for their own worldly suffering by helping to relieve suffering in others; they might evade other-worldly sufferings by giving generously in this. Just as one postponed marriage to acquire a competence , so one postponed earthly enjoyment to acquire a heavenly sufficiency: "he that giveth to the poor lendeth to the Lord". The latter motive, however, became decreasingly important as attention switched gradually from the soul of the donor to the worldly welfare of the recipient.² Whatever their motivation, Alliance leaders undoubtedly felt that their organisation was attacking poverty at its root.

Death was the faithful ally of every 19th century philanthropic organisation , as the numerous appeals for legacies and donations to "memorial funds" testify; temperance societies profited from their donors' fear of death , but also from their fear of the poor and of what they might do if allowed to starve; after 1867 they also appealed to their donors' fear of the ignorant³ and of the direction their political activity might take if allowed to persist in drinking.

1. E.Hodder, Samuel Morley, p.219.

2. C.Woodard, 'The Charity Organisation Society & the Rise of the welfare State', (Cambridge Ph.D.thesis, 1961), pp.94, 198.

3. See below, pp. 456ff.

The pattern of Alliance expenditure is quite as important as its sources of income; the general impression conveyed is one of efficiency. Alliance minute books show that a close watch was kept on the expenses of Alliance agents.¹ From 1853 to 1869 at least half Alliance expenditure went on tracts, advertisements and written propaganda, a far larger proportion than that spent by the National Temperance League.² The proportion absorbed in office expenses dwindled from 13% in 1853-4 to 5% in 1873-4; expenditure on meetings and travelling expenses also fell, from 12% in 1853-4 to 5% in 1873-4, but proportionate expenditure on salaries steadily increased - from 15% in 1853-4 to 43% in 1873-4. Only a relatively small proportion of the total expenditure went on parliamentary and electoral expenses - never more than 5%.

Alliance expenditure patterns contrast with those of the National Temperance League which spent proportionately less on salaries as the years went by - 67% in 1858 and only 21% in 1873-4. The League greatly expanded its expenditure on meetings and by 1873-4 was also devoting 9% of its expenditure to temperance work in the army and navy. This reflects the divergence in policy between the League and the Alliance,

1 e.g. Alliance House, U.K.A. Executive Committee Minute Book 1871-3, 19 Feb. 1873.

2 See Appendix, diagrams 27-9.

the former concentrating on spreading teetotal principles and encouraging the provision of counter-attractions. The Alliance, said Alexander Macdonald in 1875, ought to send temperance advocates round the country instead of binding the people "in the swaddling clothes of a Permissive Bill".¹

Taking two fairly representative years, the Alliance in 1854-5 spent £539 on salaries, £494 on office expenses, £786 on meetings and travelling expenses and £2490 on written propaganda. The corresponding figures for 1868-9 were £4551, £685, £1152, and £6887 with a new source of expenditure - £611 - on parliamentary and election expenses. Most of the expenditure on written propaganda went on the two periodicals Alliance News and Meliora, both of which made a small loss during the 1860s; far less was spent on tract distribution. The general impression conveyed therefore by analysis of funds between 1853 and 1869 is thus one of a flourishing society largely dependent on the subscriptions of the moderately rich but having access to a handful of really wealthy donors: of funds efficiently husbanded and spent primarily on written propaganda; and of subscribers located primarily in the industrial areas of the North, but also in some rural areas of the West and North.

¹ 3 Hansard 225, c. 70 (16 June 1875).

The fourth way in which the Alliance conspicuously displayed its strength was through exhaustive argument; it displayed energy and ingenuity not only in devising plausible arguments for prohibition but also in bringing them to the notice of prominent individuals. Alliance apologetics never reached a higher standard than in the Stanley-Pope discussion, published in the Times in 1856, which provoked J.S. Mill into a not entirely successful counter-attack. Analysis of Alliance propaganda and also of franchise reform speeches suggests that the quality of pressure group argument varies inversely with the strength of public support for its policy; until a movement has a sure footing, it has to defend itself by argument; when success seems near, it tries to bludgeon its remaining opponents by constantly emphasising its power and by claiming that its success is inevitable.¹

The Alliance during its first ten years specialised in exhaustively defending its principles: F.R. Lees in 1856 created the Alliance Prize Essay, a large compendium of half-digested "facts"; "if every other book that has been written and printed on the question were destroyed", said T.H. Barker in 1859, "the cause would still have a noble literature, an ample vindication, and a complete argument".² The Essay may

¹ Lord Robert Cecil, art. cit., p. 50.

² T.H. Barker, Temperance Advocacy, Manchester, 1859, p. 12. A large collection of ephemeral Alliance propaganda survives in the several bound volumes of "Alliance Pamphlets" at Alliance House.

have helped bring Cardinal Manning into the Alliance but one wonders whether Queen Victoria was able to keep awake while Florence Nightingale read it to her.¹

But Lees never intended that it should entertain: it was an urgent, emphatic plea for immediate action, full of statistics and testimonies, and typical of its author: it "was not penned to tickle the ear, but to convince...."² It was typical also of the mode of Alliance argument - piling up testimony to the harm resulting from drunkenness, without considering the practicability of the remedy or fairly assessing its advantages against its disadvantages.

The Alliance often obscured the most important issues in controversy by over-proving its case, and by pedantically pinpointing the most trivial errors, grammatical and otherwise, in the arguments of its opponents; instead of combating the general argument, the Alliance tended to take the detailed statements of its opponents and dismiss them seriatim, much to the weariness of the reader. It specialised in nailing heresies one by one.

Alliance periodicals tried to condition the public into accepting the local veto by listing the immense miseries resulting from drink, without supporting argument, in their

1 "J.N.", 'Frederic Richard Lees', loc. cit., p. 13.

2 Alliance Prize Essay, 3rd Edn., 1857, p. 12.

weekly columns of "barrel and bottle work" or "fruits of the traffic". Just as the Liberation Society saw state-Churchism as the root of all evil, so the Alliance saw everywhere the evil consequences of drink. The Alliance never sponsored research into the medical aspects of drunkenness; nor did it seriously analyse the rôle of the public-house in working class areas, or seek to provide the counter-attractions to it. Its leader Wilfrid Lawson gave Chadwick no assistance in purifying public water supplies and unlike the National Temperance League the Alliance took no part in the Drinking Fountain movement. The Alliance never approached controversy in a constructive frame of mind; it regarded opposing arguments, not as useful contributions towards solving a difficult problem, but as threats requiring to be "dealt with".

Since the press necessarily reflects existing public opinion, an association seeking to change social attitudes can often gain public attention only by founding a periodical of its own. At first, the Alliance paid for space in the weekly Atlas; finding this too cramping for its growing activities, it founded in 1854 the Alliance which it claimed was the largest and cheapest penny weekly paper in the kingdom. The repeal of the stamp tax in 1855 and the paper duty in 1861 enabled the Alliance to improve the size and quality of its periodical which by 1859 had attained a circulation

(including free distribution) of 14-15,000. During the 1850s it devoted its front page to general news, the second to the "liquor list" of miseries resulting from drink and to reports of prohibitionist meetings, the third to editorials and correspondence, the fourth to advertisements and news items.

So successful was the Alliance periodical that Cobden regarded it as a model for imitation by the Peace Movement.¹ Edited by the energetic Henry Sutton, the Alliance News enlarged the audience of speakers at its public meetings, ensured that heresy was extinguished and that truth was displayed to public view. Press and parliamentary attacks were often printed in full together with their refutation. For the Alliance, the circulation of its periodical was as vital to the health of its agitation as the circulation of blood to the health of the individual. It was "the backbone of the entire organisation", though like the temperance meeting it was probably patronised only by the converted.² Together with the National Temperance League's Weekly Record it took the lead in championing the cause of liquor restriction in the press during the 1860s.

1 B.M. Addit. MSS. 43677 (Cobden Papers), f. 49: Cobden to Collett, 5 June 1854.

2 Alliance Weekly News, 12 Dec. 1857; U.K.A. 20th Annual Rept., 1871-2, p. 64.

The Alliance also showed energy in bringing its arguments to the notice of influential individuals. John Dunlop maintained in 1844 that "one thirtieth of any town or district directed the rest";¹ the Alliance, like early 20th century American prohibitionists, knew that if it could win over a small minority of "opinion makers" it could impose its remedy on the nation as a whole.² In the late 1850s it made a special effort with this group. In 1858 the Alliance founded a quarterly review Meliora to appeal to "minds of a finer cast, a higher culture, and a more studious habit".³ Owing to uninspired editorship⁴ the periodical was never a success and was discontinued in 1870. In 1859 a short-lived series of Alliance Monthly Tracts of high calibre was begun.

The Alliance made special efforts to win the support of three important sections of "opinion makers" - politicians, religious leaders and philanthropists. The exaggerated belief held by the Victorians in the power of publicity to influence parliament⁵ certainly characterised the Alliance

1 Autobiography, p. 249.

2 A. Sinclair, op. cit., p. 129.

3 Alliance Weekly News, 13 Feb. 1858, p. 535.

4 Brougham MSS. M.D. Hill to Brougham, 8 Apr. 1859; cf. G.W. Hastings to Brougham, 16 July 1858.

5 E.E. Kellett, Religion & Life in the Early Victorian Age, 1938, p. 146.

leaders. In 1860 all the peers were presented during the Wine Licence debates with copies of the Alliance Prize Essay. In 1864 Lord Robert Cecil complained that the stationery distributed to M.P.s before the Permissive Bill debate "would alone have been sufficient to burn a hundred thousand licensed victuallers alive"; and in 1873 another opponent of the Alliance objected to being "saturated with literature".¹

To this the Alliance after 1860 added the personal pressure of its parliamentary agent J.H. Raper, and held up for imitation the model of Dobson Collett, secretary of the newspaper stamp agitation "boring the members till they were obliged to promise him to support them, as their only chance of peace and quietness".² In its desire to coerce parliament the Alliance hardly differed from the London mob it so vigorously condemned.

For winning the support of religious leaders, the Alliance relied upon three techniques. Firstly, the personal deputation to individual religious dignitaries: this proved remarkably successful with Manning. Secondly, the appeal to

1 Saturday Review, 11 June 1864, p. 709; all Cecil's Saturday Review articles are identified in J.F.A. Mason, Bulletin of Historical Research, May 1961, p. 41; cf. Osborne, 3 Hansard 215, c. 1639 (7 May 1873); Giles, 3 Hansard 286, c. 1450-1.

2 Alliance Weekly News, 2 Feb. 1856, p. 111.

the annual denominational conference: "we claim the great Methodist families as ours by right of their founder's will", declared the Alliance to the Wesleyan ministerial conference in 1859.¹ Thirdly, following Anti-Corn Law League precedents, there was the ministerial conference. The 1857 Alliance conference, attended by 353 ministers, produced a declaration against the drink trade signed by many dissenters, especially by Primitive and Welsh Calvinistic Methodists.²

The philanthropists were the third group which the Alliance tried to influence. Here the annual congresses of the National Association for the promotion of Social Science presented a great opportunity. J.H. Raper could be seen at the 1861 congress spreading the Alliance gospel to all who would listen: "there was not a half-disclosed friend that he did not ply with argument, persuasion, and documents, until he won him over".³ In the 1850s the Alliance was hindered within the Association by aristocratic influence, by the Association's fear of connecting itself with cranks and by the great philanthropic influence of publicans and

1 Alliance Weekly News, 30 July 1859, p. 829.

2 See Full Rept. of the Proceedings of the Ministerial Conference on the Suppression of the Liquor Traffic, Manchester, 1857.

3 Alliance Weekly News, 7 Sep. 1861, p. 1269.

brewers. Even the very limited temperance discussion at the 1858 Congress provoked rumblings of discontent from the publicans' organ, the Era.¹

The Alliance was brought prominently before the Social Science Association by Henry Brougham. In the 1820s and 1830s he had resembled many radicals in favouring free trade in beer and in opposing licensing restriction as class legislation. In 1835 however he regretted the Lords' rejection of the Municipal Reform Bill's original clause entrusting licensing to a popularly-elected body,² and in the late 1830s he turned against the radicals and championed licensing restriction of the beershops. Brougham was probably influenced in favour of liquor restriction in the 1850s by John Cassell, with whom he had been corresponding, and by his friend and regular correspondent M.D. Hill, a prominent Alliance supporter. When Brougham referred at the 1859 Congress to the "Grand Alliance",³ Samuel Pope expressed delight and claimed that his speech had given the cause "a ten years impetus".⁴

Brougham was too old, however, for his views to carry

1 Era, 7 Nov. 1858, p. 9.

2 Times, 19 Aug. 1835 (not reported in Hansard).

3 Transactions of the N.A.P.S.S. 1859 (1860), p. 34.

4 Brougham MSS., Pope to Brougham, 14 Oct. 1859.

much weight with the public; nor could he devote much energy to the Alliance case. His statements also caused him personal embarrassment. After hearing that illness had prevented Brougham from attending a temperance meeting in 1860, Lord Lyndhurst wrote that he was "exceedingly sorry for your illness, but not at all sorry that you do not attend that ridiculous meeting".¹ Brougham again recommended the Permissive Bill at the 1860 Congress, and in 1861 even maintained that drunkenness inevitably resulted from moderate drinking.²

The support of Brougham alone was not sufficient to obtain easy access for the Alliance to the annual congresses. The Alliance complained that temperance was admitted for discussion to the 1861 congress only "with ill-concealed reluctance".³ The ambitious secretary of the Association, G.W. Hastings, was hostile to liquor restriction and brusquely told Brougham in 1862 "we have had quite enough of the Permissive Bill and the Grand Alliance at our former meetings. Even teetotalers wish the subject to rest for the present". Although he never withdrew his support from the Alliance, Brougham henceforth displayed less public zeal in its favour.

1 Brougham MSS., Lyndhurst to Brougham, 22 Oct. 1860.

2 Alliance Weekly News, 31 Aug. 1861, p. 1264; 24 Aug. 1861, p. 1261.

3 U.K.A. 9th Annual Rept., 1861, p. 2.

In 1863, Hastings used a technical objection to frustrate an Alliance attempt to obtain a resolution from a Congress meeting on the drink traffic,¹ and in 1864 the Alliance found the Congress situation "worse this year than ever".² There were complaints in 1866 that Hanbury, the brewer, and chairman of a meeting on the causes of crime, prevented William Caine from referring to the link between drunkenness and infanticide in London.³ In the late 1860s, however, the tide seems to have turned, and at the Bristol congress of 1868 Hastings was showing moderate enthusiasm for the Permissive Bill which he had privately denounced only three years before.⁴ By the 1880s temperance legislation had become the Social Science Association's only remedy for the social evils of the day.⁵

III

From the first, the Alliance set its sights at Westminster.

1 Alliance News, 24 Oct. 1863, p. 341.

2 ibid., 1 Oct. 1864, p. 317.

3 Church of England Temperance Magazine, 1 Dec. 1866, p. 373.

4 U.K.A. 17th Annual Rept., 1868-9, p. 22.

5 B. Rodgers, 'The Social Science Association. 1857-1886', Manchester School of Economic & Social Studies, XX, Sep. 1952, p. 305.

Between 1853 and 1873 it refined its machinery for influencing elections and defined its position vis-à-vis the existing political parties. After 1856 it divided the country into districts supervised by agents who were instructed to keep the central offices informed of local political developments.

Alliance auxiliaries were kept quite distinct from local temperance societies. They retained sole control over their own funds and were solely responsible for fighting local elections. But they had to concede far tighter control to the central organisation during general elections.¹ The auxiliaries do not seem to have played a prominent part in the agitation ; they were ephemeral bodies making only small contributions to central funds. Unlike the teetotal societies, they had no continuous recreational purpose; their duty was simply to agitate at strategic moments.² The driving force of the Alliance came from above rather than from below - from a handful of wealthy donors and from a few energetic Manchester-based organisers who could appeal to the generalised sympathy with liquor restriction which prevailed among certain sections of the public.

During 1857 the Alliance in drafting the Permissive Bill equipped itself with a precise parliamentary policy. By 1866 England and Wales, except for parts of South Wales, were

1. U.K.A. 4th Annual Rept. 1856, p.21; 8th Annual Rept. 1860, p.4.

2. Local historians could do much to reveal the local roots of the Alliance and the complex of activities in which its auxiliary membership tended to engage.

covered by an organised system of agency under the direct control of the Alliance executive committee.¹ Agents were expected to organise local election committees, promote petitions, collect funds, hold meetings, question candidates, watch the local publicans, and fully acquaint themselves with local politics.¹

Alliance funds were used only sparingly to support particular candidates; part of Joseph Eaton's legacy was placed in an electoral reserve fund in 1858 and used in the 1859 general election. But in 1868 Alliance funds were not used to support any candidate, since in no constituency was the Permissive Bill the sole question at issue.³ When an election fund was at last established in 1873, it was kept "altogether distinct from Alliance funds"⁴ and was formed on the private initiative of a few wealthy Alliance supporters.

In 1859 the Alliance formed "Electoral Permissive Bill Associations" composed of electors willing to influence local candidates and M.P.s in favour of the Permissive Bill. These associations were required to compile lists of sympathetic electors, invite them to a meeting, form a committee, canvass the constituency, prepare a revised list of

1. U.K.A. 14th Annual Rept. 1865-6, p.7; see appendix, tables 41-3.

2. Alliance Weekly News, 27 Dec 1856.

3. U.K.A. 16th Annual Rept. 1867-8, p.33.

4. U.K.A. Executive Committee Minute Book 1873-5, entry for 22 Oct 1873.

supporters indexed by area and by surname, and then inform the candidates or members of their power.¹ By 1872 there were eight Permissive Bill Associations in London alone and the Alliance contemplated establishing a central register to consolidate information obtained through local effort.²

In 1872 the Alliance parliamentary leader Wilfrid Lawson urged "a more decided and definite" electoral policy and, spurred on by Kimberley's words to an Alliance deputation of 1872 - "at present we think you are the weakest party"³ - the Alliance in 1873 appointed a full-time Electoral Organising Secretary, J.W. Owen, at £200 a year to correspond with and visit local committees.⁴ The Alliance promised to provide a suitable candidate in any constituency whose existing candidates refused to support its Bill and its efforts were strongly supported by the International Order of Good Templars, a pseudo-Masonic organisation of the most extreme temperance zealots. During the 1874 election, the Alliance

1 U.K.A. 7th Annual Rept., 1859, pp. 37-8.

2 U.K.A. 20th Annual Rept., 1871-2, p. 127; 22nd Annual Rept., 1873-4, p. 61.

3 U.K.A. Executive Committee Minute Book 1871-3, 25 Sep. 1872; 3 Hansard 212, c. 984 (11 July 1872). U.K.A. 20th Annual Rept., 1871-2, pp. 38, 46.

4 U.K.A. Executive Committee Minute Book 1871-3, 19 Feb. 1873.

Executive Committee sat continuously to watch the results come in. The sequence of telegrams recorded in its minute book conveys something of the excitement with which Alliance leaders, now thoroughly involved in electoral activity, scrutinised the results.

Like their predecessors in the Anti-Corn Law and Complete Suffrage movements, Alliance supporters sought to educate the public through submitting "test questions" to candidates at the election hustings. The replies enabled the Alliance at each general election to assess its strength in the new parliament; the annual divisions on the Permissive Bill enabled it to keep these assessments up-to-date, and indicated the points at which pressure needed to be applied. The practice of extracting pledges from candidates on particular issues first became common in the anti-slavery campaign, and the painful process was employed by the Alliance to force politicians to recognise the importance of the prohibition question. The Anti-Corn Law League's employment of this weapon caused less pain however, since free trade fitted far more easily than prohibition into the complex of attitudes held by the members of a leading political party.

How did the Alliance regard the existing political parties? Although in the 1850s the Alliance admitted that its efforts would be exposed to ridicule and defeat if it insisted on returning parliamentary candidates on this one

issue,¹ its attitude hardened during the 1860s, so that, by 1868, a leading parliamentary agent pronounced its test question "the candidate's bugbear".² Such tactics virtually forced dishonesty and broken promises on many parliamentary candidates, or extracted from them promises so vague as to be politically worthless. Some critics felt that it was unconstitutional and un-English to demand public pledges from candidates. The Times in 1863 described Alliance tactics as "unscrupulous terrorism" and Gladstone in 1865 considered them "deplorable fanaticism".³ The Alliance resolutely refused to support Samuel Morley at the 1868 Bristol by-election and Edward Baines at Leeds in 1874 because, though genuine temperance reformers, they refused to agree unreservedly to support the Permissive Bill. Through adopting this policy the Alliance antagonised some of the leading moral suasionists. The history of the Liberation Society in the late 1870s shows how effectively a more conciliatory attitude could win Liberal support.⁴

1 Alliance Weekly News, 11 Apr. 1857, p. 359.

2 U.K.A. 17th Annual Rept., 1868-9, p. 5; cf. U.K.A. Executive Committee Minute Book 1873-5, 25 June 1873.

3 Times, quo. in Alliance News, 7 Nov. 1863, p. 356; & B.M. Addit. MSS. 44535 (Gladstone Papers), c. 93, Gladstone to George Melly, 24 July 1865: I owe this reference to Dr. J.R. Vincent of Peterhouse College, Cambridge.

4 H.J. Hanham, Elections & Party Management, p. 124.

But conciliation of the existing political parties was precisely the policy which the Alliance intended to avoid. Its self-chosen mission was to infuse principle into politics. Like Cobden in the 1840s the Alliance in the 1850s scorned the existing political parties. Future political discussion, said Samuel Pope in the first Alliance hustings speech, must turn "not on emasculated political dogmas which may be of real or of very doubtful utility, but on great questions of social ethics".¹ He divided M.P.s into Palmerstonians, Opposition and "Outsiders" and said that if he became an M.P. he would join the Outsiders.²

The Alliance sought to eliminate questions of personality and local influence from parliamentary elections and to transform them into debates on questions of national policy which would fragment the old system of party politics. Alliance supporters were thus usually Liberals "who would have become keen party workers if there had been a constituency party".³ Samuel Pope's statements during his campaigns at Stoke in 1857 and 1859 closely resemble those made by the Chartist Henry Vincent during his eight contests between 1841

1 Alliance Weekly News, 7 Feb. 1857.

2 Staffordshire Advertiser, 28 Mar. 1857, p. 8.

3 H.J. Hanham, General Election of 1868, p. III-6.

and 1852: they attracted those who regarded the existing party system as fraudulent and outmoded, and who longed for some sort of co-operation between good men of all parties in the task of genuine social reform. "The great party of the future", said the Alliance in 1856, "...will be devoted to the development of the great problems of social ethics, to the exclusion of the exhausted questions of the past".¹

For the Alliance, the embodiments of the traditional and self-interested attitude to electoral contests were the organised bodies of publicans in every constituency - "the most dangerous political combination of modern times".² The Alliance claimed that not less than one in five of the borough voters were directly engaged in the drink trade; it sought to counter one evil remedy merely by substituting another and tried to beat the publicans at their own game by organising ruthless and energetic bands of supporters in every constituency. Thus the Alliance had no qualms about the fact that its Devonport supporters in 1865 "hardly more than fifty.... made up for their comparative paucity by their steadfast unanimity" and made Brassey's election possible.³

In its early years, then, the Alliance declined all

1 Alliance News, 20 Dec. 1856, p. 295.

2 ibid., 23 Aug. 1856, p. 227.

3 ibid., 1 July 1865, p. 204.

party allegiance. Its policy of political neutrality had other advantages: pressure groups which identified themselves with a particular party, like the late-Victorian temperance and Home Rule movements, found that they were politically powerless when their party was in opposition. Furthermore, a newly founded pressure group could not afford to alienate potential support by identifying itself too closely with any one political party: it must appeal to national interests and capitalise on every prevailing discontent. As late as 1872 Lawson begged support from members of both political parties, and the Alliance was decidedly embarrassed by G.O. Trevelyan's attempt to make the Liberal party into the party of prohibition.¹

In 1874, however, the Alliance officially expressed sympathy with the Liberal party and Lawson, impressed with the powerlessness of the private member, changed his tactics and in 1876 urged Sir William Harcourt to assume leadership of the temperance party.² He later consulted Bright privately on the best parliamentary tactics to adopt.³ Officially, this represented a policy change, yet in reality it merely recognised an alignment which had existed from the start. The

1 See below, pp. 463-4

2 3 Hansard 229, c. 897 (17 May 1876).

3 B.M. Addit. MSS. 43309 (Bright Papers), ff. 290, 300, 312: Lawson to Bright, 15 Sep. 1878, 1 Nov. 1878, 2 Jan. 1879.

Alliance candidates of the 1850s and 1860s - Lawson, Lees, Pope and Cossham - were all extreme radicals seeking, like Miall in the Liberation Society, to liven up the Liberal party. Of the Alliance supporters whose political views were known, said F.W. Newman in 1865, there were "at least eight democrats for one Whig or Tory".¹

Samuel Pope, when he contested Stoke in 1857, was accused of "dividing the Liberal interest"; he retorted that Stoke Liberals were so anaemic in their principles that they could hardly be distinguished from the local Conservatives.² Nevertheless, the effect of Alliance intervention at elections was almost invariably to split the Liberal vote. Though the intention was never avowed, the effect of such electoral intervention was similar to the efforts of later American prohibitionists, who sought to force prohibition on to the Democrat party by threatening to divide its supporters.³

Before the development of the modern party political machine, nonconformist reforming pressure groups, together with Anglican and publicans' defence associations, were the routes through which national issues were brought to bear on

1 F.W. Newman, The Permissive Bill More Urgent than Any Extension of the Franchise, U.K.A., 1865, p. 11.

2 Staffordshire Advertiser, 28 Mar. 1857, p. 8.

3 A. Sinclair, op. cit., p. 50.

the constituencies during parliamentary elections and thence on the two leading political parties. Most of the issues dominating late-Victorian Liberal party programmes - Home Rule, Temperance, Trade Union legislation and disestablishment - were all forced on the party by specialised pressure groups resembling the Alliance.

IV

How did all this machinery function during the first phase of Alliance activity from 1853 to 1860? A leading M.P. who sympathised with the Alliance in 1854 said that he could only publicly express his support "when you have converted the constituencies". The Alliance deplored the absence of public men who would educate the public by taking a stand of their own accord, and equipped itself for the prolonged extra-parliamentary agitation which seemed to be the only means of getting statesmen to move.¹

At first the Alliance was remarkably successful in catching the public eye. By June 1854 it had issued 4500 membership cards, sent Dr. F.R. Lees to report on the situation in America, surveyed the customers of Manchester drink-shops and sent witnesses to the parliamentary committee on

¹ Alliance, No. 12 (23 Sep. 1854), p. 93.

public-houses. In 1855 the publicans helped publicise the existence of the Alliance by violently breaking up its meetings in Bristol, Birmingham and Dudley.

Alliance supporters like Liberationists learned to expect the use of violence by their opponents. George Howell recalled half a century later how Alliance men at Bristol had defended the lecturing platform against their furious publican opponents.¹ "I am just off to the Permissive Bill meeting", wrote H.J. Wilson to his sister in 1871: "very doubtful if I shall get home with my skin complete"; he had already been knocked on the head at a previous meeting.² The violence of Alliance opponents culminated in the bursting of a flour bag on the chest of Frederick Temple, Bishop of Exeter, at an Exeter Alliance meeting in 1872. The whitened bishop remained surprisingly calm under the insult, and it is probable that the Alliance gained more than it lost by such incidents.³

The Hyde Park riots of 1855,⁴ however, certainly did hinder the temperance cause. Though ostensibly against Lord

1 Bishopsgate Institute, Howell Collection, No. 4114, "A Busy & a Strenuous Life", p. 55; cf. W.H. Mackintosh, op. cit., pp. 51, 95.

2 W.S. Fowler, op. cit., p. 26.

3 E.G. Sandford (Ed.), Memoirs of Archbishop Temple, 1906, I, p. 481; cf. A. Taylor, Life of George M. Murphy, 1888, pp. 41-2.

4 See Appendix, Plates 66-71.

Robert Grosvenor's Sunday Trading Bill, these riots were really a protest against all types of Evangelical restrictive legislation. The Wilson-Patten Act, passed in 1854 to close drinking places for a large part of Sunday, was often mentioned as a grievance by the press, by the rioters and by Hyde Park orators.¹ The riots shocked parliament into severely modifying the Wilson-Patten Act after holding a hasty and biassed parliamentary committee.² The incident was used for decades by the opponents of licensing restriction as a warning against curtailing the liberties of working people in the great cities.³ R.A. Cross in 1880 said that if Sunday closing were introduced he would not be responsible for the peace of London.⁴ The riots were still being discussed before the Royal Commission on Liquor Licensing appointed in 1896.⁵

A glance at the newspapers of 1855-6 shows, however, that the Maine Law had already become a general topic of

1 Globe, 27 June 1855; Times, 15 June 1855; Marx & Engels on Britain, Moscow, 1953, p. 415.

2 For the "temperance" account of these riots, see Meliora, Apr. 1868, p. 14, probably written by Dawson Burns.

3 G.W.E. Russell, Sir Wilfrid Lawson, p. 155.

4 3 Hansard 253, c. 912 (25 June 1880).

5 Parl. Papers, 1897, xxxiv (c. 8355), qq. 1682ff. See also Appendix, Plates 69, 70, 71.

conversation, and in 1856 the important debate between Lord Stanley and Samuel Pope, the Alliance secretary, was published in the Times. The Alliance began its electoral activities during a by-election at Marylebone in 1854 by placarding the constituency and urging voters to oppose any candidate who refused to pledge himself to independence of the publicans. It gave similar advice to Southampton electors, who were urged in the 1856 by-election to "take no shuffling evasion".¹

The Alliance also encouraged its supporters to participate in municipal elections.² Like opponents of the Contagious Diseases Acts, Alliance supporters realised that a minority group could gain more publicity from intervening in a by-election than from large-scale intervention amid the distractions of a general election. Yet they never found their Colchester: they never succeeded, like Josephine Butler's crusaders, in convincing the Liberal party by timely and successful intervention in a crucial by-election that they must be granted concessions.³

The first general election faced by the Alliance in

1 Alliance, 9 Dec. 1854, p. 181; Alliance News, 20 Dec. 1856, p. 295.

2 Alliance News, 13 Oct. 1855, p. 47.

3 A. Potter, Organised Groups in British National Politics, 1961, p. 245; J.L. & B. Hammond, James Stansfeld, p. 151.

1857 came a year too soon. Alliance supporters had not yet framed the Permissive Bill and therefore had to content themselves with submitting a test question asking candidates whether they would support a permissive measure referring the prohibition question to the people. The only prominent Alliance supporter to contest a seat in 1857 was its secretary Samuel Pope who intervened at Stoke-on-Trent as third contestant when the other two candidates failed to meet Alliance requirements. Cobden would have found Pope's programme highly acceptable - it included complete commercial, civil and religious freedom, the ballot, open diplomacy and local control of education. Pope sternly denounced the Tories and echoed the moral force Chartists in maintaining that "there was nothing which our present rulers so much dreaded as the sobriety of the people". Victorious on the show of hands, Pope withdrew from the contest before the poll.¹

The Alliance claimed that at the 1857 election 65 successful candidates promised to support inquiry into the desirability of prohibition; of these only 33 promised to support the introduction of a Permissive Bill. The latter figure included members primarily from boroughs in Scotland,

¹ Alliance Weekly News, 21 Mar. 1857, p. 347; & election supplt. for 4 Apr. 1857; cf. Staffordshire Advertiser, 28 Mar. 1857, p. 7.

the North of England and the Midlands, but even the Alliance admitted that many of these had given their assent under election pressure and might fall away in time of trial.¹

The National Temperance League, through its Weekly Record, contrasted the triviality of the Alliance achievement with the pretentiousness of its claims, and was not convincingly refuted.²

The Alliance was hardly more successful at the 1859 election despite spending £420. 14. 0. on "parliamentary election expenses". Though Samuel Pope enjoyed much popular support and waged an exciting campaign at Stoke with the aid of George Thompson, he was defeated. He received 569 votes, but one of his rivals emphasised that many of these votes were cast for his radicalism rather than for his prohibitionism, and one Stoke publican said that he knew several Stoke publicans who were supporting him. The Alliance claimed that Stoke's 296 drinksellers had increased the votes for Ricardo and Copeland, Pope's rivals, by 195 and 215 respectively. Whig and Tory voters combined against Pope, and the election result reinforced the Alliance in its belief that it could only gain from franchise extension.³

1 Alliance Weekly News, 11 Apr. 1857, p. 359.

2 Weekly Record, 4 Apr. 1857, p. 116; 11 Apr. 1857, p. 124.

3 Staffordshire Sentinel, 23 Apr. 1859, pp. 4, 6; Staffordshire Advertiser, 30 Apr. 1859, p. 5; Alliance Weekly News, 7 May 1859, p. 781; 21 May 1859, p. 789.

The Alliance claimed that at Bristol 4-500, teetotalers held back their votes till late in the day, and by voting for Langton caused the defeat of Slade the Tory by 80 votes. Seymour the Alliance candidate at Southampton was returned; and though Alderman Heywood the Alliance candidate at Manchester was defeated, he did at least raise 5448 votes.¹ In retrospect the Alliance's most important contest in 1859 occurred at Carlisle, where after an unsuccessful attempt in 1857 the young Wilfred Lawson was returned with Sir James Graham. He was soon to champion the Permissive Bill in parliament, but since he had not yet publicly espoused their cause the Alliance took no part in his election which resulted largely from local influence.

The Alliance claimed that 78 of the successful candidates, almost all from English boroughs, favoured the Permissive Bill principle or at least would not oppose the Bill's introduction; 57 of these were Liberal and 21 Conservative. Only 13 M.P.s, however, 11 of them Liberal and 2 Conservative, were ready to vote for the introduction of the Bill. Once again the National Temperance League sprang to the attack: the Weekly Record noted that nearly every teetotal M.P. was pledged against the Permissive Bill.² The

1 Alliance Weekly News, 7 May 1859, pp. 78-1; cf. U.K.A. 7th Annual Rept., 1859, p. 11.

2 Alliance Weekly News, 21 May 1859, p. 789; cf. Weekly Record, 14 May 1859, p. 190.

difference in political outlook between the League and the Alliance, which was later to reappear in controversies over Reform League agitation, is reflected in the Weekly Record's superb outburst against the Alliance for supporting the candidature of Ernest Jones at the 1859 election: "when we see our movement dragged **through** an election at the heels of adventurers, and made the synonyme of Chartism, and put upon the lowest platform of politics, we should be recreant to the cause if we held our tongue".¹

Looking back over the organisational and electoral achievement of the Alliance by 1860, it can be said that the new organisation had achieved little, but showed much energy and promise. In the financial year 1859-60 it spent nearly £4000 on its two periodicals Meliora and the Alliance Weekly News, and £1132 on salaries. It received £3136 in subscriptions and donations, including £300 each from Sir W.C. Trevelyan and Charles Jupe, and £100 from William Euing of Glasgow. It was to need all its machinery and all these resources to combat the second attempt to institute free trade in intoxicants, made by Gladstone in his Wine Licenses scheme of 1860.

¹ Weekly Record, 14 May 1859, p. 191.

CHAPTER SIX

THE PROHIBITIONIST CAMPAIGN: III: THE ALLIANCE

IN PARLIAMENT: 1860-1869

The years 1860-1869 saw the Alliance fully launched as a political pressure group with mounting influence at Westminster, successfully capitalising on the resources both financial and organisational which it had evolved since 1853. Between 1860 and 1869 the Alliance put up a vigorous opposition to Gladstone when he tried to apply free trade principles to the drink question, acquired its greatest parliamentary leader, helped enfranchise the class with whose aid it hoped to secure parliamentary success, and made the temperance question one of the most pressing of political issues. At the same time, many Liberal M.P.s were beginning to see in the temperance movement an important source of energy and support. The story of the Alliance in these crucial years, and of the way in which its methods and principles were applied in practice must be outlined before the mid-Victorian prohibitionist campaign can be assessed as a whole, and before any conclusions can be reached on the "prohibitionist mentality" in particular.

I

In his budget of 1860, Gladstone sought to promote the

consumption in England of the cheaper qualities of French wine by introducing a graduated tax in wines related to alcoholic strength. He announced in February an immediate reduction in the duty on all foreign wines from 5/10 to 3/- per gallon, and said that after 1st April 1861 wine up to 15° proof would be charged at 1/-; from 15° to 26° at 1/6, and above 26° at 2/-. Gladstone hoped that the revenue would be recouped through greatly increased consumption, and defended his proposals on temperance grounds by pointing to the relative sobriety of France where wine-drinking was widespread.

The second branch of Gladstone's policy was to open up the licensing system. He steered midway between the public-house and beerhouse systems. He sought uniform application by bestowing responsibility for granting wine licences on the Excise, and by allowing magistrates' veto only on specific grounds listed in the Wine Licences Bill. If they exercised the veto, they had to show that the claimant did not own a genuine eating-house, was unable to prevent disorderly conduct, did not qualify for a licence by rating or by character.

Gladstone sought to open the trade in two directions - first by enabling shopkeepers to obtain a licence for selling wine for consumption off the premises - this would take some of the "family trade" from the publicans. Secondly,

by enabling eating-houses to take out annually-renewable wine-licences for consumption on the premises. His Bill brought under police control all refreshment houses except those in rural areas under £10 in value: obliged them to pay licence duty; and allowed licences to be granted to houses only where magistrates could testify that food was provided.

Gladstone's proposals embarrassed liquor restrictionists for four reasons. First, they placed a wedge between the temperance movement and the interests of many Northern manufacturers and emphasised the contradiction between laissez faire policy and the claims of sobriety. The Manchester Chamber of Commerce welcomed Gladstone's proposals;¹ Villiers claimed that teetotalers feared to oppose the measures since "they know that the Members that may be joining them, now being engaged in commerce, or representing those who are so, desired to have the Treaty carried out in order to exchange their cottons and crockery and linen yarns for the wine and brandy of France".² Liquor restrictionists, normally free-traders, found it difficult to oppose a treaty which, in Bentinck's words, "continued the policy of the changes of

1 Manchester City Library, Chamber of Commerce Minute Books 1858-67, minutes for 13 Feb. 1860.

2 3 Hansard 158, c. 803 (7 May 1860).

1846".¹ In public debates on the Budget in Preston, teetotalers were seriously divided - some opposing and some supporting the measure.²

The Alliance sought to oppose the wine licensing proposals and at the same time to avoid attacking laissez faire principles. It welcomed the treaty's abolition of protective duties and the attack on the publicans' monopoly; it added that "it must not be supposed that Prohibition, as advocated by the Alliance, involves any hostility to Free Trade or to sound principles of fiscal administration".³

Free traders and prohibitionists were never as far apart as they seemed. The bitterness of the contest between Manchester prohibitionists and Liverpool free-traders in the 1860s stemmed partly from the fact that the contestants had so much in common. Both were radical progressives, both were enthusiasts for free trade, both were attacking the corruptions and anomalies of the existing licensing system and both were anxious to curb drunkenness. Given the power of popular veto against renewing the licences of disorderly houses, said J.H. Raper in 1862, the system of free licensing "would

1 3 Hansard 156, c. 1863 (27 Feb. 1860).

2 Preston Guardian, 25 Feb. 1860, p. 6.

3 Alliance Weekly News, 18 Feb. 1860, p. 945.

lose its terrors".¹

Some liquor restrictionists however, particularly Joseph Livesey and some members of the Alliance, denied that free trade principles were universally applicable. Livesey emphasised that intoxicants were a peculiarly dangerous article, the demand for which was actually increased by the supply.² F.W. Newman was astonished to find educated men treating free trade as if it were a panacea: "no man has yet been so fanatical as to assert that the doctrine of free trade is of unconditional application", wrote the prohibitionist Dawson Burns.³ Even J.S. Mill had made a similar statement, though in a different context.⁴ While many teetotalers agreed with Cobden and Gladstone that wine was a safer drink than spirits, they opposed any measure which extended the facilities for purchasing any kind of intoxicant.

Free trade, said Samuel Pope, must not be "dragged through the mire in order to serve the turn of those who desire this particular measure";⁵ he claimed that even

1 Weekly Record, 27 Dec. 1862, p. 526.

2 Alliance Weekly News, 17 Mar. 1860, p. 960.

3 F.W. Newman, Alliance Weekly News, 24 Mar. 1860, p. 964; cf. Ayrton, 3 Hansard 158, c. 785 (7 May 1860); Dawson Burns, Alliance Weekly News, 12 Apr. 1864, p. 2.

4 W.D. Grampp, The Manchester School of Economics (1960), p. 130.

5 Alliance Weekly News, 17 Mar. 1860, p. 961.

Gladstone's supporters admitted the peculiarity of intoxicants as an article of trade since they did not propose to jettison the licensing system. The Alliance had a good case, yet it did not do adequate justice to it when its deputation met Gladstone in March. It did little but quote formulae and testimonials; all the sophistication, subtlety and success lay with Gladstone.¹ The Alliance complained that "the glamour which deceives so many eyes to the utterance of the magic words, - 'free trade', - has, of course, made the task of resistance to Mr. Gladstone's measure very up-hill work".²

Secondly, Gladstone's measures were embarrassing because conceived in a "gradualist" frame of mind, whereas liquor restrictionists wanted outright abolition and were thus forced into opposing a measure publicly recognised to be compatible with public sobriety. In Gladstone's measures there lay the tacit assumption that intoxicants would be consumed for many years to come, and that sobriety was best promoted by encouraging the consumption of weaker drinks rather than by cutting off the supplies altogether. His complete divergence from the puritanical temperance party

1 Alliance Weekly News, 26 Mar. 1860, p. 965.

2 ibid., 19 May 1860, p. 997.

is revealed by his advice to Bruce in 1871: licensing reform, he said, must champion the good drinking places against the bad, and the weak intoxicants against the strong.¹ Gladstone's measures actually increased the number of shopkeepers interested in the drink trade. Furthermore, liquor restrictionists disliked any attempt to tackle the licensing question as though it were "a mere matter of detail... smuggled in as one of the many points of a budget".²

For the liquor restrictionist, the crusade against liquor was a crusade against Sin. Gradualist compromises could never enable him to acquit himself of responsibility. Thus the Western Temperance Herald in April urged opposition to Gladstone's measures not only to defeat them, but also "in order.....that our consciences may be clear".³ Gladstone felt little respect for the National Temperance League whose members had it "as much in view to acquit their consciences, to liberate their souls, and to wash their hands of all responsibility as to prosecute a real and earnest opposition to the Bill".⁴ And although earnestness certainly character-

1 J.D. Clayton, 'Mr. Gladstone's Leadership of the Parliamentary Liberal Party, 1868-1874' (Oxford Univ. D.Phil. thesis, 1960), p. 317, citing Gladstone's letter to Bruce, 2 Apr. 1871.

2 Alliance Weekly News, 18 Feb. 1860, p. 945.

3 Western Temperance Herald, 2 Apr. 1860, p. 42.

4 3 Hansard 157, c. 1304 (26 Mar. 1860).

ised Alliance opposition to the budget, yet there is good reason to suspect that its campaign was quite as self-regarding as that of the League.¹

Thirdly, the 1860 discussions, especially those in the Morning Star,² exposed embarrassing divisions within the temperance movement. While the Alliance resolutely attacked any scheme promoting the sale of any kind of intoxicant, some of the National Temperance League's supporters seem to have forgotten the principles laid down in Joseph Livesey's Malt Lecture a quarter of a century before. Two teetotal M.P.s, Baines and Crossley, supported Gladstone's measures under the impression that sobriety could be promoted through extending wine consumption.³ None of the teetotal M.P.s - Gilpin, Crossley, Pease and Salisbury - attacked the Bill on grounds of morality: this task was left to a stranger, Mr. Hatfield.⁴ Baines thought the increased use of light French wines "might be a positive advantage, to the morals of the country", and Gladstone immediately wrote

1 See below, pp. 497 ff.

2 Morning Star, 13 Apr. 1860, p. 8.

3 3 Hansard 156, c. 1594 (23 Feb. 1860); ibid., c. 1864 (27 Feb. 1860).

4 Weekly Record, 7 Apr. 1860, p. 162.

to thank him for his "excellent speech".¹ According to the Alliance, such notions overturned the whole foundation of Total Abstinence practice.²

The Alliance contrasted its own vigorous opposition to Gladstone with the relatively feeble efforts made by the National Temperance League; the latter did little more than distribute a map of London public-houses to every M.P. and inform Gladstone that the intoxicating principle was "essentially the same" in all intoxicating drinks.³ So prominent was the Alliance in the campaign against Gladstone's measures that the Morning Star considered the temperance opposition "simply, an offshoot of.....agitation in favour of prohibitive legislation",⁴ and Mr. Ker Seymer pronounced Gladstone's proposals "quite a God-send to the....Alliance".⁵ Even Joseph Livesey, soon to clash with the prohibitionists, praised the vigour of their agitation.⁶

1 B.M. Addit. MSS. 44530 (Gladstone Papers), f. 160: Gladstone to Baines, 24 Feb. 1860.

2 U.K.A. 8th Annual Rept., 1860, p. 17.

3 National Temperance League, Annual Rept. 1859-60, pp. 10-15; Alliance Weekly News, 12 May 1860, p. 993.

4 Morning Star, 10 Apr. 1860, p. 4.

5 3 Hansard 157, c. 1768.

6 Alliance Weekly News, 7 Apr. 1860, p. 972.

The Alliance spent £200 on its campaign and within a week of the budget speech completed Alliance petition forms were arriving at Westminster. 525 of the 636 petitions against the budget received by the week ending 25th February also recommended the Permissive Bill.¹ The Alliance claimed that the petition was the only means of ascertaining the majority opinion in the country, but when his opponents emphasised the strength of this petitioning movement, Gladstone said that everybody knew how easily an organisation could promote petitions.² Public meetings were held against the budget and Gladstone received a deputation. The Morning Star considered temperance opposition sufficiently important to be worth combating in several editorials.³ It accused temperance reformers of forgetting their main function - the reduction of intemperance - in pursuing the will-o'th-wisp of prohibition.

The Alliance informed all M.P.s by letter that Gladstone's proposals were "absolutely appalling";⁴ its case was defended in parliament by Joseph Crook, M.P. for Bolton, who in some way managed to combine a faith in the free trade and prohibi-

1 Alliance Weekly News, 3 Mar. 1860, p. 953.

2 3 Hansard 158, c. 829 (7 May 1860).

3 Morning Star, 10 Apr. 1860, p. 4; 12 Apr. 1860, p. 4.

4 Alliance Weekly News, 18 Feb. 1860.

tionist remedies for the licensing problem.¹ The Alliance noted "with some exultation" that 193 M.P.s voted against the second reading of the Wine Licences Bill and referred to the "immense stride" which the Alliance had made in political importance. "Our organisation has made itself felt in Parliament", it wrote, "its documents have been quoted, its doctrines propounded".²

Events in 1860 convinced the Weekly Record that temperance reformers must concentrate exclusively on moral suasion and not rely on the law "as swaddling bands for moral infancy".³ Many prohibitionists drew the opposite conclusion and emphasised the need for a permanent Alliance parliamentary spokesman: "really, we must have a member - a real representative - one who understands the subject, and can make others do it", wrote one supporter.⁴ The future Alliance spokesman, Wilfrid Lawson, though elected to parliament in 1859, kept completely silent during the debates of 1860. Prohibitionists were spurred on in their electoral efforts when Gladstone, speaking in March of the publicans and the

1 Bolton Chronicle, 7 Apr. 1860, p. 7; 14 Apr. 1860, p. 8.

2 U.K.A. 8th Annual Rept., 1860, p. 16; Alliance Weekly News, 12 May 1860, p. 993.

3 Weekly Record, 24 Mar. 1860, p. 143; cf. ibid., 12 May 1860, p. 217.

4 Alliance Weekly News, 3 Mar. 1860, p. 953; cf. Temperance Spectator, July 1860, p. 93.

temperance reformers, declared, "I cannot doubt from which the most formidable opposition is to be expected".¹ Clearly the parliamentary influence of temperance reformers stemmed only from the electoral influence they could command.²

Fourthly, Gladstone's proposals embarrassed liquor restrictionists because their interests coincided with those of the publicans. The Nonconformist felt that this alliance deprived the temperance opposition to Gladstone of half its moral power;³ it was, said the Spectator, "one of the most suspicious alliances ever yet seen in political action".⁴ The Alliance was taunted with seeking to ensure that wine was sold only in conjunction with spirits,⁵ and Gladstone likened himself to Hercules encountering two figures of Virtue and Vice: "but instead of Virtue soliciting us to go one way, and Vice pressing us to go another, we have both Virtue and Vice leagued against us".⁶

Of the two allies, the publicans undoubtedly alarmed the government most. Laing told Gladstone on 17th February

1 3 Hansard 157, c. 1303 (26 Mar. 1860).

2 Alliance Weekly News, 23 June 1860, p. 1017 (Dawson Burns).

3 Nonconformist, 9 May 1860, p. 371.

4 Spectator, 3 Mar. 1860, p. 208. See also Appendix, Plates 74 & 75.

5 C.P. Villiers, 3 Hansard 158, c. 803 (7 May 1860).

6 ibid., c. 828 (7 May 1860).

"the licenced victuallers storm looks most alarming and Brand is very strongly under the impression that it will be necessary to give way".¹ A month later, Gladstone was anticipating "a stiff battle to fight with the licenced victuallers".² The temperance opposition hardly features at all in his correspondence. But Gladstone had little personal sympathy with the publicans: he noted in one debate that the recollection that they numbered 63,000 sent "a kind of shudder through the frame".³ Many commentators were disgusted when the publicans claimed that in opposing Gladstone they were upholding public morality.⁴

Publicans' electoral influence and organisational skill forced politicians to consider their case. The Protection Society's secretary Mr. Smith could be seen "constantly flitting from the lobby to the tea-room - from the Speaker's gallery to the bar of the House of Lords",⁵ trying to influence M.P.s; the society's chairman, Mr. Adams "seemed

1 B.M. Addit. MSS. 44393 (Gladstone Papers), f. 126; S. Laing to Gladstone, 17 Feb. 1860.

2 B.M. Addit. MS., 44530 (Gladstone Papers), f. 174: Gladstone to the Vice-Chancellor of Oxford, 17 Mar. 1860.

3 3 Hansard 157, c. 1304 (26 Mar. 1860).

4 Saturday Review, 7 Apr. 1860, p. 431; and see Appendix, Plates 74 & 75

5 Morning Advertiser, 11 July 1860.

as if he had become one of the pillars of the house itself". Ayrton, probably influenced by his numerous publican constituents in the Tower Hamlets, acted as the publicans' parliamentary spokesman;¹ the Morning Advertiser defended the publicans in the press, and denounced a budget which made England "play the spaniel" to the French Emperor.²

Yet Gladstone's measures passed the Commons without serious amendment; and since Gladstone's Wine Licensing Bill was considered a supply bill, the Lords, who had already antagonised popular feeling by rejecting the Paper Duties Bill, dared not reject yet another popular measure. The Alliance regarded this as "an ominous defeat"³ for the much-feared drink interest. Their defeat resulted partly from the integral links between Gladstone's licensing scheme and the Commercial Treaty: but partly also from their own internal divisions.

There was no united "drink interest" in 1860: the publican deputation to Gladstone on 20th February was fragmented

1 Windsor Castle: Royal Archives, R.A. A/28/31: Palmerston to Queen Victoria, 20 Feb. 1860; cf. R.A.A./28/69: Palmerston to Queen Victoria, 7 May 1860: I owe these two references to the kindness of Dr. John Vincent of Peterhouse, Cambridge.

2 Morning Advertiser, 1 Feb. 1860, p. 4.

3 U.K.A. 8th Annual Rept., 1860, p. 18.

into three parties.¹ Nevertheless many publicans feared consequences similar to those which had followed the Beer Act, and the Standard foreshadowed the alliance between publicans, property-owners and Conservatives when it claimed on 8th May that "if rights of this indefeasible character are to be abrogated there is no knowing where the spoliation will end. It is the publican to-day, but to-morrow it may be the grocer, the butcher, or the baker". Henry Berkeley and Edwin James, M.P.s who usually defended the publicans, and Cobbold, who had a large interest in public houses, voted against the second reading of the Wine Licences Bill.² To judge from the frequency of liquor restrictionists' subsequent complaints that Gladstone's off-licences for the sale of wine encouraged surreptitious sale of wine to housewives under the guise of "groceries", the publicans were justified in their fears. Yet the wine licences were never as widely issued as the beerhouse licences after 1830: by 1880 the combined total of "on" and "off" wine licences had still not reached 8000.³

The brewers were also divided. Bass the brewer was

1 3 Hansard 156, c. 1353 (20 Feb. 1860).

2 Weekly Record, 12 May 1860, p. 217.

3 G.B. Wilson, Alcohol & the Nation, pp. 394-6.

sceptical of Gladstone's proposals,¹ and the Times on 21st February noted that the brewers "usually so strong in their partisanship of Liberal metropolitan members" seemed "all at once to have been converted to the principles of Conservatism". Other brewers, however, were less hostile. Hanbury, Stansfeld and Whitbread both supported the second reading, and Charles Buxton, anxious like his father in 1830 to show that his wealth was not derived from monopoly, disappointed the publicans by failing to lead a vigorous opposition to Gladstone's proposals.² No one dreamed, he said, that French wines would drive out beer.

The interests of publicans clashed with those of the beersellers, who saw Gladstone's scheme as a second phase of the attack on the brewers' licensing monopoly, and were greatly disappointed when the publican pressure caused him to abandon his original intention of enabling eating-houses to sell both wine and beer.³ The beersellers' enthusiasm for Gladstone's scheme is understandable, since, as contemporaries pointed out, it closely resembled the Beer Act: Lord Donoughmore, who on 11th June seconded the rejection of

1 3 Hansard 156, c. 1876 (27 Feb. 1860).

2 3 Hansard 158, c. 819 (7 May 1860); ibid., c. 816 (7 May 1860); ~~& see above, pp.~~

3 Bolton Chronicle, 7 Apr. 1860, p. 7.

the Wine Licences Bill, had moved the rejection of the Beer Bill in the Commons thirty years before. The Times in 1860 as in 1830 remained an enthusiastic devotee of free licensing.¹

Gladstone always rejected such parallels: the 1830 Beer Act, he said, did not, like his own measure seek to reunite eating with drinking.² Nevertheless, he could not refrain from defending the 1830 Beer Act against its attackers: "its failure", he said, "was one of a far more qualified kind, and related more to certain peculiar parishes and districts than hon. Gentlemen were willing to admit".³

Of the 304 M.P.s who, including pairs, supported Gladstone's Bill, 182 were normally adherents of Palmerston and Russell, 41 were Independent Liberals, of whom 13 usually supported Bright. The 56 Conservatives who supported the Bill included Lord Robert Cecil and Stafford Northcote. Of the Bill's opponents, 191 were Conservatives, though no Conservative whip was made against the Bill, 16 were government supporters and 13 came from the Independent Liberal and Bright sections. In all, including pairs, the minority numbered 230 and included Henry Pease and Baines.⁴ The latter

¹ Times, 21 Feb. 1860, p. 11.

² 3 Hansard 157, c. 1311 (26 Mar. 1860).

³ 3 Hansard 158, c. 1038 (10 May 1860).

⁴ Morning Advertiser, 11 May 1860, p. 5.

approved of the reduction in the wine duties, but did not favour the extension of facilities for the sale of wine.¹ A majority among the M.P.s for Lancashire and Yorkshire opposed the Bill.

During the Bill's passage through the Lords, Shaftesbury pronounced it as much a police as a supply bill; Harrington considered it "injurious to public morals", and sought to give magistrates the same power over wine licences as they enjoyed over other licences.² Denman and Granville objected, however, that such an amendment, if carried, might cause disagreement between the two houses.³ J.H. Raper, the Alliance parliamentary agent, was furious when it was announced that no amendments could be permitted to a money bill; he rushed out of the gallery, mingled with the Lords, drew Lord Shaftesbury out, and insisted that the whole country relied on him for protection. Lords Denman and Harrington signed a protest to the effect that the people preferred the ~~P~~ermissive Bill to Gladstone's measure. In vain. The Bill passed its third reading by 36 votes to 2.

II

Alliance by-elections of the early 1860s continued the

1 3 Hansard 159, c. 165 (8 June 1860).

2 3 Hansard 159, c. 170 (8 June 1860).

3 ibid., cc. 170, 174.

pattern set between 1853 and 1860. Samuel Pope flustered Plymouth Liberals by standing as radical candidate there in 1861, but later withdrew on securing promises from the Liberal candidate. Dr. Lees at Ripon in 1861 advocated an aristocracy of merit, direct taxation based on property, franchise extension and the ballot, but withdrew before the poll; this enabled the 22-year-old brother of the Earl de Grey, Mr. Reginald Vyner, to enter a House of Commons two-thirds of whose members Lees had pronounced "nominees of the aristocracy".¹ In 1862, Pope stood for the third and last time at Stoke, but more interesting was the Grimsby by-election of 1862, where the Alliance helped return a Conservative. Until the drink traffic was put down, wrote the Alliance News, Derby, Disraeli, Palmerston and Russell must be "bundled into one boat, and pushed adrift".² Local newspapers devoted far less attention to Alliance intervention in these by-elections than reports in the Alliance News might lead the reader to expect. The Permissive Bill had not, by 1862, become a burning political issue.

The Alliance regarded parliamentary discussion as "the best of all modes of creating public opinion",³ but this

1 F. Lees, op. cit., pp. 100-103.

2 Alliance News, 8 Mar. 1862, p. 77.

3 U.K.A. 22nd Annual Rept., 1873-4, p. 8.

required a reliable and attractive parliamentary advocate. The most important achievement of the Alliance in the early 1860s was its selection of Wilfrid Lawson for this task. From the first, the Alliance contacted prominent politicians¹ and its deputations waited on two Home Secretaries in the late 1850s. As early as 1855 the Earl of Harrington advocated the Permissive Bill in the Lords,² but until 1860, the Alliance made no impression on the Commons. It tried unsuccessfully to induce its president Sir W.C. Trevelyan to stand for parliament,³ and lamented as early as 1857 that "the great want of the movement" was "a judicious leader in the House of Commons. A gentleman of courage, ability, firmness, sound principles, and accurate information, who would identify his public life with the temperance question".⁴

By 1859 this disability had become "unfortunate and embarrassing"⁵ and though the Alliance in 1860 found a spokesman in Joseph Crook, he was not a prominent Alliance

1 e.g. Gladstone, Alliance, Vol. 2, No. 9 (3 Mar. 1855), p. 275.

2 3 Hansard 139, c. 445 (5 July 1855).

3 Proceedings of the International Temperance & Prohibition Convention, 1862, p. 427.

4 U.K.A. 5th Annual Rept., 1857, p. 16; cf. 6th Annual Rept., 1858, p. 15.

5 U.K.A. 7th Annual Rept., 1859, p. 17.

supporter; indeed his views did not entirely accord with those of the Alliance. During its first decade the Alliance undoubtedly suffered severely from its inability to get Samuel Pope, its Cobden and its O'Connell, elected to parliament.¹ The situation in the early 1860s was certainly ripe for a parliamentary leader. The Alliance felt that the agitation of 1860 had strengthened its position and in 1861 felt able to welcome the "sudden relaxation of prejudice" which had enabled it "to make a long step of progress with comparative quietness".²

In 1860 the Alliance appointed J.H. Raper as its full-time parliamentary agent. A former Wesleyan Sunday school teacher, Liberal partisan and peace advocate, who had fainted in 1857 at the news of Bright's Manchester election defeat, Raper was a good investment - his appointment, according to the Alliance News two years later was "the best thing the Alliance ever did".³ Raper was well informed on the drink question and shrewd in foreseeing how politicians would act in particular situations. M.P.s during drink debates

1 Alliance News, 22 Apr. 1865, p. 124.

2 9th Annual Rept., 1861, pp. 1-2; cf. 8th Annual Rept., 1860, p. 16.

3 Alliance News, 8 Mar. 1862, p. 77; see also J.D. Hilton, A Brief Memoir of James Hayes Raper, 1898.

hurried into the lobbies to be primed by him and, as Pope told an Alliance meeting in 1870, he took "a great deal larger share in Parliamentary debates than most of you would be aware of, unless you were to watch his proceedings in the Lobby".¹

An ambitious M.P. normally had much to gain from connecting himself with a pressure group which could provide him with information and influence. The Anti-Corn Law League had made Cobden's political career and the annual ballot motion of Grote and Berkeley set a precedent for the persistent advocacy of a Liberal reform against powerful opposition. The Permissive Bill, however, was so unpopular with the class from which parliament was composed that few politicians were prepared to jeopardise their careers by touching it. Hence the need to inquire into the personality of the M.P. who eventually did undertake this task - Wilfrid Lawson, whose character was to influence the parliamentary fortunes of the Alliance for a generation and more.

Eldest son of Sir Wilfrid Lawson, he was born in 1829 and embraced all his father's good causes. He was elected to parliament for Carlisle in 1859 and made his maiden speech

1 U.K.A. Full Rept. of the Speeches Delivered at the Annual Public Meeting...Free Trade Hall, Manchester, 1870, p. 29.

in favour of the ballot in 1860.¹ His second speech, in 1861, attacked government timidity on franchise reform.² He seems originally to have been selected by the Alliance as a stopgap until Pope could get elected to parliament, but in the event he managed the Alliance case in parliament from 1862 to 1906. During 1862 he made several speeches in favour of licensing restriction and in June, after outlining the details of the Permissive Bill in the House for the first time, he defended it against much hostile attack with a skill which promised well for the future.³

Economy, courage, humanity, rationality, conspiracy, humour - these are the six keywords to Lawson's personality and policy. Economy: Lawson's political creed was formed by the early teachings of Cobden and Bright: Asquith described him in 1909 as "a Cobdenite of the Cobdenites".⁴ He frequently recommended measures which would minimise the expense of government, and the same objective lay behind his support for liquor restriction and his opposition to imperialism: both cost money.

1 3 Hansard 157, c. 953 (20 Mar. 1860); cf. G.W.E. Russell, Sir Wilfrid Lawson, p. 36.

2 3 Hansard 162, c. 406 (10 Apr. 1861); see also Appendix, Plate 76.

3 3 Hansard 167, c. 1181ff. (27 June 1862).

4 G.W.E. Russell, Sir Wilfrid Lawson, p. 383.

Despite his radical views, certain conservative strands in Lawson should not be ignored. He had no desire to abolish the English aristocracy, which he considered "the best aristocracy the world ever saw".¹ One M.P. once irritated him by accusing him of being "an ultra-Liberal upon every question but the land question, and he had very good reason for that exception". Lawson's revenues from his Cumberland and Durham estates brought him over £14,000 a year. He was a member of that small élite of 866 landowners who drew more than £10,000 a year from their land.² This made it easy for him to abandon political ambition and helped place him in the long line of English country gentlemen anxious to reduce taxation, suspicious of London-based corruption and deriving their political influence from their provincial estates. He could almost be described as the Sibthorp of an age whose centres of political corruption were thought to have moved from the Treasury eastwards into Fleet Street and the City.

Lawson's career should be seen in the context not of the modern "party-member", but of the "independent member", much admired in mid-Victorian England, who entered parliament

¹ Carlisle Express, 5 Aug. 1865, p. 6.

² J. Bateman, Great Landowners, 1879 Edn., p. 253.

solely because of conscientious opinion and traditional association. His life's ambition was that of Cobden: to see the Liberal party revert to its traditional policy of peace, retrenchment and reform. He was bitterly disappointed when the extended electorate after 1867, far from being more economical, actually lavished public money on imperialistic ventures.

Lawson's second characteristic, courage, also owed much to Cobden. Lawson greatly admired Cobden for his ability to rise above party and sectarian considerations, and adopted his single-minded tactics as well as his philosophy. He never allowed party considerations to interfere with his conscience. Unfortunately, though he possessed Cobden's courage, Lawson did not possess Cobden's political shrewdness and subtlety. He refused to be diverted by demands for partial licensing reform, denounced all suggestions of parliamentary inquiry into the licensing question as delaying tactics, and greatly offended Chamberlain by ridiculing the "patriotic publican and.....philanthropic potboy" whose existence the Gothenburg scheme for municipal management presupposed.¹ He refused to agitate for pure water, telling

¹ 3 Hansard 232, c. 1883 (13 Mar. 1877); G.W.E. Russell, Sir Wilfrid Lawson, pp. 129-30.

Chadwick that he would persist in recommending the Permissive Bill "even if we got good water in every town in the kingdom".¹

Lawson's courage and thirst for economy can be seen conjoined in his single-minded campaign for the Permissive Bill through a decade of hopeless parliamentary defeat. They also lay behind his attack on grants to the royal family in 1871: "the country did not get its money's worth for what it had given", he claimed.² The icy atmosphere in which such an attack was delivered, at a time when the classes from which parliament was recruited, shocked at the horrors of the Commune, regarded the Crown as the prop of property, can almost be felt in the columns of Hansard. On the division Lawson found himself in an absurdly small minority. Again, Lawson's many attacks on imperialist wars, his defence of Irishmen and Boers, required great courage amid the jingoism of the years between 1876 and 1906.

Thirdly, humanity. Though a single-minded devotee of prohibition, Lawson never displayed the fanatic's quality of hatred. He always remained on good terms with his opponents, deplored personal attacks on the publicans, and was "very good friends" with Bass the brewer.³ He had a

1 University College, London, Chadwick Collection, Lawson to Chadwick, 17 Apr. 1875.

2 3 Hansard 208, c. 785 (3 Aug. 1871); cf. 3 Hansard 242, c. 795 (31 July 1878).

3 G.W.E. Russell, Sir Wilfrid Lawson, p. 62.

passion for justice, which according to G.W.E. Russell was "tempered by a tenderness which had its root in a singularly humane disposition".¹ He claimed for others the freedom of expression which he claimed for himself and despite his deep Christianity can be found defending Bradlaugh's attempt to take his seat in parliament in 1881.

Humanity inspired his attacks on imperialism and on the drink trade. He always indignantly repudiated the title "Apostle of temperance": there was no "temperance party" in the House, he said: members differed only about means, not ends, since no politician could remain unconcerned about so terrible an evil as intemperance.² In foreign policy he displayed Cobden's curious combination of insularity and cosmopolitanism. Like Cobden he had no fear of seeing the Russians at Constantinople and denounced ensnaring treaties with continental powers; but he welcomed English neutrality during the Franco-Prussian War, plans for a Channel Tunnel and the peaceful settlement of the Alabama claims.

Lawson's fourth characteristic - rationality - has an obvious connexion with his temperance and Little Englander zeal. Both the drunkard and the soldier had sacrificed the

1 D.N.B., 1901-11 (1912), p. 430.

2 3 Hansard 225, c. 53 (16 June 1875).

use of their reason - the latter being "a mere animated machine, with no consideration of right or wrong".¹ He could not understand the apparent absence of rationality in politicians and electors: he was incredulous at the political début of the Conservative working man after 1867,² and always considered it an evil to be a Tory. He scorned precedents: "away with musty precedents", he declared airily on one occasion: "what did the House of Commons exist for but to make precedents?"³

He declared in 1882 that he had "never yet seen a Licensing Bill which could stand the test of logical examination",⁴ as though logic and not practicality were the most praiseworthy characteristic of legislation. He does not seem to have realised that the art of government is "largely the art of adapting laws to the foibles of mankind".⁵ On the contrary, law must set the standards by which men should model their conduct. Like J.S. Buckingham, he was naively

1 3 Hansard 260, c. 1858 (5 May 1881); cf. Cobden, Political Writings, 1878 Edn., p. 161.

2 W. Lawson, Wit & Wisdom, p. 17 (1868).

3 3 Hansard 222, c. 185 (9 Feb. 1875); cf. 3 Hansard 278, c. 680 (19 Apr. 1883).

4 3 Hansard 269, c. 426 (10 May 1882).

5 W.B. Munro, Personality in Politics, New York, 1925, p. 5.

incredulous that intelligent politicians could reject his rational suggestions for domestic reform and at times his career bears out Pascal's aphorism: "if a man decided to follow reason, he would be reckoned a fool by the greater part of the world".¹

Lawson was able to maintain his reputation for single-mindedness and consistency by abdicating all hope of office. In this he resembled Wilberforce, but unlike him Lawson attacked rather than supported the government in power. From his isolated pill-box he sniped at any government of whose conduct he disapproved. Undistracted by the need to compromise and by the conflicting considerations which beset those in office, he could never understand why Liberals in office abandoned many of the policies they had advocated in Opposition. For him, the party's great years lay between 1877-80. As for the invasion of Egypt, "nothing in politics ever gave me such a shock".² In 1884 he longed for his party to return to Opposition and to revert to the policy of Peace, Retrenchment and Reform.³ Like Cobden his master, Lawson was primarily a protesting, and to some extent an irresponsible, politician: "I am only an agitator", he once

1 Pascal, The Pensées, Tr. Cohen, Penguin Classics, p. 62.

2 G.W.E. Russell, Sir Wilfrid Lawson, pp. 158, 166-7.

3 3 Hansard 289, c. 182 (12 June 1884).

admitted: "I do not profess to be a great legislator".¹

Fifthly, conspiracy. If one believed, with Lawson, that the vast majority of mankind act rationally and pursue their own self-interest whenever possible, how could Englishmen engage in expensive and destructive wars overseas? How could they allow such futile ambitions to divert them from the domestic reforms so desperately needed? For Lawson, they had been deluded - even drugged. Drink provided the necessary tax revenues and supported the imperialist political party. Lawson did not allow the extension of public-house opening hours during the Golden Jubilee to pass unnoticed:² for him, the two English Gods "the God of Battles and the God of Bottles" were allied.³ Just as the Tories had their conspiracy theories to account for revolution, so Cobden and Lawson had their conspiracy theories to account for war: "Who is it that really gets up these schemes of Burglary and Murder?" he wrote exasperatedly in 1878.⁴

Apart from drink, Lawson also blamed newspapermen and

1 3 Hansard 278, c. 1291 (27 Apr. 1883).

2 3 Hansard 316, c. 672 (20 June 1887); cf. 3 Hansard 298, c. 1884 (7 June 1885).

3 3 Hansard 221, c. 1299 (4 Aug. 1874).

4 B.M. Addit. MS. 43389 (Bright Papers), f. 300: Lawson to Bright, 1 Nov. 1878.

secret diplomacy. He suffered from the Outsider's obsession with mythical political plots. For him as for Cobden, war scares were "got up" by interested journalists "sitting in a snug Editor's room and writing leading articles hounding on your countrymen to the slaughter".¹ If the public appeared to tolerate such evils, their views must be distorted by a corrupt or inefficient electoral mechanism. The remedy? Ever-widening schemes of franchise reform. If the reformed electorate of 1832 failed to give adequate support to the Alliance, then perhaps the urban working men might; if they failed, try the agricultural labourers; if they disappointed, then the women must be enfranchised. Campaigns for franchise extension thus enabled Lawson to avoid forcing himself to adjust to the political situation as he found it.

Finally, humour. G.J. Holyoake held that Lawson "not only made temperance respectable, he made it entertaining, yet always keeping before the House the gravity of its issues".² The one burst of laughter observed from Disraeli throughout his political career was provoked by one of Lawson's jokes, and it was Disraeli who later spoke of

1 3 Hansard 243, c. 1000 (17 Dec. 1878); cf. 3 Hansard 285, cc. 374-5 (3 Mar. 1884).

2 G.J. Holyoake, Public Speaking & Debate, London, n.d., p. 152.

Lawson's "spirit of gay wisdom".¹ The purity of Lawson's ideals and the almost childlike naiveté with which he approached political situations caused him to be frequently impressed with the contrast between the politician's profession and his practice, and to be far more sensitive than his colleagues to the ironies of political life.

Thus Lawson was a constant delight to a House which, in the 1870s and 1880s, was often subjected to irritation and strain. It is remarkable that he could regularly recommend liquor restriction and oppose the annual adjournment for Derby Day without gaining a reputation for sourness: and that he could remain so popular while so decidedly out of sympathy with so many prevalent political attitudes. "No one is more popular in the House", said one opponent in 1879.² His sense of humour enabled him persistently to advocate an unpopular cause without incurring the danger, very apparent to other social reformers such as Shaftesbury and Stansfeld, of boring his opponents with his pet reform.³

1 3 Hansard 222, c. 185 (9 Feb. 1875).

2 3 Hansard 244, c. 677 (11 Mar. 1879); cf. Goldsmid: 3 Hansard 220, cc. 12-13 (17 June 1874); Gladstone, 3 Hansard 251, c. 466 (5 Mar. 1880).

3 cf. J.L. & B. Hammond, James Stansfeld, p. 290.

Goldsmid claimed in a Permissive Bill debate of 1875 that but for Lawson's wit, the House "would long since have shrunk from him and been sick of the Bill".¹

Lawson thus avoided some of the worst dangers of political sectarianism. He never forbade his guests to drink wine at his table: his speeches were almost invariably moderate in tone and delivered, according to Gladstone, "in the true spirit of an English gentleman".² And though in the House he appeared extremist, in the temperance world he steered a middle course. He opposed the Gothenburg Scheme not, like some temperance fanatics, because it would implicate the nation more deeply in the drink traffic, but simply because he did not believe that it would reduce intemperance.³ Flanked by the extremist International Order of Good Templars, he once remarked that he was beginning to think he had become a retrograde himself.⁴

Thus Lawson possessed an unusual combination of qualities and attitudes which equipped him well for pursuing his dual function in the Alliance agitation of chief subscriber

1 3 Hansard 225, c. 19 (16 June 1875).

2 3 Hansard 208, c. 789 (3 Aug. 1871).

3 3 Hansard 232, c. 1890 (13 Mar. 1877); 3 Hansard 219, c. 573 (20 May 1874).

4 3 Hansard 215, c. 1616 (7 May 1873).

and leading spokesman. Yet the local veto was never introduced into England. The Alliance drew its support from precisely the same social groups as the Contagious Diseases agitators, who had to overcome, in addition, a distaste even for discussing their subject in public; yet Stansfeld succeeded whereas Lawson failed.

How far was Lawson himself responsible for his failure? Clearly the prominence of questions of foreign and colonial policy in the years of Lawson's prime imposed serious limits on the achievements of any politician advocating a domestic reform. Again, Lawson was, to all appearances, striving to take away a liberty, whereas his predecessors in the anti-slavery and Anti-Corn Law movements had embarked on the easier task of bestowing a liberty. Nor, in a parliament elected after 1867 largely by working men, could Lawson play so successfully upon M.P.s' fears of the unenfranchised, as Cobden had done in the 1840s.

Yet Lawson may himself be partly responsible for his failure. Popular MPs are not necessarily the most effective when it comes to attacking vested interests.¹ Critics of his tactics were by no means lacking. One M.P. in 1877 voiced a suspicion prevailing on both sides of the House that Lawson "unconsciously almost, does not mean to press to extremes what he says on this subject".² Sociable reformers do not

1. cf. Morpeth, in R.A. Lewis, Edwin Chadwick & the Public Health Movement, 1952, p. 158.

2. 3 Hansard 235, c. 707 (3 July 1877).

necessarily provoke such suspicions: "Oh may God enable me to preserve a constant and a sober mind with a gay exterior", Wilberforce had written; yet no one had suspected that he did not vehemently desire the abolition of slavery. With Lawson, however, the jokes were used not only to win private influence but also to gain public attention. Bishop Fraser claimed that Lawson's audiences looked for the jokes rather than for the arguments they illustrated.¹

Secondly, perhaps Lawson was not sufficiently single-minded; Cobden's parliamentary success stemmed largely from relentless argument, from the deadly and pertinent questions which he directed at the weak points in Peel's armour. Cobden concentrated almost exclusively before 1846 on free trade advocacy: "it is necessary for the concentration of a people's mind", he wrote, "that an individual should become the incarnation of a principle".² Lawson, on the other hand, may well have deterred many potential Permissive Bill supporters by publicly embracing several other unpopular causes.

Thirdly, Lawson, unlike William Wilberforce, Shaftesbury and Stansfeld, never embarked on the drudgery of research for

1 Church of England Temperance Chronicle, 1875, p. 202 (26 Oct.).

2 Quo. in W.H. Dawson, Richard Cobden & Foreign Policy, 1926, p. 71, quoting Cobden's letter to Peel, 23 June 1846.

evidence in support of his case. He too readily assumed that both cause and remedy for the evil he was attacking were self-evident. A comparison of Wilberforce's notes for his slave-trade speech of 12th May 1789 with any one of Lawson's Permissive Bill speeches immediately reveals the contrast.¹ Not that Lawson was idle: "we must work till opinion rises to the point of action", he told Bright in 1878, "and I mean work - if I don't get congestion of the lungs again".² The indictment of Lawson rests rather on the argument that propagandist energy without discriminating thought and research was insufficient for realising his objective. Too extreme a rationalist in some spheres, Lawson in the sphere of temperance legislation was surprisingly and disastrously irrational. He never subjected his faith in the Permissive Bill to the test of patient investigation, and hoped to force it through parliament, less by engaging in research to dispel the prejudices of his opponents than by combining humour with persistence, and by frequently emphasising the horrors of drunkenness and the inevitability of his ultimate success.

Unlike Lawson, Stansfeld had held office: he knew the

1 R.I. & S. Wilberforce, Life, II, p. 441.

2 B.M. Addit. MS. 43389 (Bright Papers), f. 292-3: Lawson to Bright, 15 Sep. 1878.

virtues of compromise, insisted on accepting all government concessions however small, separated himself from the unwise tactics and extreme statements of many of his supporters, spotted the weak point in his opponents' case and conducted detailed statistical research in order to push his advantage home. By demolishing the statistical case of the defenders of the Contagious Diseases Acts, Stansfeld enabled the minority report of a select committee to win his case for him. Lawson, on the other hand, had never held office, and was never able to show Stansfeld's independence of manoeuvre in his relations with the pressure group for which he spoke. And he never advanced beyond the policy of rejecting all inquiry as superfluous and all government legislation as tainted - a policy which, when initially espoused by Josephine Butler, nearly wrecked her movement.

Perhaps the Spectator was correct in claiming that Lawson was "sceptical at bottom of all political measures".¹ He certainly expressed little faith in the Permissive Bill's machinery or practical details. Thus while Lawson's personal integrity and charm cannot be impugned, his conduct of the Alliance case is open to criticism, and for all his exertions he achieved little more than clean hands, a clear conscience and a reputation for integrity. While Lawson could never be

¹ Spectator, 19 June, 1875.

accused of hypocrisy, he has something in common with the "silk stocking" reformers who so exasperated Theodore Roosevelt, who "shook their heads over political corruption but who were wholly unable to grapple with real men in real life".¹

Lawson's speaking career, unlike that of J.S. Buckingham, began modestly and mounted steadily. He spoke once in 1860, twice in 1861 and four times in 1862.² In 1863 he moved a resolution condemning the existing licensing laws: Gladstone said that he disliked abstract resolutions and Lawson was defeated by 87 votes to 21. In 1864 the Permissive Bill was opposed even at the first reading, but when Lawson moved the second reading he had 2,549 petitions behind him, bearing 482,413 signatures.³ During the debates, Bright said he preferred municipal control of licensing; Roebuck, who depended for electoral support on the Sheffield drink interest,⁴

1 T. Roosevelt, Autobiography, 1913, p. 96.

2 The frequency of his interventions in debate is as follows:

1860:1	1863:5	1869:9	1872:40	1875:31.
1861:2	1864:6	1870:13	1873:18	
1862:4	1865:11	1871:19	1874:37	

3 3 Hansard 175, c. 1390ff. (8 June 1864).

4 Leader Collection, Sheffield: Leader to the Sheffield Licensed Victuallers, 16 June 1865 (187 III 283). I owe this reference to Dr. John Vincent.

vigorously attacked the Bill. Lord Robert Cecil was violently hostile;¹ and Sir George Grey remained unconvinced: the Bill was defeated by 292 votes to 35.

More than half the minority consisted of Welsh, Irish and Scottish M.P.s. Cornish M.P.s were also sympathetic. Three-quarters of the majority came from English seats; as occurred throughout the Bill's history, London and the South-East showed marked hostility. In 1864 as on many subsequent occasions, there were complaints that abstentions and insincere voting made the division unrepresentative of genuine parliamentary opinion. Several M.P.s at the refreshment tables announced privately between sips of sherry that they were supporting the Bill only because they knew it would never pass.² The Alliance pointed out, however, that Cobden had never obtained a majority for Corn Law repeal, and that the abstentions included "a number of valuable men" who were carefully studying the question.³

III

Although the debate of 1864 was the first of many, the next Permissive Bill division did not occur till 1869. In

1 Saturday Review, 11 June 1864, p. 709.

2 3 Hansard 175, c. 1422 (8 June 1864).

3 Alliance News, 11 June 1864, p. 189.

the interval, the Alliance participated in two general elections, and some of its supporters took a prominent part in the campaign for franchise extension. Interest in the Alliance question markedly increased at the 1865 election. From the Alliance viewpoint, there were three particularly important contests - at Carlisle, Bolton and Drogheda. At Carlisle, Lawson increased his vote by 70 in comparison with 1859 and enjoyed Bright's written support. Dean Close travelled 800 miles to vote for him. Yet he was defeated by Hodgson the Tory.

There was much violence; the Alliance and the local Liberal press blamed Lawson's defeat on the drink interest,¹ but their hostility was not alone responsible. Hodgson wielded some influence over local railway employees, and some blamed Lawson's defeat on Roman Catholic hostility.² For the Carlisle Examiner, the contest was "a battle of interests, preferences, and prejudices, altogether removed from the Reform question", and reflected the traditional antagonism between the Lonsdales and their enemies.³ The Permissive

1 Alliance News, 15 July 1865, p. 220; Carlisle Express, 11 July 1865, p. 3; the result was Hodgson 616, Potter 604, Lawson 586.

2 Carlisle Examiner, 15 July 1865, p. 2; Carlisle Journal, 14 July 1865, p. 4. The freemen mostly voted for Hodgson: Carlisle Journal, 28 July 1865.

3 Carlisle Examiner, 15 July 1865, p. 2.

Bill did not feature prominently in the election discussions: according to the Liberal Carlisle Journal, it was "quite a minor matter";¹ indeed, Hodgson complained that Lawson was deliberately concealing it in the hope of getting into parliament and promoting it regardless of his constituents' wishes.²

At Bolton in 1865 Samuel Pope stood as second Liberal candidate; the publicans sponsored a Conservative candidate and distiller named Gibb. Bolton had long been represented by two M.P.s, one Liberal and one Tory, and the Liberal Bolton Chronicle complained that Liberal adoption of Pope provoked a "needless and foolish" contest with four candidates instead of the customary two.³ Pope was opposed by many Bolton drinksellers and came third in the poll; but his defeat may partly be attributed to his radical views on other topics.⁴ Benjamin Whitworth, Chairman of the Alliance parliamentary committee, was elected at Drogheda and Pope hoped he would "dry-nurse" the Permissive Bill till Lawson's re-election.⁵ A vain hope: Whitworth took virtually no

1 Carlisle Journal, 4 July 1865.

2 Carlisle Express, 11 July 1865, p. 2.

3 Bolton Chronicle, 15 July 1865.

4 Alliance News, 22 July 1865, p. 228 reports the votes of the Bolton drinksellers.

5 Alliance News, 5 Aug. 1865, p. 245.

part in drink debates.

The Alliance "could not see any ground for discouragement" at the 1865 election results: only three of the M.P.s who had supported the Permissive Bill in 1864 had been defeated. It attributed the bitterness of attacks on the Permissive Bill during the election to resentment among those "whose political existence depends on being let alone" at the disrespect shown by the Alliance towards the political parties.¹ While opponents maintained that the election revealed the lack of popular support for prohibition, Lawson drew a distinction between "the people" and the constituencies: "the Reform Bill, if carried", he said, "must extend the power of our friends".²

The Nottingham by-election of 1866 did not cause the Alliance to revise this view. Handel Cossham, a leading Alliance supporter, agreed to stand on condition that his expenses should not exceed £500. A philanthropic congregationalist, proprietor of Bristol coalmines, employer of 5000 men, and a son of a small tradesman, Cossham was branded by Louisa Stanley as "an out and out vulgar Radical of low birth and a Dissenter".³ Nottingham electors could not be

1 U.K.A. 13th Annual Rept., 1864-5, p. 16.

2 Alliance News, 28 Apr. 1866, p. 132.

3 B. & P. Russell (Eds.), The Amberley Papers, 1937, I, pp. 491, 498; biography of Cossham in Temperance Star, 28 Aug. 1868.

won by "cold water and limited liability" however, even when joined with attacks on the Adullamites and the game laws; Cossham came fourth in the poll.¹ Hostile Liberal selection committees, accusations that Alliance candidates were "splitting the Liberal interest", hostile drinksellers influential in a restricted electorate, electors hostile to the radical views displayed by Alliance candidates - all these factors encouraged the Alliance to put its trust in franchise extension.

Not all temperance reformers favoured franchise reform. Robert Lowe, with his argument that abstinence from 120 quarts of beer would enable the occupier of an £8 house to acquire the franchise by occupying a £10 house, echoed many of the quietist supporters of the moral suasionist National and British Temperance Leagues.² Some Alliance supporters, particularly F.W. Newman, felt that franchise extension would never produce beneficial political change unless preceded by enactment of the Permissive Bill. The Alliance News had itself at one time supported such views. In 1856 it advocated

1 U.K.A. 14th Annual Rept., 1865-6, p. 14; Nottingham Daily Guardian, 26 Apr. 1866, p. 2; Sir Robert Clifton, a bête noire of the Alliance at this time, helped return Osborne, the Tory. The figures were Osborne (Tory) 2518; Amberley (Whig) 2494; Jenkinson (Tory) 2411; Cossham (Radical) 2307; Faulkner, 3.

2 3 Hansard 178, c. 1431 (3 May 1865).

abstinence as an alternative to Chartist agitation, and in 1859 it recommended the Permissive Bill as a desirable preliminary to franchise extension - as the "lightning conductor" which in the hour of political strife would enable "the dangerous electricity" to be "drawn quietly down, and safely and soberly discharged, instead of, as now, allowed to become aggravated and intensified by tipsy influences, until it descends in a crash of folly and madness and riot".¹ As late as 1866, Dean Close told working men that through total abstinence, they would enfranchise themselves "long before friend Bright will get it for you".²

But most leading Alliance men did not take this view; while Robert Lowe might recommend the use of the franchise as "a lever by which you may hope to elevate the working-class", Alliance leaders by 1866 felt that franchise extension must necessarily precede the elevation of the working classes, since only a reformed parliament would support licensing legislation. Even if, in their hearts, Alliance men shared their contemporaries' doubts about franchise extension, the old franchise had done little enough for them, and they could hardly lose by a change. The Alliance had

¹ Alliance Weekly News, 20 Sep. 1856, p. 243; ibid., 9 Apr. 1859, p. 765.

² Rept. of the Meeting of Working Men, at the Church Congress...York,...October 10th, 1866, p. 20.

always been more conscious than the moral suasionists of the obstacles which government interposed between the working man and self improvement. Many of its leaders would have sympathised with the mason Thomas Connolly who told a Reform League demonstration that "he himself had been for years a teetotaller...and....had not as yet been able to get possession of the franchise".¹

The Alliance believed that any increase in the size of the constituencies must prevent a small organised group from controlling electoral majorities and "strike at the root of publican domination".² Confident of support from the labour aristocracy, the Alliance knew, like William Rathbone, that universal suffrage "weighs most heavily on the most valuable part of a nation the lower middle and upper working class, the most steady industrious and moral part of the working part of the nation".³ Thus, as Lord Robert Cecil in 1865 and Robert Lowe in 1877 remarked of Liberal M.P.s, prohibitionists found themselves dwelling on working-class virtues when discussing franchise reform, and on their vices during

1 Bee-Hive, 16 Dec. 1865, p. 1.

2 U.K.A. 14th Annual Rept., 1865-6, p. 5.

3 B.M. Addit. MS. 44402 (Gladstone Papers): W. Rathbone to Gladstone, endorsed "29? Mar. 1864".

licensing discussions.¹

The contradiction was only superficial, since in the former they had the labour aristocracy in mind, and in the latter the "residuum". The Alliance did not share Robert Lowe's belief that "drunkenness, and facility for being intimidated"² increased with every descent in the social scale: it bracketed the labour aristocracy and the residuum and indignantly repudiated the Weekly Dispatch's attempt to identify it with Lowe's unpopular views: "we have always alleged that, in proportion to their number, the unworking classes are, at least, as guilty in this matter as the working".³

The motives of prohibitionists favouring franchise extension in 1867 closely parallel those of poor law reformers favouring franchise extension in 1832; both felt that only a reformed parliament would have the moral courage necessary to pass measures bound to be unpopular with the poorest sections of the community. The idea was widely held even outside the Alliance. Thus Thomas Hughes urged parliament in 1869 to pass a Sunday Trading Bill since it "now

1 Saturday Review, 21 Jan. 1865, p. 68; Fortnightly Review, 1 Oct. 1877, p. 450.

2 3 Hansard 182, c. 147.

3 Alliance News, 3 Nov. 1866, p. 344.

for the first time represented every class, and, therefore, had the whole country at its back".¹ Even H.A. Bruce and Sir George Grey agreed that the Reform Act "offered greater facilities than existed at any time that he remembered" for dealing with the licensing question.² As long as parliament was elected on a restricted franchise, Holyoake's argument against the Permissive Bill, echoed by the Bee-Hive, that prohibition under a restricted franchise "would be the tyranny of a minority of shopkeepers and sectarians" could hardly be rebutted.³ Only if England possessed a franchise on the American scale could the success of American liquor restriction be an argument for their introduction into England.

But many Alliance supporters expected far greater improvements from franchise extension than mere liquor restriction. The Reform agitation was partly a campaign by the North of England to filch political influence from the South; the strength of the Alliance and of all opponents of feudalism lay in the North. Prohibitionists promoting franchise extension in the 1860s were inspired by the same

1 3 Hansard 194, c. 560 (3 Mar. 1869).

2 Grey, 3 Hansard 196, c. 682 (12 May 1869); cf. Bruce, ibid., c. 674.

3 Reasoner, 13 Jan. 1858, p. 10; cf. Daily News, 6 Oct. 1856, p. 4.

motives as Anti-Corn law leaguers in the 1840s. F.W. Newman felt in 1867 that "if we get a pretty democratic Parliament we shall soon carry our Bill. It will force a vast financial revolution in ten years' time; for the exchequer gets 21 millions a year from alcohol, 5 or 6 from tobacco, which more than pay the interest of the National Debt".¹ Indeed, Manning and F.W. Newman seem to have supported the Alliance as much because they felt it was a healthy political influence as from any enthusiasm for its detailed proposals. "We must not resist a movement in the right direction", said F.W. Newman in 1858, "merely because its most energetic supporters would, if they could, go farther than we think is needed".²

Agitators for franchise extension in the 1860s came from precisely the class which supported the Alliance - from that "bold, combined, and active" minority on which Shaftesbury blamed all revolutions.³ Several prominent Alliance supporters attended the 1858 reform conference;⁴

1 F.W. Newman-Sargent Collection: Newman to Sargent, 1 May 1867.

2 Reasoner, 17 Feb. 1858, p. 50; cf. Manning, above, pp. 311 ff.

3 MS Diary, 25 Apr. 1867.

4 F.E. Gillespie, Labor & Politics in England 1850-1867, Durham, U.S.A., 1927, p. 162.

George Howell himself had publicly defended the Permissive Bill in his Bristol days, and there were close links between London franchise reformers and liquor restrictionists. Among the Reform League's vice-presidents, Bradlaugh, Passmore Edwards, John Hilton, Rev. George Murphy, Samuel Pope, Titus Salt, Harper Twelvetrees, J.R. Taylor, Charles Wooltorton, and the Wilfrid Lawsons had all at some stage played an active part in the temperance movement. Of the Reform League's provincial champions, Handel Cossham in Bristol, Carter in Leeds, Cowen in Newcastle, Plimsoll in Sheffield and Burt in Glasgow all supported the Permissive Bill.¹

Both organisational and financial considerations linked the temperance and franchise reform movements. The Reform League used temperance societies, together with trade unions and friendly societies, as a means of contacting London's labour aristocrats. Its circulars encouraged members of London temperance societies to attend Reform demonstrations, bringing with them the flags and banners with which they had graced the Garibaldi meetings.² J.R. Taylor, president of

1 A.D. Bell, 'The Reform League from its Origins to the Reform Act of 1867', (Oxford Univ. D.Phil. thesis, 1961), p. 388, appx. 1. I am most grateful to Dr. Bell for allowing me to read his thesis.

2 Bishopsgate Institute, Howell Collection, George Howell Letterbook, No. 2, p. 423: George Howell to Malthouse, 11 Jan. 1867; Bee-Hive, 17 Nov. 1866, p. 7; A.D. Bell, op. cit., pp. 97-8.

the East Central Temperance Association and an enthusiastic prohibitionist, was an important intermediary here: "it is of great importance", wrote Howell, "that our Temperance men should be prepared to lead the van of Progress".¹ The Reform League executive committee of 1865 rejected a suggestion that they should not hold meetings in public-houses - not from principle, but simply because no alternative meeting-places were available".²

3000 temperance reformers participated in the Reform League procession of 11th February 1867. But, as the franchise reformers complained, by no means all London liquor restrictionists supported Reform League demonstrations. The National Temperance League was markedly hostile and, speaking of the recent Reform League demonstration claimed in February 1867 that "injudicious leaders" had caused members of the more obscure temperance societies to join the procession, but that these "should not be taken as representative of the movement".³

Prohibitionists were very prominent in financing the

1 George Howell, Letterbook No. 2, p. 385: Howell to Shields, 7 Jan. 1867.

2 Howell Collection, Reform League Executive Committee Minute Book, No. 2: (25 Aug. 1865).

3 Weekly Record, 16 Feb. 1867, p. 73.

Reform League. Wilfrid Lawson junior was one of its earliest supporters; Howell said that the League regretted his defeat at Carlisle in 1865 "as deeply as his most intimate friends".¹ Of the £621 raised at the start of the Reform League agitation, £95 came from three leading Alliance men, Sir Wilfrid Lawson, Samuel Pope and William Hargreaves.² Howell quoted Samuel Pope's declaration of support for the League when appealing to other reformers for donations.³ Sir Wilfrid Lawson, whom Howell described as one of the "few, very few, wealthy friends to whom we can appeal",⁴ gave a further £250 to League funds in November 1866.⁵ "Had it not been for you, Sir Wilfrid and Mr. Morley", wrote Howell to Sir Wilfrid Lawson in June 1867, "and some ten others, our League could not have accomplished so great a work".⁶

1 Howell Collection, George Howell Letterbook, No. 1: Howell to Sir Wilfrid Lawson, 3 Nov. 1865.

2 Howell Collection, 'A Busy & A Strenuous Life' (Bishopsgate Institute, No. 4114, Reform League chapter).

3 Howell Collection, George Howell Letterbook, No. 1: Howell to B. Whitford, 31 Oct. 1865.

4 Howell Collection, George Howell Letterbook, No. 2: Howell to Sir Wilfrid Lawson, 5 Nov. 1866.

5 ibid., Howell to F. Steiner, 24 Sept. 1866.

6 Howell Collection, George Howell Letterbook, No. 3, p. 718: Howell to Lawson, 5 June 1867; Sir Wilfrid died a week later.

The Alliance was not alone in believing that it must gain from franchise extension. There were widespread fears in the 1860s that tyrannous rule over the educated minority by an ignorant majority was imminent; the popularity of the Permissive Bill was often adduced, together with the conduct of Sheffield trade unionists, as proof of the working man's "strange proclivity for going straight to some object without considering the expediency of the means".¹ The Westminster Review discerned in the Permissive Bill an "extravagantly vicious principle": if M.P.s were returned simply for their Permissive Bill views "all the really enlightened and practical politicians"² would be driven into vainly opposing the misguided majority. Some even claimed that working men who felt they needed legal aid in restraining their desires could never deserve enfranchisement.³

John Bright also felt that franchise extension would weaken the political influence of the drink interest: "in the long run you will be beaten", he told the Birmingham publicans in 1868, after advising them to make concessions to the Sunday Closers.⁴ The prophecy was not unreasonable:

1 Brougham MSS: Hasting to Brougham, 26 May 1865.

2 Westminster Review, No. 54 (Apr. 1865), p. 519; cf. Economist, 5 Nov. 1864.

3 e.g. Leatham, Alliance News, 4 Feb. 1865, p. 37.

4 Alliance News, 15 Feb. 1868, p. 54.

the publican was often the only enfranchised inhabitant of working-class districts;¹ 27% of the pre-1867 register were said to be working men, but many of these were beer-sellers.² Publicans themselves, in some cases, showed alarm: one Bolton publican noted in 1868 that "they could not now, as under the ten-pounder's bill, turn an election, for their power under the Reform Bill was virtually extinguished".³ "It is clear", said the Alliance before the 1868 election, "that the publican power is doomed".⁴

IV

The 1868 election results disappointed such expectations. Far more than mere franchise extension was required to destroy aristocratic rule and the publicans' electoral influence. As far as the leading Alliance candidates were concerned, the election results certainly support Robert Lowe's ironical comment that "the men for fear of whom the Constitution was basely abandoned cannot find seats in the most Radical places".⁵

1 F. Leveson-Gower, Bygone Years, 1905, p. 239.

2 Melly, 3 Hansard 190, c. 1861 (18 Mar. 1868).

3 Alliance News, 24 Oct. 1868, p. 343.

4 U.K.A. 16th Annual Rept., 1867-8, p. 33.

5 A.P. Martin, Life & Letters of Viscount Sherbrooke, 1893, p. 356; cf. R. Harrison, 'The Working Class & the General Election of 1868', International Review of Social History, 1961, p. 88.

Alliance electoral activity during 1868 first became prominent during the Bristol by-election in May. The election was regarded as a significant pointer to national views on disestablishment. Samuel Morley the Liberal candidate had turned teetotaler in the 1850s for example's sake and in 1857 described the drink evil as "the monster grievance of the present day".¹ He supported the National Temperance League, tried to align the Congregational Union behind the temperance movement, and supported Sunday Closing and other liquor restrictions, but not the Permissive Bill.

His attitude to the Alliance resembles his attitude in the same year towards Liberationism. Claiming to regard questions of religious liberty and equality "not from a limited, or a denominational standpoint, but in connection with a national policy and the widest interest of the commonwealth", he refused to support disestablishment indiscriminately in all areas, and resigned from the Liberation Society.² Although the Alliance admitted that Morley was "of high and noble character, eminently fitted in many ways for usefulness in Parliament",³ it decided to make an example of him and to

1 E. Hodder, Samuel Morley, p. 101.

2 Quo. in W.H. Mackintosh, op. cit., p. 386.

3 Alliance News, 25 Apr. 1868, p. 132; 2 May 1868, p. 140.

force him to declare either for prohibition or for the existing licensing system.

The Bristol Mercury urged publicans not to allow Morley's moderately restrictionist views to push them into voting Tory;¹ the Bristol publicans were in fact divided, and a group of dissentients favoured Morley. Falling between two stools, Morley was defeated by 196 votes - a Liberal defeat "wholly unprecedented for upwards of twenty years" in Bristol, according to the Bristol Mercury, which blamed Tory use of the beer-barrel.² Goldwin Smith, however, blamed the Alliance which, he said, was certain of eventual victory and therefore had no need to damage the Liberal party in this ruthless way.³ F.W. Newman replied minimising the importance of prohibitionist opposition to Morley on the ground that no Bristol candidate had sympathised with the Alliance.⁴ As long as the Liberal party remained "wholly without guiding principles" on the liquor question, said Newman, it was hard that principled Liberals should be branded by Goldwin Smith as fanatics.

1 Bristol Mercury, 25 Apr. 1868.

2 ibid., 2 May 1868, p. 5.

3 Alliance News, 9 May 1868, p. 148.

4 ibid.

The incident highlights one of the three necessary conditions required in addition to franchise extension before the publican's electoral influence could be diminished: the temperance party must gain some influence over the selection of candidates. The 1868 general election highlighted two further conditions: public opinion still required education on the iniquity of accepting electoral bribes. Leno and Worley, reporting the situation at Guildford for the Reform League described how the Tories had been distributing drink to the electors. "What wonder....that there are only three Liberal Public Houses in the Borough", they complained.¹ The Alliance, disappointed at the persistence of corruption in 1868, asked its supporters to report on the electoral conduct of the drink interest in their localities; the reports of the election commission, it claimed, must evoke "alarm and disgust".²

Again, the 1868 election emphasised the importance of winning over those politicians who set the issues before the electorate. Prohibitionist influence was minimised at the 1868 election by the complete dominance of the Disestablishment issue, despite T.H. Barker's reminder that the Irish

1 Bishopsgate Institute No. 4060: Reform League MS Election Repts. 1868: Guildford.

2 U.K.A. 17th Annual Rept., 1868-9, p. 6.

Church "does not kill off some tens of thousands of people every year, nor fill the workhouses, the lunatic asylums, and the gaols".¹

It was difficult for even the keenest prohibitionists to cast their vote solely on Permissive Bill considerations. The many nonconformist supporters of the Alliance often felt more strongly on Disestablishment than on Drink. Few of the Alliance Anglican supporters shared the prohibitionist zeal of Basil Wilberforce, who at the Southampton by-election of 1878 voted for a dissenting advocate of disestablishment in order to defeat a Tory defender of the State Church who opposed the Permissive Bill.² The disestablishment issue caused one of Lawson's most enthusiastic supporters in 1865, Dean Close, to oppose him in 1868.³ When the Alliance had first considered independent electoral action, Dr. McKerrow had objected because it might force him to vote for a Churchman, and Rev. Joseph Bardsley objected that it would force him to support a Liberationist.⁴

Since there was no constituency in 1868 in which the

1 Alliance News, 14 Nov. 1868, p. 365.

2 G.W.E. Russell, Basil Wilberforce. A Memoir, 1917, pp. 77-81.

3 Carlisle Examiner, 17 Oct. 1868, p. 3; cf. W. Farish, Autobiography, pp. 186-7.

4 W. Farish, Autobiography, p. 187.

Permissive Bill was the sole issue before the electors, the Alliance did not feel justified in establishing a central candidates' fund. But it encouraged local deputations and was willing to provide propaganda and lecturers.¹ The election occupied far more space in the Alliance News than previous elections; detailed local constituency reports were being printed some months before polling began. The Alliance showed none of the British Temperance League's electoral timidity, and ensured that the Permissive Bill was discussed in many new places: in Oxford and the Border Burghs the Alliance considered the discussions sufficiently important to merit publication. The crucial elections for the Alliance in 1868 were at Bristol, Northampton, Bolton and Carlisle.

At Bristol, despite much violence, with Morley on the hustings warding off rotten oranges with his umbrella, two Liberals Morley and Berkeley, both hostile to the Alliance, were returned. The new electors organised a vigilance committee to prevent intimidation. On this occasion the Alliance did not declare against Morley, and F.W. Newman complained that control by the Liberal committee over the selection of candidates ensured that the new electors "were

¹ U.K.A. 16th Annual Rept., 1867-8, p. 32; cf. Alliance News, 4 July 1868, p. 212.

accounted as nothing, and the contest went on precisely as if there had been no addition to the constituency".¹ Samuel Morley remained hostile to the Alliance in the early 1870s but in the 1880s became a supporter of the Alliance and sported a Blue Ribbon in the House of Commons.²

At Northampton in 1868, F.R. Lees stood without official Alliance support against the two Liberal members Charles Gilpin and Lord Henley, two Tories and the radical Bradlaugh. Lees attacked high taxation and armaments expenditure, and advocated decentralisation and the ballot. So rarely was the Permissive Bill mentioned in his speeches that Gilpin at Northampton in 1868 like Hodgson at Carlisle in 1865, accused the prohibitionist candidate of concealing the main purpose for his candidature.³ The two Liberal candidates, approved by Gladstone, were easily elected. The Alliance correspondent claimed that Northampton shoe manufacturers, anxious that neither Bradlaugh nor a Tory should be returned, urged their employees not to support Lees until the afternoon and not even then unless his return was certain.⁴ Lees came

1 Alliance News, 17 Oct. 1868, p. 330.

2 E. Hodder, Samuel Morley, p. 315.

3 Northampton Mercury, 10 Oct. 1868, p. 8.

4 Alliance News, 21 Nov. 1868, p. 372.

bottom of the poll and Bradlaugh, furious at Lees' candidature, claimed that Lees' supporters had split their votes with Henley.¹

The Bolton election was exciting: the new constituency numbered 12,667 as against 2,139 in the old. The Liberal selection committee had some difficulty in agreeing to Samuel Pope's candidature, but eventually accepted him partly because he was the only candidate prepared to pay his own expenses. The teetotal principles of the two Liberal candidates Barnes and Pope embarrassed many Liberals in the constituency,² but especially members of the Bolton Beer and Wine Sellers' Association, whose ill-tempered disputes the Alliance News shrewdly published in full.

Some members of the Association felt that it should not engage in political activity and one publican, convinced that Bolton would never adopt the Permissive Bill, declared for Pope.³ Most members, however, eventually voted Tory. At a meeting of dissentients on 14th November, one publican held that local drinksellers must continue to support Pope as long as he remained "a consistent Reformer"; the publican's

1 National Reformer, 22 Nov. 1868, p. 321.

2 Bishopsgate Institute: Reform League MS Election Repts., 1868, Bolton.

3 Alliance News, 24 Oct. 1868, p. 343; cf. Bolton Chronicle, 3 Oct. 1868, p. 2.

interest, he claimed, was not distinct but identical with that of society as a whole. William Morgan even "intended to support the principles of Reform, if he never sold another gill of ale". The meeting unanimously deplored the attitude of the local Association.¹ But it could not prevent Bolton from returning two Tory members, for the first time since the borough's enfranchisement. There had been a general swing to Toryism throughout the Lancashire boroughs in 1868, but in Bolton the hostility of many drinksellers increased the disadvantages under which the Liberal candidates laboured.

Carlisle was the only constituency to return a leading Alliance supporter in 1868. It was local family influence, perhaps assisted by Roman Catholic support, which enabled Lawson to retrieve the position he had lost in 1865.² From 1853 to 1869 the Alliance never once succeeded in securing a seat for one of its leading members by its own efforts. It claimed that the 1868 election had more than doubled its parliamentary support.³ More important, however, was the widespread recognition after 1867 of the need to make democracy safe by educating the new electorate.

1 Bolton Chronicle, 14 Nov. 1868, p. 7.

2 Carlisle Patriot, 30 Oct. 1868, p. 4.

3 U.K.A. 17th Annual Rept., 1868-9, p. 5.

E.C. Delevan told John Dunlop in 1839 that the American governing classes were more sympathetic than the English towards liquor restriction because they knew that their personal welfare might suffer from a drunken democracy.¹ Franchise extension enhanced the attractions for Shaftesbury of popular religious missions, just as, for Robert Lowe, it emphasised the need for popular education. Educationists were certainly impressed with the importance of parental sobriety, if only because it enabled them to pay school fees and clothe their children.² It seems likely that the factors which promoted the cause of popular education after 1867 also helped cause the marked increase in Anglican and aristocratic patronage of the temperance movement in the 1870s. Franchise extension and temperance agitation, both in England and America, were closely linked.³

Franchise extension cannot, however, be the sole explanation for the boom in temperance activity after the 1860s. Firstly, there are signs even in the early 1860s that the temperance movement was becoming "respectable". Some of

1 J. Dunlop, Autobiography, p. 134.

2 See, e.g. A.J. Mundella, 3 Hansard 202, c. 898-9 (24 June 1870); George Melly, 3 Hansard 190, c. 1862 (18 Mar. 1868).

3 J.H. Timberlake, op. cit., p. 14.

this aristocratic support owes less to franchise extension than to fear of gout.¹ Secondly, there was no sudden accession of upper class support immediately after 1867. Manning definitely committed himself to the Alliance in 1868; Bishop Temple followed soon after: but not till the mid-1870s did the coffee-house movement get under way, under the patronage of Shaftesbury and numerous aristocratic ladies. By 1876, a speaker at a meeting held by the Church of England Temperance Society was claiming that "our success is almost enough to turn our heads".²

The story of the Alliance can be left at the second Permissive Bill division, in 1869, which sees it on the threshold of its greatest achievements and disappointments. Aided by a petitioning campaign and a powerful deputation to the Home Secretary, Lawson gave a speech on the second reading which was praised for its moderate tone. The Bill attracted 87 supporters as against 35 in 1864; opposition fell from 292 to 193. Nearly half the support came from members for Celtic seats; members from the North of England as usual favoured the Bill more strongly than members from other parts of England. Of the rural areas, Cornwall showed

1 e.g. Dean Close, in Church of England Temperance Magazine, 1 June 1864, p. 185; cf. Salisbury MSS. special correspondence: Lady Janetta Manners to Salisbury, n.d. (probably Oct.-Nov. 1880).

2 Church of England Temperance Chronicle, 1 June 1876, p.108.
See also below, pp.571ff.

its customary enthusiasm.

At least three-quarters of the opposition in 1869 came from English members, especially from the South-Eastern counties - a pattern which persisted through all Permissive Bill divisions; indeed, in 1871 Alliance supporters noted that the opposition in the division for that year "was almost confined to England" especially to the English counties.¹ In none of the divisions before 1875 do county members from any of the Home Counties or East Anglia show any support for the Bill. And although the Alliance enjoyed the support of all three Manchester members after 1869 and had some success with the members for Bradford, Bristol, Bolton, Leeds, and Sheffield, it never won over the members for Birmingham, Liverpool, or the City of London. In 1869 the M.P.s for the London area showed their usual hostility to the measure.

As for party alignments, Liberals and Conservatives were almost equally represented among the opponents of the Permissive Bill till 1873. Liberal opponents in 1869 included the brewers Bass and Whitbread but also W.E. Forster, H.A. Bruce, John Bright and Sir George Grey. The Bill's supporters in 1869 include Edmund Backhouse, Edward Baines, Jacob Bright, Joseph Cowen, Edward Miall, Samuel Morley and Henry Richard. Clearly this was an issue on which nonconformist Liberals sought to radicalise the attitude of the

¹ 3 Hansard 211, c. 452 (8 May 1872); cf. 3 Hansard 215, c. 1621 (7 May 1873).

government. "In the Tory party", said Lawson in 1880, "the leaders educate the party, and in the Liberal party the party educate the leaders".¹ But here, as elsewhere, a minority of non-dissenting Liberals to support them. These included G.O. Trevelyan and A.J. Mundella.²

The 1869 division shows that after 16 years' agitation the Alliance had succeeded in gaining support among a sizeable minority of Liberal M.P.s. Despite the radical leanings of its leaders, the Alliance had never ostensibly sought to get its programme officially adopted by the Liberal party; instead, it had modelled its attitude to party on that of the Anti-Corn Law League. During the 1870s, however, the increase in parliamentary business reduced the power of the private member and forced the Alliance to abandon its ostensibly neutral political alignment. Why, then, did it look to the Liberal party for aid? Some analysis of the nature of Liberalism and of its relationship with the "prohibitionist mentality" must therefore be attempted before concluding the discussion of this interesting but, to most modern eyes, strange organisation.

1 W. Lawson, Wit & Wisdom, p. 69.

2 cf. J.F. Glaser, 'Nonconformity & Liberalism, 1868-1885. A Study in English Party History' (Harvard Univ. Ph.D. thesis, 1948), pp. 538-42.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE PROHIBITIONIST CAMPAIGN: IV: LIBERALISM AND THE PROHIBITIONIST MENTALITY

By the 1880s the campaign for local option had become closely identified with the Liberal party. How far was this alignment inevitable? How easily did the demand for the local veto accord with Liberal preconceptions and attitudes? How far was there any affinity between the Liberal and the prohibitionist mentalities? Here the historian is forced into comparing two imprecise attitudes on the basis of a few public statements. Yet although any conclusions drawn from such a comparison must be hesitant, the problem is so crucial to the political history of the temperance question between 1830 and 1870 that some such inquiry must be made.¹

I

Temperance legislation of the restrictive, "policing" type introduced in 1872 - dependent on magistrates' authority and seeking to attain social amelioration by patching up the existing licensing system - was quite compatible with Tory

¹ This discussion has benefited considerably from correspondence with Dr. H.J. Hanham & Dr. J. Vincent, though neither is responsible for any of my assertions.

tradition and ideology. The growth of the Church of England Temperance Society after 1862 helped moderate possible conflict between restrictionist agitation and the Anglican wing of Toryism. Tory traditions which regarded the state as "a partnership in every virtue and in all perfection"¹ constituted a more congenial atmosphere for temperance legislation of this type than Liberal prejudice against state promotion of morality. Again, the Tories in the 1860s were still largely the party of the country gentlemen, and were likely to favour magisterial restriction as soon as it became apparent that drinking subverted rather than preserved the social order.

Lawson in 1872 sought support for the Permissive Bill not only from the Liberals "as the advocates of local self-government", but also from the Tories as "essentially the friends of order".² The leading champion of Sunday Closing in the 1860s was a Tory M.P., Mr. Somes, and a Conservative Home Secretary admitted in 1868 that "more extensive police arrangements" were required.³ The Beer Act of 1869 was intro-

1 E. Burke, 'Reflections on the French Revolution', Works, 1865 Edn., Vol. 3, p. 359.

2 3 Hansard 211, c. 457 (8 May 1872).

3 Quo. in Devon & Cornwall Temperance Journal, Mar. 1868, p. 34.

duced by the Tory Selwin-Ibbetson. And if the brewers had opposed restrictive legislation, the Tory party would have had less to lose by promoting it, since until the 1880s brewers still gravitated towards the Liberal party.

Both parties recognised that some measure of licensing reform would have to be introduced after 1867. As far back as 1857 a Liberal government promised to introduce a Licensing Bill, and by the late 1860s the failure to act upon this promise was causing concern.¹ For some time a draft Licensing Bill lay in the Home Office, but successive governments, believing that it was "a dangerous thing to interfere with large private interests"², postponed introducing it. Even after franchise extension, Bruce felt that the subject was surrounded by "shoals and rocks",³ but members of both parties in 1871-2 recognised the need for reform. When H.A. Bruce introduced his first Licensing Bill in 1871, Selwin-Ibbetson expressed "great satisfaction" that he was at last dealing so boldly with the subject";⁴ Viscount Sandon expressed regret when Bruce withdrew the Bill because, he said, many

1 E.g. to Forster, 3 Hansard 186, cc. 1851-2 (1 May 1867).

2 3 Hansard 196, c. 674 (12 May 1869).

3 3 Hansard 207, c. 188 (16 June 1871); see also B.M. Addit. MS. 44087 (Gladstone Papers), ff. 4, 5-6, 35-6: Bruce to Gladstone, 12 Jan., 16 Jan., 21 Nov. 1871.

4 3 Hansard 205, c. 1097 (3 Apr. 1871).

Conservatives would have helped the government in passing "a good sound measure".¹

The 1872 Licensing Act was a joint measure passed by both parties - one of the many measures in this parliament in which the government relied on Tory support against Radical indifference or hostility. Selwin-Ibbetson welcomed Bruce's 1872 Bill "with the greatest satisfaction",² and the Bill was not substantially modified during its passage through parliament: furthermore, its most vigorous opponent in committee was not a Tory but a Liberal, W.V. Harcourt. And if Disraeli was not enthusiastic about the measure, neither was Lawson. As Gladstone, echoing the Licensed Victuallers' Guardian, claimed in 1874, the Bill "was not one which was debated as between party and party, but one which was carried with the general assent of the House".³

The only attempt made in 1872 to identify the Liberal party as the "temperance party" was made by two young Radicals Lawson and G.O. Trevelyan who, convinced that Bruce's courage needed to be reinforced by a demonstration of popular temperance enthusiasm, lectured throughout the country on the Permissive Bill. Trevelyan urged his audiences not to be

1 3 Hansard 206, c. 944 (17 May 1871).

2 3 Hansard 212, c. 969 (11 July 1872).

3 3 Hansard 218, c. 134 (20 Mar. 1874); cf. Morgan, 3 Hansard 219, c. 132 (11 May 1874).

squeamish about temporarily breaking up the Liberal party: since the 1867 Reform Act had at last enfranchised many of the publicans' "victims", the Liberal party "must ere long become a temperance party".¹

Trevelyan's lectures were published, but the campaign was premature. The Alliance too frequently became a mere vehicle for ostentatious radicalism. G.O. Trevelyan took no further part in temperance debates and probably used the Permissive Bill question primarily as a means of demonstrating his hostility to the magistrates whom he so frequently attacked.² Alliance supporters as prominent as the Bishop of Gloucester protested against the venture and an embarrassed Alliance vigorously protested its political neutrality.³

So thorny was the licensing question that any government introducing licensing legislation in 1871-2 would have reaped unpopularity from it. If H.A. Bruce's prestige suffered severely from dealing with the question in 1871-2, R.A. Cross fared little better in 1874: "if an angel from heaven were to come down and bring in a Licensing Bill", said Cavendish Bentinck, "he would find it too much for him".⁴ To add to the

1 G.O. Trevelyan, Five Speeches, pp. 28-9.

2 Probably Lawson was referring to Trevelyan in 3 Hansard 244, c. 635 (11 Mar. 1879).

3 No Case Against the U.K.A. & the Permissive Bill, p. 75.

4 3 Hansard 220, c. 244 (22 June 1874).

difficulties of this subject, the Home Office gave little help to the Home Secretary.¹ It is unlikely however that if the Licensing Bill of 1872 had been passed by a Tory administration, Gladstone would have shown Disraeli's skill in profiting politically from the situation.

Like F.D. Roosevelt,² Disraeli was sensible enough never to make clear pronouncements on this issue. After 1868 in this as in other spheres he simply needed to keep quiet and wait for votes to fall into his lap. According to Lawson, Disraeli's speeches and letters did not commit him to supporting even the publicans, let alone to opposing the liquor restrictionists.³ Several Radicals and temperance reformers suspected that Disraeli, who in the 1850s had pronounced beer a necessity of life, himself liberally used alcohol before speaking in public.⁴ But in parliament he did no more than to note semi-humorously in 1871 that "the unfortunate licensed victuallers of England seem to me to be the class

1 J.D. Clayton, op. cit., p. 320.

2 A. Sinclair, op. cit., p. 157.

3 3 Hansard 220, c. 234 (22 June 1874).

4 R.T. Shannon, 'The Bulgarian Atrocities Agitation: A Study in the Politics of 'Virtuous Passion'', (Cambridge Univ. Ph.D. Thesis, 1960), p. 266; cf. G.J. Holyoake, Bygones Worth Remembering, II, pp. 43-4, & University College, London, John Bright Collection, John Bright to his wife, 17 Mar. 1868.

selected this Session to be baited by Her Majesty's Ministers", and to express in 1873 a casual faith that popular habits would improve.¹ It is curious that during the licensing controversy of 1871-2 - since described as "one of the source-points in the history of parties"² - neither Gladstone nor Disraeli spoke a word in parliament.

Even after 1872, however, the Liberal party never conducted any sustained attack on the drinking of intoxicants as such. On the contrary, Gladstone was still bidding for brewer support in 1882 with his policy of a "free mash tun".³ At no stage, even in the 1890s, was there any clear party division on the temperance question. There were always powerful opponents within the Liberal party of Harcourt's Local Option enthusiasm. And no prominent Conservative took up so pronounced a position against the temperance movement as Harcourt in the late 1880s took up in its favour; when Salisbury failed to act on the report of the Royal Commission on Liquor Licensing, there was much restiveness among Conservatives; Scottish Conservative M.P.s were anxious in the 1880s that the Tory government should not officially oppose

1 3 Hansard 208, c. 1110.

2 R.C.K. Ensor, op. cit., p. 21.

3 3 Hansard 273, c. 49 (28 July 1882).

temperance legislation.¹

Nevertheless, by 1872, the Alliance could discern the beginnings of a Tory alignment with the drink interest - an alignment which "must end....in ultimate disaster to the party, since the progress of public opinion will infallibly be in the direction of public virtue".² If the Liberal party never unreservedly aligned itself with the Alliance and if the Liberals before Harcourt showed little enthusiasm for any such alignment, the liquor restrictionists undoubtedly found Liberalism more congenial than Conservatism and looked to Liberals for realisation of their hopes.

It was partly of course a matter of organisational and traditional links between Liberals and nonconformists, rather than a purely ideological affinity. The Liberal party had long been the party traditionally associated with the policy of religious toleration, and the dissenters had usually gravitated towards it. Even the Wesleyans were turning towards it in the 1860s. It was therefore natural that a movement which appealed strongly throughout its history to nonconformists should look to the Liberal party for aid. The

1 Christ Church College, Oxford, Salisbury MSS: Special Corresp., W.H. Smith to Salisbury, 26 July 1887; cf. ibid., A.J. Balfour to Chamberlain, 20 May 1886; C.J. Valentine, M.P. to Salisbury, 20 May 1886.

2 U.K.A. 20th Annual Rept., 1871-2, p. 39.

increased political power of the nonconformists after the 1850s forced the Liberal party to pay increasing attention to their demands.

Again, Liberals and liquor restrictionists both relied for support on the labour aristocrat, who was often himself a dissenter. Many labour aristocrats were as incredulous as Wilfrid Lawson at the appearance after 1867 of the Conservative working man. The labour aristocrat's party zeal made up for his lack of numbers in the constituencies, and the Liberal party could hardly ignore his demands after 1867.

Several considerations suggest, however, that the alignment between liquor restriction and late-Victorian Liberalism was more than a matter of mere organisational convenience and tradition. Liberalism leaned towards Temperance, and Temperance towards Liberalism long before the 1880s. Nonconformists were accusing Anglicans of intemperance at least as early as the 1680s.¹ In the mind of Judge Jeffreys, speaking of a generous host at Newcastle in 1684, Whiggery and drink were already opposed: they tell me such a man is a Whigg", said Jeffreys, "but I find it's no such thing, he is an honest

¹ M. Scrivener, A Treatise Against Drunkenness, 1680, p. 85.

drunken fellow".¹ In Manchester during the 1790s there was a clear antagonism between "Church and King" publicans and dissenting reformers.² The mob, employed for conservative purposes until well into the mid-Victorian era, was usually organised and fortified from the public-house before it sallied forth to break up Liberal, Radical and Chartist meetings.

Again, popular radicalism and liquor restriction were aligned even before the foundation of the temperance movement. Cobbett and Burdett paid much attention to popular sobriety at the electoral contests in which they were involved during the Napoleonic Wars.³ Orator Hunt abandoned taxed intoxicants, and Political Protestants were refusing ale from a determination "not to be diverted from their purpose" many years before 1829.⁴ Furthermore, the 1830 Beer Act which, whatever its consequences, was originally intended as a

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- 1 Memoirs of the Life of Mr. Ambrose Barnes (publications of the ~~Swire~~ Society, Vol. 50, 1867), p. 196; I owe this reference to Mr. K.V. Thomas.
 - 2 T. Walker, A Review of Some of the Political Events which Have Occurred in Manchester during the Last Five Years, 1794, pp. 41-2.
 - 3 E.P. Thompson, Making of the English Working Class, p. 463.
 - 4 See above, pp. 28ff. ; R.F. Wearmouth, Methodism & the Working-Class Movements of England 1800-1850, 1937, p. 77.

temperance measure. Though nominally passed by a Tory administration, it owed much to Liberal pressure, and beer-sellers long afterwards displayed Liberal leanings.

Parliamentary reformers hoped before 1832 that franchise reform would greatly reduce electoral corruption and in several places in 1832 the reformers' victory was celebrated with drink-free dinners in which wives could participate together with their husbands.¹ Liberals were bitterly disappointed when the Blackburn election of 1832 registered no change in electoral mores.² The Complete Suffrage and Anti-Corn Law movements vehemently denounced electoral corruption; the League even described itself as "at once the teacher, purifier, and emancipator of the constituencies".³ The statesman most closely identified with legislative attempts to curb treating in this period was the Liberal, Lord John Russell, whereas the most persistent defender of "hospitality" in the 1840s was the Tory, Col. Sibthorp.

The individual candidates who first tried to wage electoral campaigns without using publican assistance were

1 E.g. at Brampton, British & Foreign Temperance Herald, May 1833, pp. 64-5; and at Evesham, B.M. Addit. MS. 27796 (Place Papers), f. 36.

2 B.M. Addit. MS. 27796 (Place Papers), ff. 154-6; cf. 3 Hansard 27, c. 310-11.

3 The League, 6 Apr. 1844, p. 445.

almost always Liberals or Radicals. The Radical Henry Vincent fought eight electoral campaigns between 1841 and 1852 largely from a desire to convert the election into a "great battleground of principle".¹ The Radical George Thompson was elected at Tower Hamlets in 1847 without employing a single public-house or a drop of drink;² the Liberal Robert Lowe was defeated at Kidderminster in 1859 partly because he refused to employ corruption;³ and the Liberal W.V. Harcourt conducted his canvass at Oxford in 1868 entirely without employing public-houses - preferring to use a tent where sufficiently large rooms could not be hired.⁴ And if Liberals and Radicals showed a desire for electoral sobriety, the Conservatives were certainly identified in the public mind with electoral corruption.⁵

Liberal nonconformists, especially the Quakers, were the most ardent upholders of electoral sobriety. Sometimes, like William Foster in 1834, they took individual action and opposed any candidate who distributed drink;⁶ this was

1 Vincent, York Herald, 16 Dec. 1848.

2 Bristol Temperance Herald, Sep. 1847, p. 131.

3 A.P. Martin, op. cit., II, p. 171.

4 3 Hansard 208, c. 676 (1 Aug. 1871).

5 Hanham, Elections & Party Management, p. 92.

6 Memorials of William Foster, II, p. 91.

precisely the course which the Alliance advocated at the by-elections of Marylebone in 1854 and of Southampton in 1856.¹ Nonconformists sometimes took combined action. Thus their desire to eliminate electoral corruption inspired York Quakers in 1835 to sponsor Barkly instead of the Whig Dundas; the same motive lay behind their support for Henry Vincent at the 1848 by-election.²

A few Tories also declared for electoral sobriety. Evangelicals were particularly anxious to promote it: "the means I took, and the exertions I made", said Wilberforce of his election as M.P. for Yorkshire, "...were such as I could not have used after my religious change".³ A similar scrupulousness was displayed by other members of the Clapham Sect.⁴ This tradition bore fruit in the Tory Shaftesbury's delight after his Bath election of 1847 that "not a penny during six months was expended on Beer".⁵ Dean Close continued the Tory Evangelical tradition with his suggestion in the Times of 29th

1 See above, pp. 390ff

2 York Herald, 22 July 1848, p. 7; Yorkshire Gazette, 27 May 1848, p. 4; N. Gash, op. cit., pp. 111-112.

3 R.S. & I. Wilberforce, Life, I, p. 383.

4 S. Meacham, Henry Thornton of Clapham. 1760-1815, Harvard, 1964, pp. 67-8.

5 Lord Shaftesbury's Diary, 2 Aug. 1847.

July 1865 that public-houses should be closed during general elections. Yet such scruples were more common in the Early Victorian Liberal party than among the Tories.

Again, Liberals were the first supporters obtained by the Preston teetotalers in the 1830s and in the 1850s by the Alliance. Staunch Liberals like the Lawsons, Trevelyan, Joseph Cowen and Hugh Mason feature in Alliance subscription lists and the Alliance leaders Pope, Raper, Lees, Cossham and Barker were Liberals through and through. The division lists also show that from the start the Permissive Bill's supporters had been overwhelmingly Liberal.¹ The first leading aristocrat to support organised teetotalism was the Radical Earl Stanhope and the first leading politician to support the Alliance was Henry Brougham. There are of course individual exceptions among the Radicals - Roebuck was one of the Permissive Bill's most virulent opponents in 1864 just as Cobbett and Place had strongly attacked temperance societies in the 1830s. Nevertheless, Liberals seem to have been more energetic supporters of teetotalism, more zealous opponents of electoral corruption, than the Tories.

Similarly, the alignment of the drink interest behind the Tory party, though never complete, seems to have begun

¹ See Appendix, diagrams 29-31.

some time before the licensing controversy of 1871-2. To go back no further than 1860, there were signs that Gladstone's licensing proposals, recommended on the score of temperance, were pushing brewers into the arms of the Tories.¹ To some extent the movement of 1860 constitutes a false dawn, since the Alliance regarded a parliamentary division of 1862 as showing "the entire abnegation of party ties" on the drink question.²

As soon as parliament accepted the temperance movement's argument that increased beer consumption was incompatible with temperance, the Tories with their agricultural connexions could not espouse local veto, as opposed to mere police legislation, without sacrificing their traditional agricultural sources of support. The malt tax debates of 1852 saw the beginnings of this change,³ and in the 1860s Gladstone consistently rejected temperance arguments for abolition of the malt tax, though he did what he could to enable the farmers to use untaxed malt for cattle-feed.

Gladstone's measures of the 1860s combined kicks with halfpence as far as the drink manufacturers were concerned,

1 See above, pp. 407-410

2 U.K.A., 10th Annual Rept., 1862, p. 19.

3 See above, pp. 243

While in 1861 he greatly eased restrictions on the retail sale of spirits and in 1862 abolished the inconvenient hop duty, he imposed a brewers' licence which M.T. Bass six years later still considered "a blot, a special blemish" on his great financial schemes.¹ Lowe firmly refused to remove this burden in the 1870 budget and the subject was still causing complaint in 1873.² As early as the 1850s, however, the Rochdale drink interest was united against the Liberal candidates.³ At Bolton in 1865 and at Bristol and Bolton in 1868, the publicans were beginning to align themselves with the Tories; by the early 1870s Tories were beginning to link Liberal Irish legislation with their licensing legislation and to foresee a general Liberal attack on property.⁴

The Permissive Bill fitted into the Liberal framework only with some difficulty, however. G.O. Trevelyan implied as much when he said in 1871 that the Liberal party "in spite of its antecedents, in spite of its fancied interests, in spite of itself",⁵ must eventually become a temperance party.

1 3 Hansard 191, c. 156 (24 Mar. 1868).

2 3 Hansard 215, c. 912 (24 Apr. 1873).

3 J.R. Vincent, 'Electoral Sociology of Rochdale', Econ. Hist. Rev., Aug. 1963, p. 83.

4 Collins, 3 Hansard 212, c. 1001 (11 July 1872); cf. Disraeli, 3 Hansard 208, c. 1110.

5 G.O. Trevelyan, Five Speeches, pp. 28-9.

Liberals could strongly support voluntary temperance and at the same time strongly oppose the Local Veto. As late as 1912 , J.M.Robertson claimed that many liquor restrictionists adhered to the Liberal party "on the sole ground of their desire for a better control of the drink trade, caring for no other Liberal measure, and even disliking other Liberal tendencies".¹ Nevertheless the long history of the Liberal-temperance alignment suggests that there is some ideological affinity between the two , and even between Liberalism and prohibition.

At first sight , it might seem futile to search for any affinity between the Permissive Bill and so amorphous a phenomenon as Victorian Liberalism , which could accommodate foreign policies as antagonistic as those of Palmerston and Cobden, domestic policies as diverse as those of John Bright and T.H.Green. M.P.s moreover, often inherited their political views and abandoned them when enmities or personal interest demanded. Furthermore, the mid-Victorian period saw a gradual extension of nonconformist influence on the Liberal party, so that the Liberalism of a G.O. Trevelyan or a T.H.Green could differ markedly from that of a Granville or even from that of a Gladstone.

1. J.M.Robertson,The Meaning of Liberalism,1912,p.55.

Yet analysis of parliamentary divisions in the 1840s does suggest that there was some ideological content in party alignments, and that each party espoused a related set of causes which catered for contrasting types of political personality.¹ There is some truth in Birrell's notion that Liberalism was "not a creed but a frame of mind",² though whether Professor Parkinson is right in claiming that this polarity can be pushed back beyond the 1790s to the Civil War is another matter.³

The related attitudes which made up mid-Victorian Liberalism, and which throughout the period 1830-70 can accommodate Liberals, Radicals, and to some extent Whigs while distinguishing them from Tories, can be described as flexibility and optimism in the face of demands for innovation; desire to reduce the resources and responsibilities of government, together with its correlative, the desire to increase the sphere of individual liberty; a belief that disputes can be settled entirely through rational discussion, and a consequent condemnation of the use of violence and of

1 W.O. Aydelotte, 'Voting Patterns in the British House of Commons in the 1840s', Comparative Studies in Society & History, Jan. 1963, passim.

2 J. Morley, Recollections (1921 Edn.), I, p. 117.

3 Liberal News, 28 Apr. 1962, p. 4.

the influence of prejudice or self-interest upon statesmen; finally, closely connected with the latter, a desire that those in authority should be accountable for their power to some wider authority; hence the marked Liberal distaste for monopoly. How far is the demand for the local veto compatible with each of these broad characteristics?

Firstly, responsiveness to discontent. Tories tended to accept a certain amount of suffering as inevitable in this world and thus to oppose any legislative curtailment of the popular pleasures which consoled the poor for their inevitable sufferings. Liberals, on the other hand, were less willing to accept existing evils as inevitable; this in itself helps explain why they were more prepared to experiment with new remedies for drunkenness. Tories like J.R. Stephens lingered affectionately on the tradition of the public-house as "every Englishman's freehold", whereas mid-Victorian Liberals often made themselves almost ridiculous by their energetic attempts to "improve" the working man.¹

Certainly the languid attitude to the drink problem implicit in Disraeli's remark that popular habits were "as likely to purify and refine as the tastes of any class I know", could hardly have come from a Liberal.² Whether he

¹ Saturday Review, 21 Jan. 1865, p. 69.

² 3 Hansard 215, c. 1365 (1 May 1873).

agreed with liquor restriction or not, the Liberal usually advocated some reform designed to improve the situation, whether it be education, counter-attractions, pure water or improved housing: he seldom left the elimination of the evil to chance.

The Late Victorian Liberal's refusal to lie down under existing evils led him to blame social ills on a series of dragons - corrupt politicians, self-interested journalists, greedy financiers, bigoted priests or selfish monopolists - so that in the form of Sir William Harcourt, he "grew breathless in his pursuit of smaller and smaller dragons - for the big dragons were now harder to come by".¹ This restlessness displayed under suffering by Liberals made it likely that they would react to a realisation of the evils of drink by attempting to secure effective remedies. Yet this would not necessarily lead them to favour the Local Veto; other strands of 19th century Liberalism tended to make this remedy acceptable.

Suspicion of centralised government, a second characteristic of mid-Victorian Liberalism, made Liberals far more receptive than Tories to the demands of the extra-parliamentary pressure-group - whether it be demands for franchise reform

1 K.R. Minogue, The Liberal Mind, 1963, p. 1.

in the 1830s , for free trade in the 1840s , or for local veto in the 1860s. Grey's belief that "there never was an extensive discontent without great misgovernment"¹ had been strong among Liberals , especially when in opposition , at least since the days of Fox. They regarded public criticism as an excellent counterbalance to the corrupting influences of power. In the 1860s , the Liberal party acquired a leader whose ear was particularly sensitive to public opinion as voiced by the reforming pressure group. By contrast, Tory leaders suspected such organisations: Disraeli and Salisbury were among their shrewdest critics.

Many mid-Victorian Liberals so distrusted the central government - so exaggerated the potentialities of the individual citizen - that they dreamed of the eventual withering away of the state and , paradoxically , first advocated state intervention precisely in those spheres which would hasten this process. Hence their zeal to eliminate ignorance and drunkenness, and so internalise political authority that the policing and fighting functions of government might gradually atrophy. Alliance supporters often insisted that society had the right to protect itself from the drunken and ignorant. The prohibitionist William McKerrow, when defending compulsory education in 1875, scornfully dismissed any notion of liberty as "the right of every one or any one to do what he pleases, irrespective of the rights and interests

1. Earl Grey in 1819, quo. in A. Bullock & M. Shock, op.cit., p.6.

of others..."¹ Liberals found attractive a movement which incessantly emphasised its function as preventing "waste of wealth" and as reducing the expenses of government.²

Many Liberals were temperamentally anti-authoritarian and leaned towards inculcating in the citizen a desire to behave in a socially acceptable manner rather than towards allowing misbehaviour to occur and then punishing it. Voluntary abstinence, and still more the Permissive Bill, were often recommended as necessary constituents of that policy of "peace, retrenchment and reform" to which the Liberal party, under Gladstone's guidance, reverted during the 1870s. A sober public would require less expenditure on local government and police. "I'm worth more than ten policemen", said the temperance reformer Revd. J. Brodbent.³

Again, the decentralising aspect of the Permissive Bill attracted Liberals suspicious of the central government. It would bring licensing policy into closer accord with the views of each locality. Decentralisation had always appealed to Chartists, Radicals and nonconformists, for whom the government was in enemy hands: thus the Northern Liberator had described the true Radical as praising a government "rather

1. J.M. McKerrow, op.cit. p.259; cf. Combe.MSS. 7294, f.41: Samuel Lucas to Geo. Combe, 23 Jan 1848.

2.. See appendix, plates 58-60.

3. P.T. Winskill, Temperance Movement & its Workers, IV, p.213.

for what it does not than [for] what it does".¹ When decentralisation was accompanied, as in the Permissive Bill, by popular control, many Liberals found it irresistible. By contrast, the Tory, though quite as anxious to reduce the expenses of government, was less hostile to state intervention in the free economy, and less confident that the state would eventually wither away.

Thirdly, the Liberal pursuit of liberty. Morley saw "respect for the dignity and worth of the individual" as the root of Liberalism.² The Permissive Bill appealed to this sentiment in several ways: prohibitionists often argued that the working man surrounded by drinkshops was no more free than the slave enchained by his master. The working man could be free only if there were restrictions upon his freedom to drink. Again, liquor restriction, while it nominally restricted the freedom of the head of the family, might enhance the freedom of his wife and children.

There was also a strand within Liberalism, particularly strong among nonconformists, which pursued liberty through the reduction of the individual's demands upon the community: through the simple life, in reaction against the extravagance

1 Northern Liberator, 28 Apr. 1838.

2 J. Morley, Recollections, I, p. 21.

of the Big City. If a choice had to be made between affluence and liberty, the Liberal had no hesitation in plumping for the latter and too infrequently allowed for the interconnexions between the two. For the Liberal, said Holyoake in 1877, the true test of any measure was its compatibility with the people's "independence and facilities of self-support".¹ This was usually recommended in that tone of moral elevation which had characterised Whig/Liberal oratory since the days of Sydney and Russell.

Behind Liberalism there lay a suspicion of prosperity and urbanism as subversive of individual self-reliance. As an antidote to the increasing prosperity of mid-Victorian England, a dose of abstinence might be salutary. "Depend upon it", wrote Bright to Cobden in 1861, "suffering and suffering only will teach wisdom. Riches, - success in life - great prosperity, beget a self-confidence and puff up the mind, until truth becomes hateful, and flattery is the only welcome food you can administer".²

Many Liberals felt however, that the Permissive Bill constituted too great an infringement of individual self-

1 G.J. Holyoake, in A Reid (Ed.), Why I am a Liberal, n.d., p. 57; cf. his 'Impatience in Politics', Nineteenth Century, Aug. 1877, pp. 31, 41.

2 Sussex County Record Office, Cobden Papers, No. 20: Bright to Cobden, 24 Oct. 1861.

direction. For a majority of temperance enthusiasts, to demand abstinence from a minority of drinkers seemed to infringe the peculiarly Liberal virtue of tolerance. The Permissive Bill posed a problem not dissimilar to that raised by Ulster's resistance to Home Rule in 1912-14; to what extent is the majority entitled to limit the freedom of the minority?

The fourth characteristic of mid-Victorian Liberalism - the belief in the settlement of disputes through the exercise of impartiality and reason, again embarrassed prohibitionist Liberals, for their Permissive Bill relied upon force rather than upon persuasion to induce sobriety in the individual. It abandoned the traditional Liberal policy of compromise for an alien extremism justified only in exceptional circumstances. For Permissive Bill supporters of course, an emergency did exist: prohibition was required to create the conditions within which reason could operate, and was required as an emergency measure designed to cope with a rapidly worsening situation. It was a matter of balancing off the evils inherent in alternative policies: most Liberals would have preferred to secure sobriety without resorting to state intervention, but they felt that the existing social situation made such an ideal solution impossible.

Once this hurdle had been crossed, however, the prospect of universal temperance could only attract the Liberal. Lawson in 1868 claimed that the Liberals were "a thinking

party; they think for themselves whereas the Tories are made to order, they are machine made".¹ A sober people would be more likely to range freely and without bias over questions of policy, and would seek rational solutions to political and social problems; for many Liberals, drinking and thinking were mutually exclusive. Liberals were anxious to remove by peaceful means all sources of social disharmony; temperance by enabling working men peacefully to accumulate capital seemed, like co-operative societies, to be the route to social harmony: it was a means of peacefully assimilating working- and middle-class styles of life.

Many Liberals felt that the strength of Toryism lay in "the ignorance and poverty of the people",² that education and temperance ran together; many Liberals felt that a working man would only cast a Tory vote when his reason had been subverted by drink. The designation "stupid party" was not entirely unfair on the Tory party from 1846 until proper-tied intellectuals began to drift away from the Liberal party during the 1870s. The Liberal attacked all forces distorting the free play of reason - tradition, ignorance, sentiment, and drink, and favoured the elimination of poverty by un senti-

1 W. Lawson, Wit & Wisdom, p. 18.

2 Hugh Mason, Speech at an Aggregate Special Meeting of the Liberal Committees of Ashton-Under-Lyne, 1874, pp. 6-7.

mental and radical methods - by preventing the rich from making indiscriminate donations to the poor, by promoting workhouses conducted on the principle of "less eligibility", by compulsory abstinence through prohibition laws. Liberalism, according to one critic, was "philanthropy organised to be efficient".¹

Ideally the Liberal was free from prejudice, open-minded and candid. The Liberal outlook, said Lowe in 1877, consisted "in a view of things undisturbed and undistorted by the promptings of interest or prejudice, in a complete independence of all class interests, and in relying for its success on the better feelings and higher intelligence of mankind".² Unfortunately, many Liberals too easily assumed that personal culture was a sure preservative against prejudice, and could not see that government by the educated might be as self-interested as government by the masses.

A fifth and final Liberal objective - accountability for power. While the case of Robert Lowe shows that Liberals did not necessarily favour democracy, Liberals always distrusted the exercise of power by small exclusive groups. The Liberal always aimed at "rule by the best", but by the 1860s

1 K.R. Minogue, op. cit., p. 7.

2 R. Lowe, 'A New Reform Bill', Fortnightly Review, 1 Oct. 1877, p. 441.

the progress of self-improvement, especially as demonstrated by the Cotton Famine, showed many Liberals that the dangers accompanying the exercise of power by a restricted electorate might outweigh the dangers of a further franchise extension. The local veto would ensure that rule by the masses would eventually coincide with rule by the best. The Liberal identification with the local veto is one of several signs that many Liberals "had little sympathy with the half-educated multitudes whom they had called into being",¹ and would not be entirely happy with democracy until they had "improved" the working-class voter.

For the 19th century Liberal, the monopoly constituted perhaps the most flagrant example of the exercise of power without responsibility. Against this abuse, the 19th century Liberal's 17th century predecessors had fought some of their most glorious battles. As Liberal attitudes to the railways show, the mere suspicion of monopoly could always weaken Liberal prejudices against state interference in the economy. The Permissive Bill was one means of attacking monopoly without resorting to free trade, which in this sphere seemed to the prohibitionist incompatible with morality. At least one

¹ Stephen Spender, 'The Character of Lloyd George', Twentieth Century, Dec. 1951, p. 513.

Conservative found it "rather an extraordinary fact" that in a Permissive Bill debate all the arguments against liberty came from the Liberals, while all the arguments for free trade came from the Conservatives.¹

The public-house monopoly was bestowed by the magistrates, and many Liberals relished the Permissive Bill because in attacking a monopoly it also attacked the power of the magistrates. While G.O. Trevelyan was exaggerating when he claimed that "the paramount and unlimited authority of popular control" was "the key-note of all Liberalism",² it was certainly true that Liberals disliked the notion of a closed group of magistrates allocating or refusing valuable licences without giving good reason to the public for their decisions. Such a system must, they thought, lead to corruption in some instances. Thus as early as 1835, the Whigs in their Municipal Reform Bill favoured popular control of liquor licensing. The Alliance supporters argued that the ratepayers could never feel an interest in giving a corrupt verdict, just as Gladstone argued in 1877 that a large national electorate was likely to be less corrupt than a small.³

1 3 Hansard 229, c. 1862 (14 June 1876).

2 G.O. Trevelyan, Five Speeches, p. 10.

3 W.E. Gladstone, 'The County Franchise & Mr. Lowe Thereon', Nineteenth Century, Nov. 1877, p. 545.

Thus long before the licensing controversy of 1871-2 there was an affinity between temperance agitation and 19th century Liberalism; there are several aspects of Liberal ideology which make the eventual alignment of the Alliance with the Liberal party more than a product of mere tradition or organisational convenience. But the marriage was never completely harmonious: Liberals were especially doubtful about the limits to which the state might go in interfering with individual conduct. They were still more dubious, however, about the sectarian or puritanical aspects of the Alliance agitation; hence the importance of concluding discussion of the prohibitionist campaign with an attempt to describe "the Prohibitionist Mentality".

II

Historians of 19th century England tend to concentrate on the history of successful pressure groups, and to accept interpretations of their history provided by their supporters. Thus we hear more of the Anti-Corn Law League, the Reform League and the Anti-slavery Movement than of the Financial Reform Association, the Complete Suffrage Movement, or the Peace and Liberation Societies. The study of an unsuccessful pressure-group, the United Kingdom Alliance, exposes the many inadequacies and even absurdities of pressure-groups indiscriminately employing Anti-Corn Law League tactics.

These defects were emphasised by their contemporary opponents, but have since received less attention.

One M.P. maintained in 1846 that if ministers gave way to Anti-Corn Law League clamour, "they would have plenty of other leagues".¹ The prophecy proved accurate; Taine in the 1860s likened the numerous reform agitations in English politics to snowballs rolling about the country until they could gather enough weight to burst into the House of Commons.² By the 1870s many politicians regarded themselves as mere executants of the wishes of extra-parliamentary agitators, and the traditional notion that parliament should "shut out as far as might be all extrinsic pressure, and then....do what was right within doors"³ had largely disappeared. Jevons complained that the success of the Anti-Corn Law League had led many zealots to imagine that any agitation, if only vigorously conducted, must eventually get its way with parliament.⁴

Indeed, some politicians felt that without these agitations, politics would be in an unhealthy state. Cobden in

1 3 Hansard 84, c. 173 (26 Feb. 1846).

2 Taine's Notes on England (Ed. & Tr. E. Hyams, 1957), p. 172.

3 The Speaker to Gladstone in 1838, quo. in P. Fraser, 'Public Petitioning & Parliament before 1832', History, 1961, p. 210.

4 W.S. Jevons, 'The United Kingdom Alliance & its Prospects of Success', 1876, repr. in Methods of Social Reform, 2nd Edn., 1904, p. 238.

1859 felt that there could be "no healthy political existence"¹ without them; for Cowen in 1876 they were "the very stay and bulwark of our national prosperity".² Certainly many English observers regarded these agitations as testimonies to English political vigour and as the source of English political stability, and even recommended them to the French as the recipe for stable government. Yet the mid-Victorian reforming agitation was an expensive and distracting method of securing social improvement, especially when, as in the case of the Alliance, it concentrated more on coercing M.P.s than on educating the public. These agitations frequently spent their energies in mutual depreciation, fragmented from personal or sectarian reasons rather than from any real divergence over the means of attaining the desired reform, distracted attention from more serious evils and even discouraged genuine inquiry into the problems they were tackling.

If these agitations had concentrated on ventilating already existing discontents and on searching out their causes, they would have performed a more useful reforming function. But unfortunately they magnified small grievances

1 B.M. Addit. MSS. 43651 (Cobden Papers), f. 21: Cobden to Bright, 3 Oct. 1859.

2 3 Hansard 229, c. 863 (17 May 1876).

into large: peripheral evils into fundamental: partial remedies into panaceas. Crusading, said the National Review in 1860 "threatens to become a social danger as well as a fashionable folly of the age".¹

The Alliance certainly helped create political confusion in the early 1870s. It spent much of its energy in promoting parliamentary divisions on the Permissive Bill. How accurately did these divisions reflect the genuine convictions of the M.P.s? Many of the votes cast in favour of the Permissive Bill were really protest votes at governmental delay in introducing its own licensing measure.² After the enactment of Bruce's second Licensing Bill, the Permissive Bill attracted far less support.

Again, many of the votes cast in Permissive Bill debates bore no relation to genuinely-held conviction. Rival pressure groups subjected M.P.s to severe pressure. At first this caused wavering M.P.s to abstain, as Cobden had done in 1864. Even in 1871, when Bruce pleaded for a division which would "represent the real meaning of the House",³ the Alliance could complain afterwards that only half the House had voted.⁴ By

1 National Review, Jan. 1860, p. 107.

2 3 Hansard 206, c. 945 (17 May 1871); 3 Hansard 215, c. 1651-2 (7 May 1873).

3 3 Hansard 206, c. 950-1 (17 May 1871); cf. Mr. Locke, ibid., c. 941 & Bruce again in 1872: 3 Hansard 211, c. 492 (8 May 1872).

4 No Case Against the U.K.A. and the Permissive Bill, p. 30.

1872, however, extra-parliamentary pressure had so increased that according to Viscount Bury it had become impossible for M.P.s to abstain on divisions.¹ Publicans ordered M.P.s in 1873 to vote with minimum discussion so as to prevent the Permissive Bill being talked out, as had occurred in 1872.² Muntz's Alliance constituents brought a subtler form of coercion to bear, when they urged him "as he valued his immortal soul" to support the Bill.³ Such pressures created a complete divergence between M.P.s' opinions and their parliamentary votes. "What——nonsense it is", exclaimed one M.P. to Bass on the 1863 Sunday Closing Bill, for which he promptly proceeded to vote.⁴

In this situation, there was something to be said for the view of Shaftesbury and Bagehot that the Lords rather than the Commons might sometimes be the most suitable forum for debate.⁵ Certainly the institution of a secret ballot in the Commons in the 1870s would have killed the Permissive Bill

1 3 Hansard 211, c. 497 (8 May 1872).

2 3 Hansard 215, c. 1619-21, 1636 (7 May 1873); cf. Lawson, 3 Hansard 223, c. 1779 (28 Apr. 1875).

3 3 Hansard 215, c. 1652; cf. 3 Hansard 251, c. 492.

4 Weekly Record, 19 Sep. 1863, p. 415.

5 W. Bagehot, English Constitution, 2nd Edn., Doubleday paperback, New York, n.d., p. 153; Shaftesbury, 3 Hansard 208, c. 1268 (10 Aug. 1871).

just as it would have killed the 18th amendment in America half a century later.¹ But Lawson was not dismayed by such arguments. Many of the M.P.s who had supported the Reform Bills or Corn Law repeal he said, had condemned those measures in their private conversation: the public always had to force parliament to do right.²

Though 19th century reforming pressure groups usually claimed to be acting in the national interest, they derived their funds and energy from small, articulate and enthusiastic groups whose conception of the national interest were often seriously distorted. They concentrated too exclusively on demonstrating their own strength rather than the suitability of their remedy. They filled the political arena with uncompromising and determined reformers, each of whom gave priority to his particular reform. John Bright likened the situation in the early 1870s to the attempt of several omnibuses to get through Temple Bar at once,³ and Bruce in a licensing debate of 1871 pronounced Lawson "the greatest obstructive in dealing

1 A. Sinclair, op. cit., p. 128; cf. 3 Hansard 286, c. 1447 (2 Apr. 1884).

2 B.M. Addit. MS. 43389 (Bright Papers), f. 292: Lawson to Bright, 15 Sep. 1878.

3 W. Hoyle, 'On the Prospects of the U.K.A.', Manchester Statistical Society, 1876, p. 20; cf. 3 Hansard 262, c. 559 (14 June 1881).

with this question".¹ M.P.s regarded Alliance pressure as "not right or constitutional"; according to Bruce it prejudiced the dignity and independence of the House.²

Yet it is not on these grounds that the indictment of the Alliance rests. While it is true that the Alliance reduced the importance of parliamentary oratory as a means of winning support for a measure, constitutional arrangements are only valuable insofar as they are tailored to the social and economic structure of society; this structure had rapidly changed in the recent past, and the change had been recognised by politicians when they extended the franchise in 1867. The strains to which the Alliance and the publicans subjected M.P.s in the early 1870s owe less to prohibitionist irresponsibility, than to the unusual political situation created by the time-lag between franchise extension and the growth of a nation-wide party political organisation.

If pressure groups tried to discipline M.P.s during parliamentary divisions and on the election hustings, this was because no tightly-disciplined party machine yet existed to take full responsibility for enacting the desired reform. And if pressure groups clashed in their demands for parlia-

1 3 Hansard 206, c. 949 (17 May 1871).

2 3 Hansard 211, c. 497 (8 May 1872); Bruce, 3 Hansard 215, c. 658 (7 May 1873).

mentary time during the early 1870s, this was largely because the political parties had not yet taken complete responsibility for initiating policy changes, for deciding their priority, and for carrying them through parliament. Many of the criticisms directed at the parliamentary effects of Alliance activities during the early 1870s apply equally to any system of party discipline: indeed the mid-Victorian nonconformist pressure group unconsciously helped to create such a system.

Yet if the Alliance can be defended against the charge of producing political confusion in the early 1870s, it failed to secure the passage of its Permissive Bill. Its defenders might argue that the Alliance set the pace in licensing legislation and that, by agitating on the hustings and in parliament after 1857, it gave parliament the courage to pass necessary but hitherto politically impracticable legislation. But such an interpretation ignores the fact that as early as 1853 the demand for licensing reform had been vigorous enough to secure the appointment of a most important parliamentary inquiry and to obtain total Sunday Closing in Scotland. There is no evidence that Alliance activities from 1853 to 1867 did anything to bring licensing reform any closer.

Furthermore, when the government did put forward a radical measure of licensing reform in 1871, the Alliance adopted an

uncompromisingly hostile attitude which gave Bruce no incentive to defend his measure against clamorous publican hostility. The Alliance cannot justly claim credit for the passage of legislation which it did not support at the time. Some individual prohibitionists - Manning, for example - supported prohibitionist demands because they hoped that these would push governments into any form of licensing restriction. But there is no evidence that the executive committee of the Alliance favoured any form of licensing restriction less stringent than total prohibition. They were too conscious of the striking success of Richard Cobden's "no compromise" policy.

Alliance conduct can be more effectively explained along quite different lines. Such an explanation devotes less attention to the services which the Alliance claimed that its measure would perform for society as a whole, and more to the services which the Alliance itself performed for its members; and it recognises that the members of reforming organisations supported by private subscription, especially by donations from the religious public, enjoy less freedom of manoeuvre and inquiry, and can display less objectivity and single-mindedness in combating social ills, than the modern social reformer or welfare worker supported from public funds.

If the Alliance is solely regarded as an organisation seeking to enact a "final remedy" for the drink problem -

several of its attitudes and policies seem incomprehensible and several serious criticisms of its tactics can be made. Indeed, the Alliance can be criticised for its very existence. The drink trade in 1853 was hardly the most flagrant of public evils requiring attack. Indeed it provided many essential and harmless services to society. Unemployment , poverty , insanitary housing , the double standard in morality , social privilege, ignorance, recreation starvation , overwork and under-pay - all these now seem evils severally deserving of attacks quite as vigorous and costly as that delivered by the Alliance on the drink trade. Yet none of these evils inspired attack on anything like the same scale.

Nor was the demand for prohibition a response to any recent increase in the seriousness of the drink problem. On the contrary, though intemperance was still widespread, several mid-Victorian statesmen felt that it had declined within living memory.¹ Consumption statistics which , however they may distort the true picture , did at least influence contemporary attitudes , do not indicate increasing per capita consumption in the 1840s and 1850s . Figures had remained static since the 1830s ; the per capita consumption of wine and beer did not rise again till the 1860s ; spirits not till the 1870s. Thus with Alliance agitation as with American

1. e.g. 3 Hansard 112, c.1014 (5 July 1850); 3 Hansard 174, c.558 (1864). See also below, p. 548

anti-slavery campaigning, there seems to be little correlation between the relative importance of the evil and the intensity of the attack upon it. "When a patient reacts with excessive vehemence to a mild stimulus, a doctor at once becomes suspicious of some deep-seated malaise".¹

It might be argued that if the Alliance did not attack the worst or most fundamental contemporary evils, at least its members did not relax complacently amid the evils of mid-Victorian society: that drunkenness was a serious contemporary evil, whatever other evils also existed: and that by attacking the drink trade the Alliance was in fact attacking most of the above-mentioned mid-Victorian evils simultaneously. Such a defence requires us to consider the accuracy of the Alliance diagnosis and the suitability and efficiency of its tactics in advertising its remedy.

Yet the Alliance mistook the symptoms of the disease for its root cause. There was substance in H.A.Bruce's objection to the Permissive Bill "which, in what he might safely term a holy cause, diverted attention and strong feeling throughout the country from plans which were efficacious to those which were delusive".² Between 1853 and 1869, instead of favouring policies which would gradually reduce the per capita consumption of intoxicants, the Alliance tied itself to a drastic remedy which it knew would take years to enact, and thus

1. D.Donald, 'Towards a Reconsideration of Abolitionists', in his Lincoln Reconsidered, Vintage Books, 1961, p.20; cf. S.M. Elkins, Slavery, Chicago, 1959, p.158.

2. 3 Hansard 206, c.947 (17 May 1871).

sacrificed the relative sobriety of the fathers to the dream of complete abstinence in their children. It cold-shouldered any attempt at licensing restriction , branded counter-attractive remedies as a futile compromise, and failed to shed light on the nature of the problem it was tackling.

Even accepting the need for an Alliance agitation after 1853 , four criticisms can be made of the way in which it pursued its campaign - criticisms whose impact can be parried only by maintaining that the Alliance efficiently performed important functions quite distinct from its ostensible rôle . The Alliance can be criticised for displaying political ineptitude, political irresponsibility, fanaticism, and blind faith in its remedy: for failing to sponsor the medical and sociological research which alone could indicate some way out of the impasse.

Firstly ,political ineptitude. By firmly refusing to compromise and by attaching exaggerated importance to consistency of principle , the Alliance lost several opportunities for substantially restricting drinking hours and for removing private interest in promoting drink consumption. G.J.Holyoake felt that genuine temperance reform had been held up for years by the hostility which the Alliance had displayed towards all piecemeal measures.¹

1. G.J.Holyoake, Bygones Worth Remembering, II, p.191.

Several liquor restrictionists felt that the Alliance actually obstructed temperance reform by condemning Bruce's 1871 Licensing Bill, just as Josephine Butler when she rejected government compromise proposals in 1872 was accused of seriously retarding the agitation against the Contagious Diseases Acts. T.H. Green in 1882 said that Bruce's Bill, if supplemented by the permissive veto, would have been "the best possible settlement of the question", and deplored Alliance hostility to it.¹ Such a course would, admittedly, have brought unpopularity with some Alliance extremists, just as Shaftesbury reaped unpopularity from his Ten Hours' compromise of 1850;² but successful reformers like William Wilberforce brave the "significant winks and shrugs" from their extremist colleagues and accept government concessions whenever they can get them.³

Furthermore, the Alliance helped drive a valuable sympathiser away from the temperance movement when it received Chamberlain's Gothenburg Scheme so coldly in 1877. And when, during the first World War, the Alliance refused even to consider proposals for drink nationalisation, a critic

1 Oxford Chronicle, 4 Feb. 1882.

2 J.L. & B. Hammond, Shaftesbury, p. 135.

3 R.I. & S. Wilberforce, Life, III, pp. 233, 245.

pertinently complained of "the danger of vested interests growing up in moral and philanthropic questions as in other things".¹

Throughout its history, the Alliance refused to have anything to do with the existing licensing system: "our object", declared its founder, "is not to procure the enforcement of the present system but to secure a better".² Like the agitators against the Contagious Diseases Acts and the supporters of the Charity Organisation Society, the Alliance considered that any attempt to patch up an evil system was futile. It even regarded the failure of attempts to extend licensing restrictions as "absolute gain" for the prohibitionist cause.³

The Alliance pursuit of consistency, its policy of keeping to the "straight road",⁴ its hebraising tendency to "hold to the law"⁵ - alienated many philanthropists and temperance

1 Quo. in G.B. Wilson, Nationalisation of the Drink Traffic. Ought the Churches to Advocate it?, 1915, p. 5.

2 Parl. Papers, 1854, xiv (231), Q. 1967.

3 U.K.A. 3rd Annual Rept., 1855, p. 13; it claimed that the Hyde Park riots of 1855 showed the impossibility of compromising with the Traffick.

4 Leif Jones, Why Leave the Straight Road? A Warning to Temperance Reformers, U.K.A., 1915, p. 5.

5 M. Arnold, Culture & Anarchy, p. 186. Dr. Jabez Burns' preliminary sermon at the inauguration of the Alliance was preached on the text "Lest they drink and forget the law".

reformers and produced no legislative result of any importance. Often likening itself to the Anti-Corn Law League, the Alliance always refused to modify its original objective, and declared that its founders "knew ~~what~~ they were about when they laid down the principles on which they would proceed".¹ One of the first objections raised by the Alliance to drink nationalisation in 1915 was that it would require the abandonment on grounds of expediency of "those foundation principles on which the great structure of Temperance Truth rests".²

At the conclusion of the official history of the Alliance, published in 1953, there is no hint of any modification of its original objective laid down a century before. For a moment a note of doubt creeps in: "we do not see all we are doing. But it is there". But this mood is rapidly dispelled, and amid a flourish of Biblical echoes and quotations from temperance zealots enjoining courage, the official history assures its readers that whether they see their objective - their "Vision Splendid" - accomplished "here or hereafter", they will never have cause to regret that they pursued it.³

1 Leif Jones, op. cit., p. 5.

2 U.K.A. Nationalisation of the Drink Traffic, Manchester, 1915, p. 4.

3 M.H.C. Hayler, Vision of a Century, p. 195.

The Alliance constitutes a remarkable example of sectarian longevity; after the passage of a century, with no legislative achievement to its credit, it still felt no need to adapt its policies to accord with the realities of human conduct.

Secondly, the accusation of political irresponsibility: the Alliance often displayed a positive delight in conflict: an almost irresponsible abdication of responsibility for working existing social institutions: an almost blind striving for society as it should be. The Alliance rejected any compromise solution to the drink problem through licensing restriction.

"Shall LAW! its sanction give,
And license men to live,
by dealing death?"

went the inaugural hymn.¹ The initial declaration of the Alliance emphasised the failure of attempts to regulate a system "essentially mischievous in its tendencies".² While it welcomed attempts at extending licensing restriction because these weakened the self-confidence and political influence of the drink interest, this was "not the sword with

1 U.K.A. Inaugural Hymn, 26th Oct. 1853.

2 U.K.A. Public Inauguration Proceedings, 1853, clause 3 of the initial declaration.

which the monster can be slain".¹

Lawson was never greatly attached to the practical details of his Permissive Bill: it was its principle, not its practicality which he defended. The Alliance was never much worried by complaints that prohibition could never be enforced: the law must prohibit harmful practices even if it could not enforce its prohibition. A law, for the Alliance, was good or bad in the absolute sense, not in relation to the changing character of society and the individual.² The Alliance was essentially a protesting body, and like its greatest parliamentary leader Wilfrid Lawson preferred the freedom of Opposition to the compromises of Office.

Nor did the Alliance ever use its ample resources to palliate the existing evils of society - to pay for drinking fountains, coffee-stalls, and counter-attractions of every kind. It wanted a clean sweep, not a gradual reform. "So long as the temptations remain", argued F.W. Newman, "your work is never done....sweep away the temptation itself, and the work is done once and for ever".³ To palter with counter-

1 U.K.A. 6th Annual Rept., 1858, p. 11; cf. U.K.A. 4th Annual Rept., 1856, p. 14.

2 W.S. Jevons, Methods of Social Reform, p. 239.

3 Alliance News, 17 Oct. 1868, p. 330.

attractions was as futile as the attempt to patch up the licensing system. The Church of England Temperance Society once gently suggested a more prudent course: "placed as we are in a world like this, and in a state of society that has grown up under this abnormal state of things, we must be politic and wise".¹

The contrasting positions taken up by Sir George Grey and the Alliance during a deputation in 1863 reveal the prohibitionists' relative indifference to questions of practicability. Sir George Grey repeatedly tried to divert them from assurances of their power and from denunciations of the evils of drunkenness, into explaining to him how their scheme could ever succeed in practice. "We do not differ as to drinking being the cause of crime", he said, "but we differ as to the best mode of checking the evil". And again: "the only question really is, what is practicable?"²

The Alliance airily brushed aside suggestions that its Local Veto proposals might cause dissension; its nonconformist supporters were bred in an atmosphere of conflict. Life for them was a continual struggle against snares and sin. They could never be "at ease in Zion";³ they must, like

1 Church of England Temperance Chronicle, 1 July 1876, p. 126.

2 Weekly Record, 27 Dec. 1862, pp. 525-6.

3 M. Arnold, Culture & Anarchy, p. 135.

Pilgrim, spend their lives fighting - indeed, conflict positively developed the character. "I wonder what man was born for", Lawson retorted to one such objection, "excepting to struggle. We live in a world full of sin, of wrong, and of injustice, and if we are not to struggle, the sooner we are out of this world the better".¹

Thirdly, fanaticism. The Alliance erected the drink trade into an all-embracing, all-pervading evil, which must be removed before progress could be made in any other sphere of social reform. Like Pilgrim, the Alliance was fighting dragons - drink was "the dragon-trade of our land".² It brought forward the Permissive Bill as a certain cure for a remarkable assortment of evils: for unemployment, poverty, strikes, prostitution, political corruption, racial degeneration, religious and political apathy. The Alliance in national policy, like the Puritans in individual conduct, demanded "the one thing needful";³ like many teetotalers with the individual, the Alliance with society as a whole ignored the need for balanced and gradual development. Its fanaticism turned

1 Speech at Alliance banquet, Manchester, Alliance News, 22 Apr. 1865, p. 125.

2 U.K.A., Principles & Policy of the Alliance, 1859, p. 16.

3 M. Arnold, Culture & Anarchy, pp. 150, 159.

many sympathisers into opponents, and in many quarters discredited temperance agitation as a whole. Baines at Leeds in 1874, like Morley at his first Bristol election of 1868, found prohibitionists actually voting for his opponents because, despite his sympathy with liquor restriction, he would not abandon all independence of thought on the drink question.¹

Finally, blind faith. Superficially, this is a surprising accusation to make against an organisation which attracted the support of many intelligent men, and whose early propaganda was of the highest intellectual calibre. Yet despite its vast resources, the mid-Victorian Alliance never engaged in any sociological or medical research into the drink question. Despite its claims to be founded on scientific truth the Alliance rejected the very basis of the scientific approach to the drink problem: it failed to keep itself receptive in the face of changing social situations or with changing diagnoses of the problem.

More energy and resources were expended in propagating ideal solutions than in investigating the existing situation.²

1 J.R. Vincent, 'The Formation of the Liberal Party 1857-1868', (Cambridge Univ. Ph.D. Thesis, 1962), p. 156.

2 cf. A.M. Lee, 'Techniques of Social Reform', American Sociological Review, 1944, p. 77.

Alliance leaders regarded their problem as pressing, the solution as self-evident; further inquiry was therefore superfluous. Their activities certainly exemplify that mid-Victorian "preference of doing to thinking",¹ of which Matthew Arnold complained. Alliance supporters felt they had only to agitate energetically and single-mindedly, and the Utopia would arrive. Indeed, the "Vision" performed a similar function for them as drink performed for many a drinker: it brought an ephemeral perfection into a disordered world.

The Alliance undertook research only when research seemed likely to confirm its preconceptions, and when it could produce statistics which would shock politicians or the public into following its advice. Just as the anti-spirits societies had concentrated on counting the number of London ginshop customers, so the Alliance industriously compiled huge "national drink bills" and conducted large-scale canvasses designed to indicate the strength of support for its policy. When Alliance supporters - Joseph Livesey in the 1860s, T.P. Whittaker and Lady Henry Somerset later - used their intelligence, and advised less Utopian policies, they were branded as apostates. The Alliance erected its inflexibility into a positive virtue, and allowed irrelevant con-

1 M. Arnold, Culture & Anarchy, p. 129.

siderations of loyalty to stifle the intellectual inquiry which the seriousness of the drink problem demanded.

In these four ways, then, the Alliance either failed to help, or positively hindered, the quest for a solution to the drink problem. If its sole function had been to eliminate drunkenness, its history would indeed be a sorry tale. Yet although the Alliance failed in its ostensible objective, it was remarkably successful in other respects. If the timing and intensity of its demand for prohibition seem unrelated to the incidence of drunkenness and to its importance in comparison with other social evils, this was because the attack on drunkenness was not its sole function; and because although apparently tilting at windmills, the Alliance was in fact assuaging the very real earthly and spiritual grievances and fears prevailing among its supporters.

Analysis of the background of leading Alliance donors in the year 1868-9 provides some clues to the less obvious functions played by the Alliance. Taking donors who gave £5 or more, analysis of their dates of birth reveals no more than the fact that many of the leading Alliance donors in 1868-9 were middle-aged.¹ 36 of the 88 whose birth-dates are known were born between 1801 and 1812, and many of these 34 had been attracted towards the liquor restrictionist movement

¹ See Appendix, table 30B.

by the teetotal campaign of the 1830s.

The leading donors were almost entirely male - 186 out of 204, and those women who feature in the subscription lists were often widows or spinsters perpetuating the generosity of departed husbands or imitating the generosity of relatives.¹ The extent of female influence inspiring male donations is impossible to assess.

More revealing is an analysis of the leading Alliance donors by occupation. The occupations of 142 of the 204 donors are known; quite the largest group, with 39 names, consisted of textile manufacturers. Manufacturers and merchants accounted for the overwhelming majority of the other donors; there were few retailers and no industries approaching the prominence of textile manufacture.² Donations often came from firms rather than from individuals,³ or from individuals working in the same firm.⁴ The leading industrial areas which sent donations to the Alliance were Manchester, Glasgow, the North-East coast and Durham industrial areas, the West Riding, Lancashire, and Cardiff. Several of the donors were active

1 See Appendix, table 30B; for widows, see Table 30, Nos. 149, 174; for spinsters, Nos. 5, 33, 103 & 132.

2 See Appendix, table 30A.

3 See Appendix, table 30, Nos. 10, 68, 84, 105, 107, 186, 198.

4 See Appendix, table 30, Nos. 27+29+30, 191+192, 171+172.

in promoting railway construction,¹ and the lives of several of the donors fit into the self-help mould.²

Only 7 of the 142 leading donors whose occupation is known came from the wealthy landowning class. The three titled donors in this list included only one member of an ancient landowning family - Sir Robert Brisco, Lord of the Manor of Thursley; the other two were very recent creations - Sir Wilfrid Lawson, a dissenter, and Sir W. A'Beckett, who had attained his title through a career in the law. Of the landowners, Thomas Taylor of Tetsworth was a retired cotton spinner, and Theodore Moilliet was a member of a family which had only recently arrived from Geneva. If John MacKenzie and Arthur Trevelyan came from "governing class" landowning families, they were, like the Lawsons, markedly progressive in their attitudes to estate management and Liberal in their political outlook. Apart from two farmers, no other rural donors derived the major part of their income directly from agriculture.³

The other rural donors were dissenters, like the flour-milling Christys and Marriages of Chelmsford, the Radical

1 See Appendix, table 30, nos. 16, 18, 52, 66, 102, 147, 149.

2 See Appendix, table 30, nos. 43, 54, 70, 73, 86, 104, 125.

3 See Appendix, table 30, nos. 4, 8, 9, 34, 123, 130, 146, 199, 204.

grocer of Brackley Thomas Judge , the Quaker miller of Fordingbridge W.R.Neave, the Evangelical Quaker from Banbury James Cadbury, and the dissenting Pattinson family, contractors of Ruskington. Thomas Judge has been described as "the enfant terrible of Northamptonshire politics" - a tradesman who championed the cause of Liberalism against the local Tory gentry.¹ Furthermore, the "governing class professions" - law , the church , the services, and (understandably) brewing - are markedly under-represented.

It is difficult and perhaps invidious to attempt measurement of the intelligence of leading Alliance donors. The appeal of the Alliance to those in academic occupations would probably be under-represented in an analysis of donors who could afford to give £5 or more. Several highly intelligent men supported the Alliance at this time, but Professor F.W.Newman is the only university figure in this list. The Radical intellectuals Goldwin Smith, Thorold Rogers, Professor Rolleston and T.H.Green from Oxford, together with Professor James Stuart from Cambridge , were all enthusiasts, despite the strong hostility felt in the old universities to any predominantly dissenting agitation for social reform.

The list of major donors in 1868-9 includes only one schoolmaster, the Quaker Fielden Thrp of York ; but several

1. W.R.D.Adkins, Our County, 1893, p.28, and see Appendix, table 30, no.124.

of the industrialists helped promote school-building.¹ One, R.S. Newall, of Gateshead, was an inventor, and several were prominent in local cultural activities.² Others dabbled in scientific activities in their spare time - Trevelyan was an amateur chemist, McCulloch an amateur electrician.³ Three doctors appear in the list, and three enthusiasts for hydro-pathy, A.E. Eccles of Manchester, John Smedley of Matlock and Dr. John Goodman of Southport.

Analysis of the donors' political outlook shows Liberalism to be overwhelmingly dominant. Of the 54 whose political views are known, no less than 49 were Liberals;⁴ temperance enthusiasts were often among the most enthusiastic among Liberal supporters in the constituencies. 33 of the 189 male donors in the list are known to have been active in local government, and this figure probably substantially underestimates the extent of their participation.⁵ There were probably several who, like Walter Smith of Southport, were first able to catch the public eye through their zeal for temperance. Several were leading and respected personalities

1 See Appendix, table 30, nos. 16, 17, 21, 25, 78, 83, 147, 149.

2 ibid., nos. 1, 26, 50, 157.

3 ibid., nos. 184, 201.

4 See table 30C.

5 See Appendix, table 30C.

in their localities - the Corys in Glamorgan, the Peases in Durham, and C.E.Darby in Denbighshire , for instance, had all been responsible for opening up new sources of wealth in their localities, through their exploitation of local mineral deposits. Davies of Cardiff, Shaw of Colne, Mason of Ashton, Smith of Southport and McCulloch of Dumfries were all household names in their neighbourhoods. "To enumerate the topics on which he so often addressed his fellow-citizens with acceptance and effect", wrote the Manchester Guardian on William McKerrow, "would be to relate the social, political, and , in particular, the educational progress of Manchester during the past half century".¹ Similar compliments could have been paid to many members on this list.

In some ways the donors constituted a small community in themselves - especially in the case of Quaker donors, several of whom were related.² Analysis of the donors by religious belief shows the Quakers to be very prominent - of the 95 whose religious belief is known , 36 were Quakers; 43 of the remainder were nonconformists of various denominations ; only 15 were Anglicans.³ Before the mid-1860s the proportion of Anglicans would probably have been much smaller. Only during this decade were there signs that Anglican hostility to the temperance crusade was beginning to decline.⁴

1. Manchester Guardian, 5 June 1878.

2. See Appendix, table 30, Nos. 32+3, 16+17+18+19+20, 63+128+141+142+143.

3. See Appendix, table 30D.

4. See below, pp. 57 ff.

There was undoubtedly a close connexion in many instances between religious belief and temperance enthusiasm. Men like John Smedley and Timothy Coop derived immense energy from their conversion experiences; several of the donors personally distributed charity to the poor.¹

The leading donors were by no means narrow in their philanthropic interests; these often included the Y.M.C.A., anti-slavery, free-trade, peace, the Bible Society and feminism. Several leading prohibitionists experimented with vegetarianism, including Hoyle, Lees, Hargreaves, Raper and F.W. Newman. The general impression conveyed is thus one of serious-minded but not narrow or illiberal personalities. Energetic, progressive, individualist, deeply religious and usually nonconformist, overwhelmingly connected with "trade" - these men could gain far more from the Alliance than a mere diminution of the drink evil. So also could the labour aristocrats too poor to feature among the leading donors but prepared to attend Alliance meetings in such large numbers.

Viewed in this light, Alliance attitudes take on a rather different aspect, and can be effectively defended against the criticisms which have been made. For if the Alliance made its appearance at precisely the time when "combative dissent" was supplanting the traditional quietism, and if its supporters were predominantly nonconformists and members of the manufacturing and trading classes, the Alliance can fruitfully be regarded at least partly as a vehicle for the

1. See Appendix, Table 30, Nos. 129, 15, 170.

campaign against aristocratic, Anglican and agricultural ascendancy. Attitudes which at first sight seem self-defeating become explicable against a background of social deprivation. This is not to impugn the sincerity of Alliance supporters in their expressions of horror at this evil; it is simply to suggest that the shape of their agitation owed much to the social situation of the agitators.

The "two nations" of rich and poor, which have received so much attention from 19th century historians, were less important in moulding the conduct of the Alliance than the "two nations" of Anglican and nonconformist. The conflict between aristocrat and tradesman is more relevant in explaining the attitudes of the Alliance than the conflict between the industrial employer and his employee. The Alliance conducted its social pathology in terms of aristocratic oppression. Just as the Anti-Corn Law League had blamed the poverty of the 1840s on restrictions on the freedom of trade, imposed by the landowning classes for their own selfish purposes, - so the Alliance blamed aristocratic self-interest for the drunkenness of the mid-Victorian period.

It would have been surprising if the Alliance had blamed drunkenness on the social disruption, monotony and dreariness accompanying industrialisation, for many of its leading supporters were themselves industrialists. It was more natural for them to blame a system of licensing drinking places which

had been "imposed" on the rest of society by an aristocracy anxious to exempt itself from expense through levying indirect taxes, and concerned to keep up the price of barley grown on its estates by proliferating public-houses in localities occupied by the under-privileged.

In the minds of many mid-Victorian Radicals, the great landowners, the legal system, the Anglican church, the London clubs, the army and the great London brewers all constituted a great Leviathan obstructing social and political progress. Early and mid-Victorian nonconformist and middle-class reforming pressure groups sought to attack the monster from several directions. While the National Education League attacked aristocratic and Anglican control over popular education, the Anti-Corn Law League their control over the economy, the Peace Society their military rôle, the Administrative Reform Association their control over government and the Liberation Society their control over religion - the Alliance and the teetotal movement threatened their control over popular leisure, over philanthropy, and over the framing of party policy. The campaign for liquor restriction threatened both the moral platform of the London brewers at Exeter Hall, the publicans' traditional links with popular recreation, and the traditional reliance of the political parties on local allegiances, emotive political symbols and personal rivalries rather than on practical schemes for

social amelioration.

The Alliance grew to maturity in an age when the lives of Anglicans and nonconformists, tradesmen and aristocrats, seldom mixed. Rosebery when he attended one of Spurgeon's meetings in 1873, came upon a world which was "as completely unknown to the world in which I live as if it did not exist. Its aims are not our aims, its language is not our language, its aspirations and ideas are wholly alien to our aspirations and ideas".¹ This separation was actively promoted by many nonconformists, who made a virtue of their exclusion from power, and treasured the "clanship and the satisfaction of belonging to a society marked off from the great world".² They branded public life as corrupting, forced their ministers to abstain from it, and isolated themselves as much as possible from those whom they had been trained to regard as wicked.

Teetotalism had been an admirable means of accentuating this insulation and of building up dissenters' sense of being a "holy people". The Saturday Review, when it glanced at some temperance periodicals in 1858, entered an entirely unfamiliar world, with its own servants, doctors, tradesmen,

1 R.R. James, Rosebery, 1963, p. 58; I owe this reference to Mr. M.C. Hurst, of St. John's College, Oxford.

2 M. Rutherford, Autobiography, p. 31.

schools, insurance schemes and even its own funeral directors. It was a small and comfortable world as warm and reassuring for its members as was the public-house for its customers.¹ "Born within this world", commented the Saturday Review, "you need never travel out of it".²

These teetotal associations criticised by implication the aristocrats and Anglicans who, until the 1870s, held aloof. Teetotal and Alliance papers always emphasised that intemperance occurred among rich and poor alike, denounced the late-night pranks of drunken aristocratic youths,³ and attacked the drinking habits of Oxford and Cambridge undergraduates.⁴ For although the governing classes had become increasingly temperate since the late 18th century,⁵ they were very slow to adopt the teetotal panacea. J.S. Buckingham in 1845 said that he had sat at table with about 500 members of the middle and upper classes in the previous year, and had found only two or three who were water-drinkers.⁶

The National Temperance Chronicle in 1846 even regarded the teetotal crusade as one branch of the general attack on feudalism. "Feudalism has faded before civilisation, and

1. A.M.Lee, art.cit., p.74.

2. Saturday Review, 25 Dec 1858, p.641.

3. See Appendix, Plate 99.

4. British & Foreign Temperance Intelligencer, 10 Apr 1841, p. 113.

5. See above, pp. 31ff.

6. National Temperance Chronicle, June 1845, p.382.

serfdom before liberty", it wrote on 1st January, "but the drinking-customs, which should have perished with them, have survived". 19th century liquor restrictionists regarded the appearance of their movement as a sign that their century surpassed all others in morality; the middle ages, for them, constituted no Arcadia of sobriety, but rather a drunken and servile era to be contemplated with disgust.¹ Denunciations of drunken feudal rural revels feature as regularly in teetotal as in Chartist and Anti-Corn Law periodicals.² Indeed, 19th century liquor restrictionists, like 20th century Russian communists, eagerly tried to brand persistent drunkenness as a survival from a discredited and superseded economic and social order.³

Superficially, the incursion of nonconformists and, via Manning of Roman Catholics, into political life via the Alliance, constitutes a complete reversal of their previous policy of insulation and withdrawal, just as free trade seems at the opposite pole from prohibition. Yet in both cases the extremes came close to meeting. Although Quakers like Joseph

1 Temperance Penny Magazine (Manchester), 8 Aug. 1835, p. 14.

2 E.g. Weekly Record, 14 Dec. 1861, p. 467.

3 R.G. McCarthy, Drinking & Intoxication, Illinois, 1959, pp. 145-6.

Sturge and Robert Charleton, who constituted the backbone of the early Alliance, strove to induce Quakers to participate in public life, it would be surprising if they had not taken into political life some of the prejudices and fears they had inherited.

To return to the above-mentioned criticisms of the Alliance: firstly, the accusation of political ineptitude. This springs as much from conscious defiance of the customary political methods of the governing classes, as from political inexperience; a defiance whose stridency owes much to the lack of political self-confidence characterising Alliance leaders. Alliance men in the 1850s, like their quietist nonconformist predecessors, regarded parliament as a centre of corruption; inexperienced amidst designing and corrupt politicians, and stranded in the enervating atmosphere of London, their spokesmen clung to "principle" as their guiding light. Washington Wilks described at an Alliance meeting in 1862 how men changed as soon as they entered parliament: "if you go there", he said, "you scarce see around you a man animated by his own moral sense and feelings".¹

Furthermore, nonconformist religious training stressed that "finality or absoluteness of attitudes or ideals"²

1 Weekly Record, 28 June 1862, p. 273.

2 Otto, 'Fanaticism', in Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences, Vol. 6, p. 92.

which has always characterised the education of the fanatic; this bore fruit in the "principles" of prohibition for the nation and teetotalism for the individual. Experience taught Miall that there is "something else in the world beside fidelity to principle"; fidelity to principle unaccompanied by discretion was often, he found, ineffectual. "Brave men fight battles", he said, "sagacious men draw up treaties".¹ The Alliance never learnt this lesson. Prohibition and teetotalism sought to rescue the individual from sin, not by giving him experience in dealing with it, but by insulating him against danger. Despite their apparently jaunty self-confidence, Alliance supporters felt frightened and insecure at Westminster; their apparent political ineptitude reflects their fears, for in prohibition they had found their Saviour.

Secondly, the charge of irresponsibility: the tendency to protest against evils rather than to devise any constructive means of dealing with them. Alliance insistence on prohibition is not to be explained in terms of shock at the sudden exposure of an appalling evil. Most Alliance members had, as teetotalers, long been familiar with the evil, and certainly made no sudden discovery of its horrors in 1853.

¹ Nonconformist, 27 Aug. 1856, p. 633, quo. in M.H. Macintosh, op. cit., p. 133.

The direct transition from moral suasion to prohibition is rather to be explained against the background of nonconformist attitudes to the central government.

"There is.....no consistent standing-point betwixt free trade and the Maine Law", wrote Livesey in 1855.¹ If they were to move away from moral suasion, nonconformists could hardly move towards any policy which would increase the power and patronage of the central government, a power which had long been used by Anglicans and aristocrats against their co-religionists. The licensing system they deplored if only because they saw it as a means of giving political and religious influence to the members of another class and another denomination. If they could not have free trade, then they would go for total prohibition, or for the lesser prohibitions of Sunday Closing or beershop abolition, since these would not provide opportunities for continuous regulation in the interests of the governing classes. Prohibition, like teetotalism, was a means of tackling the drink problem without resorting to the magistrates for aid.

Not only did the Alliance men adopt irresponsible policies: they showed a positive delight in doing so. The Weekly Record described Alliance men as people "whose design is

¹ J. Livesey, Letter to J. Wilson Patten, 1855, p. 10.

agitation rather than legislation".¹ Their exhilaration in protesting against the licensing system reflects the frustrations and deprivations of nonconformist life - a situation which, as Matthew Arnold pointed out, made the public agitation "stimulating and refreshing to them in the highest degree".² "I have always professed to like agitation", said Miall; "...I like to see truth stirred up".³

To expect Alliance supporters to defer to the need for compromise and to recognise the impossibility of earthly perfection would be to deprive them of that psychological release with which their agitation was designed to furnish them. And if Alliance men seemed to delight in conflict, this was because their religion had long taught them to anticipate wars and rumours of war before the millennium arrived. Virtue must be tried in the fire before it found its reward. Samuel Pope urged Sir Charles Trevelyan at an Alliance meeting in 1870 to lay aside "this little difficulty" and "the other little difficulty" and to go for the simplicity of prohibition.⁴

1 Weekly Record, 15 Mar. 1862, p. 88.

2 W.F. Connell, The Educational Thought & Influence of Matthew Arnold, 1950, p. 148.

3 A. Miall, Life of Edward Miall, 1884, p. 146.

4 U.K.A. Full Rept. of the Speeches Delivered at the Annual Public Meeting...Manchester,...October 26th, 1870, p. 31.

just as the admired Pilgrim warded off his family's efforts to prevent him from striving to reach the light indicated by the Evangelist, "put his fingers in his ears, and ran on, crying, Life! life! eternal life! and looked not behind him".¹

The twin fears of corruption and exploitation do not, however, explain away the third accusation directed at the Alliance - that of fanaticism. This can only be understood against the background of the Final Reckoning. Of the three elements of fanaticism listed by Isaac Taylor, "the supposition of malignity on the part of the object of religious worship"² was undoubtedly made by many supporters of the Alliance, despite the compromises which certain sections of the teetotal movement had made with meliorism.

The fear of divine vengeance was a most important influence on many 19th century reforming movements, and was certainly influential with many of the nonconformists who supported the Alliance. Just as incest in primitive tribes can cause the crops to fail, so intemperance or Sabbath-breaking could, in 19th century England, cause national decay, industrial depression, or even some more catastrophic sign of Divine displeasure. The Old Testament, which 19th century

1 J. Bunyan, Pilgrim's Progress, 1953 Collins Edn., p. 27.

2 I. Taylor, Fanaticism (New Edn. 1843), p. 67.

bibliolaters read so uncritically, provided them with many instances of Divine retribution for human disobedience. Moral reformers scanned the horizon for signs of sin, as part of their campaign for national and individual self-defence against divine retribution.

Alliance agitation can be seen at least partly as a mechanism which enabled its supporters to purge themselves of complicity in evil; if the Permissive Bill would do nothing for the inhabitants of those areas which failed to adopt it, at least it would enable Alliance supporters in the prohibition areas to shake off responsibility for the miseries caused by drink.¹ A similar outlook characterised opponents of the Contagious Diseases Acts, anxious to preserve themselves against complicity in prostitution. "Better, a thousand times better, that we struggle against a giant evil, even though we fail, than that we learn to look on in apathy and make no brave and heroic effort to save our fellow creatures from destruction. By this very effort we at least save ourselves from sinful complicity...."²

That "high-minded passing-by on the other side" of which John Bright has been accused³ can be detected in the Alliance and in many 19th century nonconformist agitations. It reappears in the Bulgarian atrocities agitation of 1876

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1. cf. R. Hofstadter, The American Political Tradition, 1962 edn., p. 146: on those opponents of slavery who wished the North to secede from the South - a measure which would accomplish nothing for the Southern slaves, but much for their own consciences.
 2. T. H. Barker, Civil Rights & Social Duties, 1871, p. 14.
 3. A. J. F. Taylor, The Trouble-Makers, p. 61.

and in Bright's resignation of 1882. The desire for "clean hands" at the Last Day helps explain the Alliance refusal to co-operate in Gothenburg or nationalisation experiments, both of which would implicate all citizens in a wicked trade.¹ If the Alliance strove so valiantly to keep itself pure from the sins of the world that it never succeeded in doing much to remedy them, its nonconformist supporters did not complain; for them, it performed its functions admirably.

Deference to conscience, an important spur to social reform in some spheres, could in others promote the despairing and unconstructive protest - designed to set the mind at rest rather than to remove the evil in question. "Our own moral efforts", wrote the Alliance secretary in 1871, "shall bless us here, not in our outward life alone, but in the inward and majestic life of conscience".²

Desire to evade complicity helps also to explain why the Alliance failed to advocate increased taxation of intoxicants. The temperance movement tended to regard drink taxes as "the price of blood" falling into the Exchequer "heavy with the curse of God".³ Prohibitionists aimed, for both religious and political reasons, to deprive the government of this disgraceful "annual bribe"⁴ in drink taxes. Yet it was

1. U.K.A., Nationalisation of the Drink Trade, 1915, p.5.

2. T.H.Barker, Civil Rights & Social Duties, p.16.

3. Weekly Record, 24 Mar 1860, p.143.

4. Alliance News, 28 Oct 1865.

difficult for the Alliance to recommend their reduction without appearing to recommend increased accessibility of the article from which they wished the nation to abstain. While emphasising that it would rejoice to find a government willing to abandon revenue derived from a source so pernicious,¹ it knew that such a government was hardly likely to materialise. Prohibitionist agitation was once more the only feasible alternative.

Isaac Taylor also maintained that the fanatic was characterised by "abhorrence of mankind at large". At first sight, this quality certainly does not characterise the Alliance - least of all its parliamentary leader Wilfrid Lawson and the Quakers who so zealously supported it. They were humane men, very conscious of the suffering which they so zealously attacked. Furthermore, prominent Alliance supporters like Manning and Lawson specifically denounced personal attacks by liquor restrictionists on the publican.² And in their attitude to the drunkard, the prohibitionists showed more compassion than those members of the public who favoured tightening the penalties for public intemperance.

Yet humbler prohibitionists were not necessarily so

1 Alliance News, 18 Feb. 1860, p. 945.

2 See above, p. 420 ; & H.E. Manning, Temperance Speeches, p. 141.

charitable. The prohibitionist campaign, like so many other reforming campaigns, tended in its lower echelons to become a campaign against Enemies, and to be inspired by "malevolence, not humanism".¹ During the licensing debate of 1871, a placard was circulated in Bradford entitled "The Publican's Prayer", and beginning "Our Father Which Art in Hell".² For those who circulated this placard the publican, and not drunkenness, had become the Enemy.

Furthermore, even among Alliance leaders, always excepting Lawson, there was a certain hardness, a certain delight in taking the uncompromising line which they knew would cause pain to particular individuals. "A few hundred letters each bearing the signature of a voter, laid upon the breakfast table of a member of Parliament", said an Alliance supporter in 1870, "would give him something to digest which might do him more good than his morning's meal".³ The logical development of such a course was the horsewhipping of prominent public statesmen by early 20th century suffragettes.

The same note recurs in the Alliance rejoinder to criticism of its insistence that Morley should clearly pronounce for or against the Permissive Bill at the Bristol by-

1 Rix on C.N.D., in New Statesman, 1 Jan. 1965, p. 14.

2 3 Hansard 206, c. 927 (17 May 1871).

3 Devon & Cornwall Temperance Journal, 1 June 1870, p. 81.

election of 1868. "Public men must make their choice", said the Alliance, "and either go in with the liquor traffic, or go on with the temperance movement for its annihilation".¹ Motivated by its vision of the ideal man, the Alliance failed to investigate the actual conduct of man as he really existed - a process which would now be considered an essential preliminary to any scheme of social reform, but which requires an outlook and organisation among social reformers quite foreign to the world of the Alliance. Like Burke's French Revolutionaries, Alliance supporters often "by hating vices too much" came "to love men too little".²

The adoption of this uncompromising tone stemmed partly, of course, from the inexperience of the Alliance leaders in political manoeuvre. Their relations with parliament resembled that between the impatient Chadwick and the suave Morpeth: "as I have to make things go down with Senates, Boards and Bodies of men..." he wrote to Chadwick in 1848, "I hope we shall keep all things smooth, which is not only pleasanter, but at the present constitutes our highest prudence".³ Yet the note of indignant protest and rigid insist-

1 Alliance News, 9 May 1868, p. 148.

2 E. Burke, 'Reflections on the French Revolution', Works, III, p. 458.

3 R.A. Lewis, Edwin Chadwick & the Public Health Movement, 1832-1854, 1952, p. 159.

ence on adherence among its supporters to prescribed pronouncements also characterises that somewhat unlovely body, the Liberation Society. Indeed, at the Bristol election, Samuel Morley offended both Liberationists and Alliance men by his attitudes.

Much of the harshness in the tone of nonconformist pressure groups stems from the feeling prevalent among their members that they were conducting a battle against a firmly entrenched enemy - a battle in which neutrality was impossible. For them, the typical M.P. was not a well-meaning and conscientious representative, but a member of an alien class who in the past had severely restricted their religious liberties and their social dignity. He might well be related to the parsons and magistrates who had so recently sold up nonconformist property in payment of church rates. M.P.s had to be forced by popular pressure to "do right", for they would seldom do right of their own accord.

A third quality attributed by Taylor to the fanatic is "a credulous conceit of the favour of Heaven, shown to a few, in contempt of the principles of virtue". The Alliance was always confident that it enjoyed Divine support - indeed this was a necessary prop not only because opposition to the Permissive Bill was so virulent, but also because combative nonconformists were still unaccustomed to taking the political initiative. The Alliance was confident in 1871, "that the

Divine Protector of the poor and the tempted, and the Avenger of the oppressed, is with our enterprise".¹ For T.H. Barker in 1871, the Alliance struggle was quite literally "part - and oh, how large a part! - of the great war between Heaven and Hell".² Despite a century of Divine delay, the author of the centenary history retains the certainty of his predecessors "that God is for us and for our work".³

If Alliance supporters display in varying degrees all three of the characteristics of the fanatic listed by Isaac Taylor, they also display the two additional qualities listed by Otto;⁴ and once again the possession of these qualities is closely linked to the social situation of nonconformists and members of the trading classes at this time. Otto maintains that fanatics show an "extreme narrowness and rigidity of temper" in their refusal to consider any remedy for a problem before their own, and in their refusal to compromise. Here too the lack of leisure associated with industrial activity, and the lack of recreation associated with 19th century nonconformity help to explain the mood adopted by the Alliance.

1 U.K.A. 19th Annual Rept., 1870-1, p. 89.

2 T.H. Barker, Civil Rights & Social Duties, 1871, p. 11.

3 M.H.C., op. cit., p. 195.

4 M.C. Otto, art. cit., p. 90.

The prohibitionist leaders displayed to the full that "narrowness, one-sidedness, and incompleteness" which Matthew Arnold saw in the mid-Victorian nonconformist, deprived as he was of access to the centres of learning and despising therefore the culture of the class which he could not enter.¹ The Alliance refusal to consider any other solution to the drink problem but prohibition has already been noted, and undoubtedly hindered progress in dealing with the temperance issue. In Alliance attitudes to the drinking fountain movement, or to Bruce's 1871 Licensing Bill one can certainly discern the presence of Santayana's fanatic "who redoubles his efforts when he has forgotten his ends".²

The second additional characteristic noted by Otto - the desire to fix an idea on mankind rather than to meditate upon human problems - leads to consideration of the final accusation which can be levied against the Alliance: the accusation that it relied on blind faith in dealing with social problems. This quality owes more to the structure of the 19th century philanthropic world than to the peculiar temperament of those who inhabited it. In several ways, the organisational structure of the Alliance and of other contemporary reforming pressure

1 M. Arnold, Culture & Anarchy, p. 12.

2 Quo. in L. Coser, 'Sects & Sectarians', Dissent, Autumn 1954, p. 366.

groups fostered inflexible attitudes, even in the most successful reformers. First, the agitator was constantly pressed for short-term decisions, and his time was consumed with intellectually stultifying activities such as the organisation of bazaars, meetings and campaigns. There was neither the time nor the demand for the long-term view. Wilberforce incessantly complained of the "immense arrear of letters, and continual fresh masses coming in" - incessantly longed for "the best of all medicines, quiet".¹ "Letters and Chairs eat me up", said Shaftesbury in 1848; "I never refresh my mind with new stores; always speaking, never reading or thinking".²

This disability stems largely from the way in which the 19th century reforming pressure group was financed. The need to give the subscriber his money's worth pushed pressure groups, like Godwin's political associations, into "doing something, that their association may not fall into insignificance" - even when success was unlikely to result.³ Hence the diffusion of effort in small spectacular campaigns, the failure steadily to build up intellectual and evidential

1 R.S. & I. Wilberforce, Life, III, pp. 193-4, 191.

2 Lord Shaftesbury's Diary, entry for 8 July 1848; cf. entry for 9 Apr. 1848.

3 W. Godwin, Political Justice, I, p. 294.

resources; the expenditure on unprofitable items which might "do credit" to the society, the preference for formal assemblies of members and delegates over the informal visitation which Livesey always advocated. Hence also the expensive buildings, the paid officials, the elegant membership cards and the long annual reports filled with lists of subscribers and pages of comfortable words.

So hectic an atmosphere and so irrational a pattern of expenditure could hardly foster serious research, which only becomes possible with the private income or the long-term grant from the state, or from the great philanthropic foundations. Only these can enable the reformer to concentrate on his main task, instead of frittering away his energies on money-raising schemes. In the field of education, the inconvenience of relying on the fluctuating generosity of the public for facilities required continuously had become apparent to many by the 1850s.¹ In the field of drunkenness, this realisation was to take longer. The complaint which Godwin made of political associations can also be made of 19th century charities: their organisation and finance caused them to be "ever at hand to mar the tranquillity of science, and the free, but unobserved progress of truth".²

1 Westminster Review, Vol. 55, 1851, p. 458.

2 W. Godwin, Political Justice, I, p. 294.

Finally, the pressure group agitator tended to move informally only among those who agreed with him. When faced by opponents, he was publicly defending his cause and livelihood and could not show himself receptive to criticism, nor could he be in a suitable frame of mind to receive it. Because he regularly received the applause of his supporters, he tended to think that his cause must prevail. This induced what might be called an intellectual incestuousness which prevented his movement from responding rapidly to social change; it was difficult for such organisations to face criticism constructively. Thus they easily lost contact with the ideas prevalent in society at large; to the outsider, their ideas often seemed merely ridiculous. Beatrice Webb, during her short essay in pressure group campaigning, found it "a curiously demoralising life", working amidst "the subservient and foolish admiration of followers".¹ These disadvantages, under which most 19th century reforming pressure groups laboured, help to explain the failure of the Alliance to adopt a more constructive approach to the drink problem.

But in addition to these organisational origins of blind faith, the Alliance was hindered from effectively campaigning against drunkenness by the "believing mentality" of its supporters. It would indeed be surprising if the religious

¹ B. Webb, Our Partnership, p. 432.

public had not carried over many of its religious attitudes into the sphere of social amelioration. For social reformers who in their religious life attached such importance to retaining a firm religious faith unshaken by intellectual inquiry, the modern association between social amelioration and rational investigation would have seemed incongruous. Processes of intellectual inquiry did not normally precede the sudden religious conversion too prevalent in mid-Victorian nonconformity. The enactment of the Permissive Bill was conceived as a form of nation-wide conversion experience, generated by emotional campaigning rather than by intellectual inquiry; it would bring a sudden and complete transformation of the life of the nation.

Thus alternative remedies for the drink problem were regarded not as helpful suggestions but as temptations to be spurned. The transition from concern with heavenly welfare to concern for earthly amelioration demanded the gradual abandonment of such anti-intellectualism; but the transition was gradual, and the Alliance refusal to advocate public inquiry or to promote constructive research into the drink question shows that its supporters, despite the transference of their interest to earthly amelioration, still needed to believe. The Alliance showed itself incapable of profiting from experience, unable to adapt its remedy in the light of new evidence. Indeed, once the final solution to the problem

had been discovered, new evidence, for the Alliance as for most sectarian bodies, was irrelevant.¹

More important than any of these factors in explaining Alliance "anti-intellectualism" was the fact that, despite its apparent resemblance to more modern campaigns for social amelioration, prohibitionism originated as a moral crusade. Unlike campaigns for improved housing, sanitary reform, unemployment relief or old age pensions - which in modern eyes might seem more urgently required reforms in the 1850s - the crusade against drunkenness offered special attractions to the nonconformists who supported it.

The influences acting on Edwin Chadwick, whose contemporaneous proposals for social reform were always carefully preceded by exhaustive social inquiry, differed markedly from those acting on the Alliance leaders. To the latter it seemed obvious that souls were being lost and that they could most rapidly be reclaimed through some form of moral transformation in the individual, or, failing that, through removing the peculiar temptations on which drunkenness flourished. Only later were temperance reformers led into painstaking investigation of the ecology of drunkenness. Only later did patient sociological and medical investigation seem relevant to the problem in hand.

¹ L. Coser, art. cit., p. 366.

Though in retrospect the Alliance seems a transitional body - midway between the old reforming campaign which concentrated on modifying the environment, in the 1850s it seemed simply the most recent in a long line of righteous protests against evils which had only to be recognised by society to be immediately removed, and which stemmed more from selfishness and apathy on the part of individuals than from the complex sociological consequences of economic change.

In conclusion, then, if the Alliance displayed political ineptitude, political irresponsibility, fanaticism and blind faith in its remedy - these qualities sprang naturally from the social background of its nonconformist supporters. There is indeed a strong similarity between the outlook of the mid-Victorian nonconformist prohibitionist in England and the mentality of his contemporaries, the out-and-out American intellectual opponents of slavery. Not only was there a direct interchange of ideas between the two; there was also a similar reform situation.

In both cases, individuals with authority failed to espouse the reforming cause. The English prohibitionist agitation never found its Wilberforce, and did not enjoy the support of aristocratic and established institutions until the 1870s, and even then it acquired only partial support. Between 1853 and 1869 the universities, the established church, parliament, the law, the services and even the philanthropic

world all averted their eyes from the liquor restrictionist crusade. Liquor restrictionists had been laughed out of parliament in 1834 and their views remained unrepresented there until the 1860s.

Both types of reformer found themselves in a rapidly-changing society, with uprooted immigrants, with new townships lacking in long-established traditional institutions, with a traditional hierarchy lacking in authority and a traditional church unable to adapt itself to rapid social change. In America, the relevant "frontier" was geographical, whereas in England it was economic. The social situation in the rapidly expanding industrial towns of the North of England and industrial Scotland whence came the strength of the Alliance, closely resembled the transatlantic social situation in the rapidity of its change and the fluidity of its institutions.¹

Like the American intellectual, the English nonconformist had not yet gained access to real political power. Though there were nonconformist M.P.s, the first Quaker had not been elected until 1832. Though one political party traditionally sympathised with their grievances, nonconformists were still normally expected to follow the political lead given from above. When, as in this particular sphere, no lead seemed

¹ S.M. Elkins, Slavery, pp. 158-163.

forthcoming, the nonconformist tradesmen and manufacturers who supported the Alliance were denied access to the customary means of channelling off their "gnawing sense of responsibility for the ills of society at large", they sought relief in the erratic and emotional "protest" remedy.

Like American abolitionism in the 1830s, English prohibitionism between 1853 and 1869 was "the anguished protest of an aggrieved class against a world they never made".¹ But whereas the American abolitionists came from a rural hierarchy now increasingly losing its authority to industrialists, the English prohibitionists came primarily from the industrial cities, whose middle-class and nonconformist leaders were gradually gaining in authority, who were no longer content with mere "toleration" but were anxious for recognition as a power in the land.

As long as the liquor restrictionists pursued social amelioration, their aims were quite reconcilable with mid-Victorian Liberalism, and to a lesser extent even with Conservatism. But as soon as they looked more to the sectional interests of nonconformity than to the national interest - as soon as their movement became a puritanical machine for holding together the nonconformist spiritual élite, for preserving it from worldly corruption, and for asserting the

¹ D. Donald, op. cit., p. 36.

social dignity of a minority - Liberal sympathisers anxious to prevent their party from remaining in perpetual Opposition began to feel uncomfortable, and most Conservatives were provoked into active hostility.

Nevertheless, if the unfamiliar attitudes adopted by the Alliance between 1853 and 1869, and even later, reflect the long years of social deprivation which its supporters had endured, the agitation against the drink trade did at least bring many nonconformists out of retirement, and encouraged them to engage actively in local and national government. It did not attract all nonconformists; the quietists still preferred the moral suasionist agitation and condemned political activity. Nor did it attract those nonconformists who, like Samuel Morley, Edward Bains or John Bright, were slowly accommodating themselves to the methods and mentality of the governing classes. But for the rest, the Alliance helped its nonconformist supporters to lose their inferiority complex, and thus helped towards healing the wound which had been festering in English society since 1662. Insofar as it succeeded in this it was of course, like other organisations of combative dissenters, preparing the way for its own demise.

CHAPTER EIGHT

NEITHER VICTORY NOR DEFEAT: SOME CONCLUSIONS

AND A NEW BEGINNING

The three campaigns for liquor restriction - for anti-spirits societies, teetotal societies and prohibition - share certain common characteristics. All three displayed sectarian tendencies: the B.F.T.S. mildly, the teetotal societies seriously, and the Alliance cripplingly. Since far-reaching claims for these remedies were made at the time, and since present-day liquor restrictionists still claim credit for much of the progress made during the 19th century in combating drunkenness, the liquor restrictionists must be put to the test.

How can the effectiveness of these three campaigns be measured? Not with any statistical precision. The prohibitionist experiment was never even attempted between 1828 and 1869, except in a few private estates; the other two liquor restrictionist remedies were applied only on a limited scale. Yet time lends objectivity to the view, and a knowledge of events after 1869 helps the historian to gauge the relative practicality of the three campaigns, considered exclusively (as contemporaries could seldom consider them) as remedies for the social problem of drunkenness.

I

Firstly, the statistical criticism of the liquor restrictionists. Such statistics as exist do not indicate that any striking decline in the incidence of drunkenness took place by 1869 despite over thirty years' energetic activity by the temperance movement in its three branches. The rate of growth in the number of drink licences fell behind that of butchers, bakers and drapers and even lagged behind population, and markedly behind the growth in the numbers of green-grocers, coffee- and eating-houses and manufacturers of non-intoxicating drinks.¹ But the divergence did not become marked until the 1870s.

Local directories show that drinksellers and drink manufacturers in the 1860s still accounted for a formidable proportion of local tradesmen and that there had been no marked decline in this proportion since the 1830s.² Banbury, for example, had 37 drinksellers in 1824 to 10 butchers and 21 tailor/drapers. In 1869 it had 90 drinksellers to only 20 butchers and 38 tailor/drapers. Preston had 229 drinksellers in 1834 to 56 butchers and 88 tailor/drapers; in 1864 it had 428 drinksellers to only 105 butchers and 175 tailor/

1 See Appendix, Table 31 & diagram 35.

2 See Appendix, diagram 36, table 32.

drapers.¹

Admittedly the rate of increase in the number of drink-sellers fell slightly behind that of traders in food and household goods; but it kept roughly level with the increases in population and in traders in clothing.² While in the 1820s and 1830s drink accounted for 12-18% of the total number of tradesmen listed for these towns, it still accounted for 8-16% after 30 years' liquor restrictionist activity.³ Census returns show that a marked relative decline in the number of drinksellers took place only in the 1870s and 1880s.⁴

What of consumption figures and the number of licences per head of population? Joseph Livesey himself recognised that these were embarrassing for his movement: "when we apply to the true test", he wrote "- the quantity of liquor consumed and the number of places that sell it - we find the facts are against us".⁵ First, per capita consumption. Comparing the two five-year periods 1825-9 and 1865-9, United Kingdom per capita consumption of spirits fell from 1.10

1 See Appendix, table 33.

2 See Appendix, table 34.

3 See Appendix, table 32, diagram 36.

4 See Appendix, diagrams 37-41.

5 J. Livesey, Autobiography, p. 76.

proof gallons to 0.97; but wine rose from 0.30 proof gallons to 0.45. Comparing the years 1830-4 and 1865-9, the per capita consumption of beer in the United Kingdom rose from 21.6 gallons to 28.8. The mid-Victorian rise in per capita alcohol consumption which for beer had begun in the 1850s, for wine in the early 1860s and for spirits in the late 1860s - did not tail off till the late 1870s.¹ The number of licences per head of population declined slightly - 1 licence to 168 people in 1831 as against 1 licence to 201 people in 1871; but here too the really rapid decline came after 1871.²

Fluctuations in per capita licence figures, however, are as much an index to licensing policy as to drunkenness; nor do per capita consumption figures necessarily indicate the incidence of drunkenness, which it was the aim of the temperance movement to reduce. Consumption figures, moreover, are marred by decline in home brewing, illicit distilling and smuggling during the period. The inadequacy of arrest statistics as a guide to the prevalence of drunkenness has already been discussed. The historian is therefore forced back on contemporary subjective impressions, which do not

1 See Appendix, table 2.

2 See Appendix, table 1.

precisely dovetail with the statistical evidence. Though H.A. Bruce in 1872, together with several of his contemporaries, commented on the recent decline in drunkenness, a glance at the statistics was he said, "by no means reassuring".¹

But even if these subjective impressions are correct, they do not prove that the liquor restrictionists had been successful. Firstly, the diminution in drunkenness may owe as much to the increased consumption of food as to any reduction in the consumption of intoxicants. Per capita consumption of food rose more rapidly during this period than that of intoxicants.² Habitual intoxication, according to the Anti-Bread Tax Circular of 1843 was caused "by the absence of healthful and sufficient food, and of all home comforts".³ Early 19th century working men were often faced with a choice between eating and drinking. Drink, in early 19th century England as in some modern primitive societies, was often chosen in preference to food.⁴ But during the 1850s, many working people moved above the income level where "other

1 3 Hansard 211, c. 489 (8 May 1872); cf. Gladstone, in Alliance Weekly News, 24 Mar. 1860, p. 965.

2 3 Hansard 218, c. 637 (1874 budget speech).

3 Anti-Bread Tax Circular, 11 Apr. 1843, p. 116.

4 A.I. Richards, Hunger & Work in a Savage Tribe, 1932, p. 99.

advantages sometimes seem preferable to a sufficiency of food", or at least could afford to combine eating with drinking.¹ A decline in drunkenness would well accompany an undiminished liquor consumption in these circumstances - it need owe nothing to the liquor restrictionist.²

Again, the liquor restrictionists can hardly claim credit for initiating an improvement in sobriety which began before their movement was founded. By general agreement, the improvement in upper class sobriety had begun during the late 18th century, and if Place is to be believed, a labour aristocracy distinguished by personal habits of sobriety had crystallised out in London some years before 1828.³

Nor can the liquor restrictionists be credited with initiating the gradual change in taste (still in progress⁴) from stronger to weaker types of intoxicant; if Bass's brewery increased production sixfold between 1831 and 1847, teetotalers, who advocated the complete abandonment of all types of intoxicant could hardly claim to be responsible.⁵ Further-

1 A.E. Richards, Land, Labour & Diet in Northern Rhodesia, 1939, p. 399.

2 Cf. G. Lolli, Alcohol in Italian Culture, Illinois, 1958, p. 71.

3 See above, pp. 31 & 32.

4 J. Barr, 'Changing Tastes in Food', New Society, 4 Feb. 1865, p. 8.

5 E.M. Sigsworth, 'Science & the Brewing Industry', Econ. Hist. Rev., Apr. 1965, p. 544.

more, the decline in the consumption of port and porter, and the increased taste for light Burton beers and French wines began at a social level where liquor restrictionists had little influence.¹ "It is a mark now that a man is not a gentleman if he gets drunk", said Roebuck in 1856.² Liquor restrictionists were not responsible for the abandonment of long after-dinner port-drinking sessions. These came under attack with the early 19th century growth of "lunch" and postponement of "dinner" from 5 or 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. or later.³ The change was promoted by Prince Albert in the 1840s, when he left the dining room fifteen minutes before the rest of the men and immediately joined the ladies.⁴ Light wines consumed during dinner replaced after-dinner port. In 1851 G.R. Porter maintained that this revolution since the late 18th century was "one of the greatest, if indeed it be not the greatest reformation that society has witnessed".⁵

Two liquor restrictionist defences remain. Firstly, they

1 C.H. Denyer, art. cit., p. 46; G.W.E. Russell, Collections & Recollections, II, 1909 Edn., p. 300; D.M. Knox, op. cit., pp. 11-13; J. Burnett, op. cit., p. 51; J.A. Banks, op. cit., p. 68.

2 Sheffield & Rotherham Independent, 15 Nov. 1856.

3 J.C. Drummond & A. Wilbraham, op. cit., p. 106.

4 R. Fulford, The Prince Consort, 1949, p. 101.

5 G.R. Porter, Progress of the Nation, 1851 Edn., p. 675.

could argue that but for their agitation the increase in 19th century per capita liquor consumption figures would have been still greater. Certainly, in combating drunkenness, the liquor restrictionists were fighting an uphill battle during the unprecedented mid-Victorian prosperity, since affluence had traditionally prompted increased drinking.¹ But the liquor restrictionists can never be conclusively defended along these lines.

More plausible is the defence that the real effects of the liquor restrictionist agitation between 1828 and 1869 were felt only during the 1870s and 1880s, and that to cut off the story at 1869 does them an injustice. Marked progress was certainly made after 1869 in reducing the number of drinksellers per head of population, in reducing their number in relation to other occupations and in reducing per capita liquor consumption figures: liquor restrictionists were undoubtedly active in these decades: but proof of causal connexion is unfortunately not forthcoming.

Even if credit is given to the liquor restrictionists for the more favourable late-Victorian situation, they have still to meet a second criticism - that of bad tactics. Did

¹ T.S. Ashton, 'Economic Fluctuations 1790-1850', Econ. Hist. Rev., 1954-5, p. 380.

they employ their resources to the best purpose in their campaign against drunkenness? Firstly, progress was slow, particularly in relation to the claims which liquor restrictionists put forward for their remedy. Holyoake complained that they promoted "comparatively the tardiest and most inefficient advocacy that the nineteenth century has seen".¹ The complaint was echoed by Livesey: "in the early days", he wrote in the 1860s, "we felt that we were really engaged in a "Temperance Reformation". We gave heart and soul to it We seemed as if we would turn the world upside down. We scarcely feel in this mode now".²

The early teetotalers thought they would soon win the whole nation to teetotalism, yet it is clear that even in the 1860s they still constituted only a small minority within the nation. It is almost as difficult to measure the number of teetotalers between 1833 and 1869 as to measure the incidence of drunkenness. The membership of teetotal societies incessantly fluctuated and changed;³ though national teetotal organisations tried to secure accurate statistics of member-

1 G.J. Holyoake, Social Means of Promoting Temperance, p. 20; cf. Thos. Hodgskin, in Economist, 10 Nov. 1855, p. 1235.

2 Quo. in Western Temperance Herald, 1 July 1868, p. 100.

3 Temperance Spectator, 1 May 1861, p. 74.

ship from their auxiliaries, they were seldom successful. The absence of such figures, said Dawson Burns in 1862, was "not very creditable" to the movement.¹

Several estimates were made during the 1840s. The British Temperance Advocate in 1841 claimed, without supporting evidence, that there were four million teetotalers in the United Kingdom.² Certainly Father Mathew was making Irish recruits in hundreds of thousands at the time. But many of these were ephemeral, and the National Temperance Society mentioned a figure of one million.³ Peter Burne's Teetotaler's Companion in 1847 and Cook's National Temperance Magazine in 1844 hazarded 1,200,000.⁴ This estimate was based on the fact that returns of teetotal membership from places with a population of 1,830,877 produced 96,034 teetotalers. Assuming that this proportion was representative of the nation as a whole, an estimate could thus be made of national strength.⁵

1 1862 Prohibition Convention Report, p. 281; cf. J.M. Ludlow & Lloyd Jones, The Progress of the Working Class, 1832-1867 (1867), p. 247, & Dawson Burns in Alliance Weekly News, 30 June 1860, p. 1021.

2 British Temperance Advocate, 15 Aug. 1841, p. 85.

3 Bristol Temperance Herald, July 1844, p. 50.

4 P. Burne, op. cit., p. 350.

5 National Temperance Magazine, June 1844, p. 256.

Clearly these are guesses. More profitable is to concentrate on the active teetotalers - that is, those who contributed to temperance society funds or who read teetotal periodicals.

The National Temperance League, one of the three leading English restrictionist societies, listed a membership of 52,241 in 1849.¹ In 1856 it found that the 80 societies responding to its questionnaire claimed 33,357 pledged members.² Since the League was primarily based on the South of England, its membership figure is far smaller than the total number of teetotalers in the country. The number of subscribers to the national teetotal societies is much smaller: these were the hard core of comparatively wealthy and energetic workers. Only 979 individuals in England and Wales contributed to the League funds in the year 1861-2. The United Kingdom Alliance, whose subscribers were not necessarily teetotalers, counted 1155 donors in England and Wales in 1859-60, but by 1868-9 this figure had risen to 3074. Many teetotalers contributed locally rather than nationally; in some localities the proportion of teetotalers to total population was quite high. In Preston in 1835 there were 1,500 teetotalers in a population of over 40,000; in

1 National Temperance Chronicle, Aug. 1849, p. 506.

2 National Temperance League, Annual Rept., 1856, pp. 24-6.

Middlesborough in 1851, 1214 teetotalers of all sexes and ages in a population of 7,000; and one in five of the population of Frome in the 1860s.¹

The Alliance in 1861 claimed to issue 58,000 membership cards of enrolment to individual subscribing members, and to be linked with over 1000 temperance societies and auxiliaries.² The Temperance Permanent Provident Institution at this time enjoyed an annual income of £114,000, and the Temperance Permanent Building Society £77,000; but as late as 1870 the Rechabite teetotal friendly society had an adult membership of only 15,402.³

Another means of assessing the number of teetotalers was through the circulation of teetotal periodicals. The monthly National Temperance Advocate in 1843, one of the leading temperance periodicals of the day, claimed a circulation of 9,500 per number; this meant a much higher readership.⁴ By 1858 the liquor restrictionists were producing two quarterly

1 Preston Temperance Advocate, Suppl. for 1835; Bristol Temperance Herald, Apr. 1851, p. 58; B.M. Addit. MSS. 44188 (Gladstone Papers), f. 42: Newman Hall to Gladstone, 11 May 1865.

2 Temperance Spectator, 1 May 1861, p. 74.

3 Quo. in National Temperance League, Annual Rept., 1860-1, p. 19; Robert Highet, op. cit., p. 501; cf. Appendix, diagram 32.

4 National Temperance Advocate, 15 Nov. 1843, p. 133.

reviews, four weeklies and about ten monthly papers, though many of these enjoyed only a small circulation.¹ The Alliance Weekly News in 1859 enjoyed a circulation of 14-15,000, but much of this, as with most teetotal periodicals, was accounted for in free distribution.

William Tweedie, the temperance publisher, told Baines in 1861 that in 1860-1 there were 13 large temperance associations in the kingdom, employing 40 paid lecturers, and enjoying a united annual income of £22,000; there were three weekly newspapers with a united circulation of 25,000 weekly, and six monthly magazines with a united circulation of over 20,000; there were also temperance quarterlies and periodicals for children. On this basis, Tweedie estimated that there were three million teetotalers of all ages in the United Kingdom, but that three-quarters of these did not belong to teetotal societies.²

Newman Hall thought this an exaggeration, and that two million would be more accurate.³ T.H. Barker's 1861 estimate was also more cautious. Excluding several hundred child

1 Saturday Review, 25 Dec. 1858, p. 641.

2 Baines reported Tweedie's estimate in parliament. His speech is quoted in National Temperance League, Annual Rept., 1860-1, p. 19.

3 B.M. Addit. MS., 44188 (Gladstone Papers), f. 42: Newman Hall to Gladstone, 11 May 1865.

members of the Band of Hope, he felt that there could not be less than 900,000 adult teetotalers in England and Wales. Many of these were influential - they included the 3,000 clergy who signed the ministerial declaration, and at least some of the 2,000 doctors who signed the medical certificate.¹

The general impression conveyed in the 1860s is thus one of an influential and literate minority of zealous "opinion makers", particularly in the labour aristocracy and religious denominations, numbering well under 100,000. The efforts of this minority seem to have affected the personal habits of at least a million individuals, but many of these were not active members of teetotal societies. There were, in addition, several hundred thousand child teetotalers in the Band of Hope. This was a formidable spearhead, but it was no "reformation". Drunkenness still remained, after thirty years of teetotal advocacy, an obtrusive and flagrant evil; teetotal membership was geographically patchy; the movement had done no more than insulate an élite from temptation; it had not transformed the habits of society as a whole.

Furthermore, although teetotalers influenced many who never joined their societies, they also antagonised many by the absurdity of their statements. Dickens referred indignantly

¹ Temperance Spectator, 1 May 1861, p. 74.

in 1844 to "that monstrous doctrine which sets down as the consequences of Drunkenness, fifty thousand miseries which are, as all reflective persons known, and daily see, the wretched causes of it".¹ And in blaming drinking habits for the miseries of the Cotton Famine many restrictionists lost their sense of proportion.²

A second "tactical" complaint made against the liquor restrictionists was that they showed apathy or positive hostility towards the counter-attractive policy. They persistently under-estimated the influence of environment on character; or if they recognised it, their attention was directed exclusively to the influence of drinkshops on the individual. It was absurd to claim that the individual could be transformed merely by signing the pledge; to concentrate on transforming the nation through mere prohibition. J.C. Farn, one of the more imaginative temperance reformers expelled by the movement in the 1830s, noticed that "~~most~~ of our reformed drunkards were spiritless...men that did not seem to enjoy life". Mere pledge-signing had not removed this disability. Farn pointed out that a work on the physiology of individual drunkenness had yet to be written.³ It

1 C. Dickens, Letters (Nonesuch Edn. 1938), p. 563: Dickens to Theodore Compton, 26 Jan. 1844.

2 Weekly Record, 21 Feb. 1863, p. 87.

3 Reasoner, 28 Oct. 1857, p. 245.

would be "a prosperous day" for the nation , said Kay-Shuttleworth in 1874, when liquor restrictionists diverted their energies into demanding from parliament "such measures for improving the condition of the people as would supply them with strength to resist temptation".¹

For individuals or nations who would not totally abandon intoxicants , the liquor restrictionists did little. Their national organisations made little effort to curtail opening hours , except when motivated by sabbatarian zeal; nor did they recommend that drink taxes be increased. On the contrary, the latter would implicate the whole nation in a wicked trade and would make drinking respectable and even patriotic."What is it... which makes the sale of ... strong drink, respectable?" asked a temperance periodical in 1842:"...Is it not surely this - that the whole system is hedged round with government sanctions - with the implied approbation of the wise, the pious , and the good - that the revenue of the country is largely supplied by it...?"²

Liquor restrictionists had little success until the 1870s with the temperance hotel, the coffee shop and the eating place, and by that time their philanthropic efforts were largely superfluous. They gave little help to the water reformers or to the drinking fountain movement. Despite individual

1. 3 Hansard 220, c.22 (17 June 1874).

2. British & Foreign Temperance Intelligencer, 9 Apr 1842, p.113; cf. above, pp.528-9.

exceptions , they were suspected of puritanical attitudes towards recreation. Certainly many teetotalers of the 1860s protested against the introduction of recreative interludes into the temperance meeting , and of "trashy tales" into temperance periodicals.¹

Teetotalers often resembled sabbatarians in requiring the individual altogether to shun a pleasure which in some circumstances might lead to abuse.² Too often they tried to make sin ugly by depriving the drinking place of all auxiliary attractions. Liquor restriction was but one aspect of the "abstinent attitude" displayed by 19th century nonconformists. It was one branch of the policy of removing social ills through individual moral reform. Thus one could avoid responsibility for war by abstaining from fighting , and escape the temptations of sexual immorality through shunning the theatre and the novel. Such a policy was easily transmuted into an attempt to separate out the chosen people from the unregenerate mass, and owed much to a fundamental lack of self-confidence in the face of suffering and sin.

The modern sentiment that "one owes oneself leisure" was of course comparatively rare at this time,³ and liquor restrictionist attitudes must be seen against the background of

1. e.g. T. Beggs, op.cit., pp. 26-8; Devon & Cornwall Temperance Journal, May 1868, p. 73; Staunch Teetotaler, July 1867, p. 109.

2. cf. G. Combe, Moral Philosophy, 1840, p. 97.

3. D. Riesman, 'Themes of Work & Play in the Structure of Freud's Thought', in Individualism Reconsidered, 1954, p. 332.

contemporary attitudes. Furthermore, many individual teetotalers pursued counter-attractive policies and helped establish parks, libraries and clubs. Individual teetotalers supported many contemporary reforming causes - from the Anti-Corn Law League to Complete Suffrage, from the Freehold Movement to the Reform League, from the Jamaica Committee to the Contagious Diseases Agitation.

The reluctance of the official temperance movement to engage in counter-attractive policies owed as much to lack of funds as to lack of inclination; the movement's limitations, said F.W.Newman, stemmed largely from "the position, culture, and means of those by whom it was chiefly carried on".¹ As soon as the temperance movement attracted wealthy support for the first time in the 1870s, it immediately began branching out into counter-attractionist ventures.

A third "tactical" complaint. The liquor restrictionists tended to condemn and even obstruct any rival attempt to solve the drink problem. Bolstering up the existing licensing system, said the prohibitionists, was worse than leaving it alone; moderate drinkers, said many teetotalers, set a more dangerous example than drunkards.

Yet if liquor restrictionists are to be condemned for this tendency, many successful reforming movements must also be criticised along these grounds. The C.O.S. denounced all other remedies for the problem of poverty without showing that

1. Alliance Weekly News, 4 Feb 1860, p.938; cf. H. Solly, Working Mens' Clubs & Institutions, 1865, p.5.

its own remedy was likely to be more effective; they branded indiscriminate relief as more harmful than no relief at all, just as Josephine Butler branded all schemes for safeguarding the health of prostitutes through state control as worse than leaving them entirely alone.¹

To condemn liquor restrictionist for his exclusive devotion to one remedy would be to condemn Richard Cobden, whose correspondence before 1846 was almost exclusively concerned with the free trade issue. "I really was not aware", he wrote in 1851 after looking through his letters, "...how completely I had isolated my mind upon the one topic".² Just as Wilfrid Lawson brushed off Chadwick's suggestions for water reform, so Cobden brushed off the sanitary reformers before 1846: "they told us that the people wanted water and wanted good houses....but did they ever hear of people short of food keeping themselves clean or warm, or being comfortably housed?"³

More to the point is a fourth "tactical" objection to the liquor restrictionists - the complaint that they devoted

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- 1 C.L. Mowat, Charity Organisation Society, 1961, p. 131; A.S.G. Butler, Josephine Butler, pp. 60, 87.
 - 2 Sussex County Record Office, Cobden MSS. : No. 30: Cobden to Ashworth, 14 Sep. 1851.
 - 3 Quo. in The League, 11 Jan. 1845, p. 244; cf. M.H. Dawson, Richard Cobden & Foreign Policy, 1926, p. 109.

too much money and energy to literary propaganda. Ignorance of its ultimate consequences was not the reason for the prevalence of drunkenness among 19th century working men; if their immediate miseries could be assuaged, they were prepared to take the long-term risk. The temperance reformer's concentration on distributing literature reflects his tendency to denounce vice rather than to seek its cure. Such denunciation simply increased the miseries of those who had already succumbed to temptation, and made it all the more likely that their drunkenness would degenerate into alcoholism. As soon as society makes drunkenness disgraceful, the drunkard has to withdraw from society; once this occurs, his fate is usually sealed.¹

Cruikshank claimed that three most powerful enemies of the temperance movement were ignorance, appetite and custom; the liquor restrictionists devoted too much energy to attacks on the first, and too little to attacks on the second and third. Mayhew saw a man who had vigorously praised Cruikshank's Bottle drunk three hours afterwards, and Kohl observed that a quarter of the audience watching a temperance drama were drunk.² Propaganda alone was seldom sufficient. Dunlop, agitating against drink usages and trying to secure medical declarations against alcohol, found his efforts much obstructed by the tendency to concentrate on spectacular forms

1. cf. E.M. Lemert, Alcohol & the North-West Coast Indians, pp. 364-5; R. Benedict, The Chrysanthemum & the Sword, 1947, p. 189.

2. H. Mayhew, London Labour, I, p. 25; J.G. Kohl, England, Ireland & Scotland, 1844, pp. 54-5; cf. Cruikshank, quo. in Bristol Temperance Herald, Dec 1850, p. 184.

of advocacy, rather than on quiet and steady work.¹

One final criticism of the tactics pursued by the liquor restrictionists: though all parties admitted the serious lack of precise information on the drink problem, the Archbishop of Canterbury, in 1876 after nearly half a century of liquor restrictionist activity, was struck when reading the licensing debates of the House of Commons with a sense of "the extreme uncertainty which often existed as to the facts of the particular question under consideration".² Liquor restrictionists held to their panaceas and only collected evidence which would support them. Yet the absence of state inspectors in this sphere made it particularly necessary to obtain detailed information on which appropriate legislation could be founded.

Liquor restrictionists approached their problem with no genuine sense of inquiry. In this they resembled Wilberforce, who began reading a book having decided on the propositions requiring to be proved and then marked up the passages which supported these propositions.³ This approach was perhaps justifiable in exposing an evil, but not in

1 J. Dunlop, Autobiography, p. 279 (19 Nov. 1846).

2 3 Hansard 230, c. 722 (30 June 1876).

3 R.S. & I. Wilberforce, Life, III, pp. 203-4.

prescribing the remedy. Nobody disagreed with the liquor restrictionists in deploring the evils of drink: it was the liquor restrictionists' remedy that was in question.

Edwin Chadwick stressed before the 1834 Committee and in his sanitary report the need to provide counter-attractions to the public-house; he emphasised that "when intemperance is mentioned as the cause of disease...on carrying investigation a little further back,discomfort is found to be the immediate antecedent to the intemperance".¹ Yet his suggestions went unheeded by the national temperance organisations. Furthermore, in his several social inquiries Chadwick provided models of social investigation which temperance reformers never imitated. The attitude displayed by 19th century liquor restrictionists too closely resembles that of their supporter Joseph Sturge: "his weakness was that , with all his ready sympathy, he looked much less at causes than at effects, and never penetrated below the surface ills of the society which he so ardently desired to reform".²

II

Most important of all the "tactical" objections is the accusation that the 19th century temperance movement was too closely tied to religious objectives. Joseph Livesey often complained of the way in which such policies narrowed the base of the movement. "Instead of making teetotalism a diet-

1. Sanitary Report, (Ed. M. W. Flinn, Edinburgh 1965), p. 203.

2. G. D. H. Cole, Chartist Portraits, 1941, p. 186.

etic and hygienic question", he complained, "- of embedding it in physiology - and advocating it on moral , social , domestic and national grounds , it has become regarded by too many as a useful expedient only , for the furtherance of denominational religion".¹

Livesey and John Dunlop persistently opposed sectarianism within their movement , which Livesey feared would soon be "dwindling into a mere formal service; the work to be done merely speaking at the 'hall', and that chiefly by a paid agent"² He denounced any attempt in the 1850s to eliminate from teetotal advocacy those rough working men who had lent such dynamism to the movement in the 1830s . He feared the distractions which would beset the movement if it began to purchase property; he condemned expenditure of money on banners, and expenditure of time on presenting testimonials to temperance leaders.

He also deplored the charging of entrance fees to temperance meetings. One teetotaler complained in 1842 that when he visited some temperance meetings "the door has been opened very slowly and cautiously, and some person has peeped out rather suspiciously , as if the inmates were hatching treason!" While teetotalers on the platform were zealously calling upon all to join their movement , the officials at the door were carefully excluding all who most needed to come in, and thus ensuring that the speaker addressed only the converted.³

1. Quo. in Western Temperance Herald, 1 July 1868, p.101.

2. Livesey's Progressionist, I, No.15, p.222.

3. British & Foreign Temperance Intelligencer, 16 Apr 42, p.124.

Yet if the temperance meeting is seen as a recreational activity for individuals otherwise starved of entertainment, the imposition of an entrance fee seems quite reasonable.

By the 1840s , accusations of sectarianism were often being made against the liquor restrictionists, notably by the Teetotal Chartists. The Cornwall Teetotal Journal of 1842 admitted that many teetotalers misinterpreted the text "come out from among the ungodly, and be ye separate"¹. Far from seeking out the drunkards, they tended to congregate together as a spiritual and moral élite. For many of their members ,the adoption of teetotalism meant,not a transformed life,but merely a changed attitude.²

Livesey regularly urged liquor restrictionists to visit drunkards personally.³ "I would rather have one good plain disinterested teetotaler", he said , "who gives every week what time he has to spare to the cause , than fifty vice-presidents who do little or nothing".⁴ Nevertheless, the confessions of reformed drunkards which featured in teetotal periodicals of the 1830s had vanished from the liquor restrictionist press by the 1860s.

Livesey could not single-handed hold up tendencies which from the first had been mounting within the liquor

1. Cornwall Teetotal Journal, Nov 1842, p.166.

2. cf. G.H. Barnes, The Anti-Slavery Impulse, 1830-1844, New York, 1933, p.25; & D.J. Pittman, & C.R. Snyder (Eds.), Society, Culture & Drinking Patterns, New York, 1962, p.191.

3. e.g. J. Pearce, op.cit., pp.cxlvi, cxlii, cxliii, cxliiii, cxliiii, cxliiii.

4. ibid., p.cxxxi.

restrictionist movement. Its respectability was greatly increased during the 1860s when the religious denominations grew more sympathetic. "When I knew more about them than now a very large portion were infidels", said J.R. Stephens in 1867 of teetotalers in the 1840s: "they would not go to church or chapel, and now they have lecturers and reverend gentlemen amongst them of a very stiffnecked character".¹

While Stephens correctly emphasised the prevalence of infidelity among teetotalers in the 1840s, the official temperance movement had always been, in J.C. Farn's words, "a mere recruiting agency for the parsonocracy".² In its anti-spirits phase it had attracted support from some of the leading members of the Evangelical public, and even in its teetotal phase it had been dominated by nonconformists and Quakers, and had extruded members who embraced dangerous theological notions. John Finch and J.C. Farn were valuable and imaginative temperance reformers driven from the movement by its religious sectarianism in the 1830s. Farn was shunned by teetotalers when he ventured to affirm the value of morality without religion.³

It seems that by the 1860s, sectarian tendencies within the liquor restrictionist movement had proceeded far enough to eliminate the flavour of working class self-

1. Ashton Reporter, 13 Apr 1867.

2. Reasoner, 28 Oct 1857, p. 245.

3. ibid.

assertion which had driven away respectable supporters in the 1830s. "Respectability", which for obscure reasons had become less suspicious by the 1860s of the temperance movement's emphasis on "works", was thus enabled to return, and the less extreme policies which had died with the B.F.T.S. to reappear in the movement. Thus the sectarianism, which from the short-term viewpoint seriously damaged the liquor restrictionist movement in the early Victorian period, actually helped it in the late-Victorian period to gain access to funds and to more prudent policies. Its early history illustrates well the dilemmas with which 19th century reform movements were faced.

The energies of many teetotal organisations between 1828 and 1869 tended to be dissipated in doctrinal controversy ; in pursuing consistency they often lost sight of sobriety. Instead of uniting against the foe , they often squabbled among themselves as to the different means by which he could be routed; instead of seeking genuine removal of the drink problem, they often used teetotal principles simply as a means of "setting a standard", and were not unduly alarmed when the majority of mankind failed to live up to it. No doubt the parallel furnished by the history of Christianity itself was often in their minds.

There was probably also , though this is impossible to prove, much hypocrisy. The prevalence of the phrase "methody

drinking" in the North of England suggests that this was so. Hypocrisy was, indeed, a common and perhaps necessary weapon by which 19th century England was civilised - it was "the result of the attempt to lay claim to new standards of conduct which proved to be too hard to maintain consistently".¹

Coupled with the tendency among the liquor restriction-ists to content themselves with "setting standards" was their tendency to content themselves with the pious exculpatory protest, as in the case of the National Temperance League's exhortation to electoral sobriety in 1868 which the Times found so distasteful.² Certainly the tendency to denounce evil instead of helping to remove it - a tendency which Place divined in the anti-spirits movement as early as 1834 -³ became very widespread: the movement too often became a means by which the barrier between the unrespectable poor and their social superiors could be rigidified rather than lowered. The small proportion of teetotal societies consisting of reformed drunkards in the 1840s is a testimony to this unfortunate development.⁴

Again, the campaign for liquor restriction often became

1 G. Kitson Clark, op. cit., p. 64.

2 Times, 31 Oct. 1868, p. 9.

3 cf. G.H. Barnes, op. cit., p. 25; and see above pp. 105-6

4 See above, p. 174

a means by which the guilt-feelings of the respectable classes could be syphoned off without prompting any radical transformation of the social structure. The tendency has been noted in an extreme degree in the United Kingdom Alliance, but the desire to acquit oneself of responsibility for sin was always present in the teetotal movement. "How long shall this Traffic continue to be licensed by a Christian government", asked one teetotal periodical in 1839.¹

Livesey feared in the 1860s that these sectarian tendencies in the temperance campaign would be accentuated by the accession of religious support. The process began with the Anglicans in the late 1850s. The reasons for this change in the attitude of many Anglican clergymen are obscure, since those who recommended the change were perhaps deliberately vague about their motives. The reasons provided in Dean Close's Why I Have Taken the Pledge, published in 1860, do not give any general explanation for the widespread change of heart. The historian must fall back on conjecture, taking the widest possible view of the Christian situation in the mid-Victorian period.

The change seems to have begun in 1856-7. There had been a short-lived Church of England Temperance Society founded

¹ British & Foreign Temperance Intelligencer, 31 Aug. 1839, pp. 345-6; cf. S.M. Elkins, Slavery, p. 164.

in 1840, and a few clergymen had always been ready to support teetotalism; but the initiative in organising them as a coherent body within the Anglican church was taken by Revd. Stopford J. Ram, Evangelical vicar of Pavenham, who tried during 1857 to compile a list of Anglican abstainers.¹ Interest in teetotalism was greatly enhanced by the Evangelical wife of a Shrewsbury vicar, Mrs. Wightman, who found teetotalism extremely helpful in converting local working men to Christianity in 1858.² She wrote about her experience in a most influential book, Haste To the Rescue! The book became popular at just the time when the links between teetotalism and religious recruiting became apparent in the Ulster revivals of 1859.

Mrs. Wightman was strongly influenced by a fellow-Evangelical Catherine Marsh, and the transition of the Anglican church towards teetotal activity apparently owes much to a group of energetic Evangelicals - precisely the group which had rejected teetotal campaigning 20 years before. Ram advertised in the press during 1859, asking all abstaining clergy to contact him; he received 158 answers. An address was then published, signed by 112 teetotal clergymen from all parts of England. The list included several clergy-

¹ Weekly Record, 9 May 1857, p. 157.

² See Appendix, Plate 89.

men who had long supported teetotalism - notably W.W. Robinson, Henry Gale and William Caine.¹

The address claimed that drinking customs were frustrating all contemporary efforts for the social and religious improvement of the people. Clergymen laboured with tracts and sermons, but still "the hideous assemblages" in drinking places outnumbered their own congregations on Sunday evenings. Special instruments must be employed against special evils: teetotal association would remove one impediment to salvation. The clergy must set an example by themselves abstaining; their motive must be Christian charity rather than Christian duty or Biblical injunction. Teetotalism was quite compatible with health. "Is it not drink above all things which.... keeps back numbers from the house of God", the address perorated: "which degrades the masses of society and mars almost every effort to win souls to Christ?"

Evangelical links with this change in policy again become apparent from analysing the signatories of 1859. Headed by the arch-Evangelical Dean Close and concluded by the Evangelical Ram, six of its first nine signatories were Evangelicals:² the list includes an Associate Secretary of the Society for Promoting Christianity Among the Jews, an Associate Secretary

1 Weekly Record, 8 Oct. 1859, p. 380.

2 Information kindly provided by Revd. J.S. Reynolds.

of the C.M.S. and three Associate Secretaries of a church society much loved by the Evangelicals - the Church Pastoral Aid Society. If those signatories identifiable in the subscription lists of the 1859 annual report of the Church Pastoral Aid Society are assumed to be Evangelicals, 45 of the 112 clergymen on the 1859 list are certain Evangelicals, 7 possible; on 58 there is no information. Many leading Evangelicals however are absent from the list - which includes no bishops and few distinguished clergymen. It is possible that in the 1860s the temperance movement profited from the same thirst for social amelioration among Evangelicals which gave T.H. Green his disciples:¹ - that Anglicans who espoused the teetotal cause in the 1860s wished to urge society, like another prominent Englishman reared by Evangelicals, to "give up your carburetted hydrogen ghost in one healthy expiration, and look after Lazarus at the doorstep".²

In 1860 Revd. Robert Maguire, Vicar of Clerkenwell, and in 1861 Canon Ellison, Vicar of Windsor, signed the address. The drawing-room meetings of Samuel Bowly and Mrs. Fison, organised by the National Temperance League, together with the League's distribution of over 10,000 copies of Haste to

1 M. Richter, Politics of Conscience, 1964, p. 31.

2 Ruskin, quo. in J.D. Rosenberg, The Darkening Glass, 1961, p. 156.

the Rescue! to every clergyman in the kingdom, helped create the favourable atmosphere within which in 1862 the Church of England Total Abstinence Society (later the Church of England Temperance Society) was created. Indeed, the National Temperance League claimed credit for its foundation.¹

Dean Close became president, Rev. H.J. Ellison Chairman of Committee, Maguire and Ram secretaries. by 1864 the C.E.T.S. could list 491 teetotal clergy in England and Wales, the leading dioceses in 1866 being London with 9.8% of the total, Lichfield with 8.6% and Manchester with 7.4%. The familiar pattern of urban dominance, with London surrounded by relative apathy was repeated here as with the Alliance, though with a greater proportion of support from the West Midlands and less from the South-West. The relative predominance of support in the North East would appear even more striking if related to the number of clergy in each diocese, since Anglican clergy were thickest on the ground in the South.²

An analysis of 2760 abstaining ministers and clergy of 1866 shows a marked rise in the Anglican proportion - from

1 National Temperance League, Annual Rept., 1862-3, p. 38; Weekly Record, 25 Jan. 1862, p. 29; National Temperance League, Annual Rept., 1861-2, p. 17.

2 See Appendix, diagram 33.

4% in the 1848 declaration to 22%. Wesleyans still contributed the relatively small proportion of 7%. Only one Wesleyan preached a temperance sermon in 1862 as against 16 Anglicans, 16 Baptists, 9 Congregationalists, 3 Presbyterians, 2 Primitive Methodists and one Wesleyan Reformer.¹ Congregationalists at 19% in 1866 included nearly a quarter of their total ministry; Primitive Methodists, 15%, Calvinistic Methodists 12%, Baptists 9%. The Wesleyans showed, however, in their petitions for the Sunday Closing Bill in 1863 that they could overwhelm all other denominations with the number of their petitions whenever the sabbatarian issue was allied to liquor restriction. The increase by 1866 in the total number of ministerial abstainers shows that the temperance cause was progressing in all denominations.²

Liquor restriction became increasingly popular in the religious world of the 1870s. J.R. Stephens surprised a Sunday Closing meeting in 1867 when he said he was quite prepared to meet working men in public houses.³ By 1870 Bishop Frazer of Manchester provoked a storm by his claim that bitter beer was a good preparation for a sermon.⁴ In 1877

1 Weekly Record, 7 Feb. 1863, p. 58.

2 See Appendix, diagram 13.

3 Ashton Reporter, 13 Apr. 1867, pp. 6-7.

4 J. Barker, Autobiography (1880), p. 118.

Canon Harper of Selby was a lone voice in pleading that clergymen should visit the public-house so as to be sociable with their parishioners. The public-house, he said, "should be indeed a house for the public good"; he felt that the presence of the parson would ensure good order. He could also meet parishioners there who were never seen in Church. The Church of England Temperance Society dismissed his arguments high-handedly.¹ In the dissenting denominations too, the denominational temperance society was gaining ground and activities hitherto confined to week-nights were absorbing an increasing proportion of attention on Sunday.

The Christian crusade against Evil was rapidly becoming a crusade against the public-house. "It is not in bowing the knee to idols that idolatry consists", wrote Wilberforce, "so much as in the internal homage of the heart".² The attitude became increasingly prevalent in the 1860s which Revd. W.R. Baker had displayed in his book The Idolatry of Britain, and which Cruikshank had portrayed in his picture "The Worship of Bacchus", an attitude resembling the view of Prynne and several 17th century opponents of health-drinking, that drinking customs constitute a kind of heathen worship subversive of Christianity.

1 Church of England Temperance Chronicle, 1877, pp. 126, 155.

2 Practical View, p. 166.

There was some ground for this. The churches performed markedly similar recreative and consoling functions in Victorian society: hymns - pubsongs: the priest - the publican: stained glass - frosted glass: the altar-rail - the bar: the bar handles - the altar candles: the altar - the bar back. There were undoubtedly strong similarities, and the Church, in endeavouring to compete, made more and more concessions until, in the "Edinburgh Castle" after 1873 it even took over public-house premises.¹

Why this widespread change in the relationship between churches and public-houses beginning in the 1850s and culminating in the 1870s? There are several reasons: firstly, the need to recruit working men into religious organisations was the reason most commonly adduced in public. It was certainly the motive behind Mrs. Wightman's efforts. The 1859 address emphasised the impossibility of influencing working men without the religious public first setting a personal example.² If English clergymen would take up the temperance question, said Dean Close, "they would draw the people around them"; this might sometimes require them to make a choice between their humbler parishioners and the elders

1 See Appendix, Plates 83 & 84.

2 Weekly Record, 8 Oct. 1859, p. 380.

and deacons of their churches, often themselves engaged in the drink trade.¹ Archbishop Manning, in embracing the temperance cause after 1868 made a quite self-conscious choice of this sort.²

The 1859 temperance address reveals a breach with traditional Evangelical doctrine when it claims that "if we can make the drunkard sober, the tendency will be to lead him beneath the influence of Gospel truth".³ This was to make formidable concessions to the cult of progress, to abandon the doctrine of Total Depravity, and to embrace a form of Pelagianism quite incompatible with traditional Evangelical attitudes. The Christian adoption of teetotalism sprang partly from realisation of the extent of irreligion, and from alarm at lack of progress in combating it - from a feeling that there must be some blockage against Christian teaching which must first be removed before progress could be made.

Wilberforce had taught, however, that moral conduct would necessarily follow from embracing theological truth; his son Samuel echoed his views in 1861 when he declared

1 Alliance News, 10 May 1862, p. 147.

2 See above, pp. 313ff.

3 Weekly Record, 8 Oct. 1859, p. 380.

"Remove the Theology, and you take away the morality".¹ Teetotalers on the contrary were emphasising that moral reform must precede the acceptance of theological truth, and that the greatest danger to Christianity lay in its divorce from morality rather than from intellect.² This was precisely the message preached by Wilson in Essays & Reviews when he stressed that from the Gospels one could glean morality but not theology: that Christ had censured the moral defects of the Pharisees more sharply than the doctrinal defects of the Sadducees, and that "a national Church must be concerned with the ethical development of its members".³

It may be significant that one of the first bishops to join the teetotal movement, Bishop Temple, himself contributed to Essays & Reviews. By the 1880s, R.W. Dale was commenting upon the rarity with which sermons mentioned the doctrine of Justification by Faith in its original sense; far more frequently was it argued that we are justified through faith because through faith we become personally righteous. Such an emphasis on "works" would have been abhorrent to the early

1 Quo. in S. Meacham, 'The Evangelical Inheritance', Journal of British Studies, Nov. 1963, p. 99; cf. Practical View, p. 16.

2 E.g. Rev. R.M. Grier, Rept. of Ministerial Conference on Temperance, Manchester, 1874, p. 55.

3 Essays & Reviews, 5th Edn., 1861, pp. 160-1, 195.

Evangelicals.¹

A second attraction of teetotal campaigning for mid-Victorian Christians, as they often themselves emphasised on teetotal platforms, was the way in which it could unite all denominations behind a public crusade, and in this it could appeal to the long Evangelical tradition of co-operating with dissenters in reforming campaigns. The "revival" gained popularity in the late 19th century for similar reasons,² and had in fact long been associated with teetotalism. Just as late 17th century moral reform crusades united Protestants more afraid of the common enemy than of each other,³ so late 19th century teetotal crusades united Christians against Infidelity. Let the enemy appear at the gate, wrote Canon Ellison "and....former animosities are at once perceived to be trivial and are forgotten under the sense of the common danger".⁴

The early teetotalers had always emphasised the need for Christian unity in the task of moral reform, and the earliest teetotalers had helped promote Christian unity by enabling

1 R.W. Dale, The Old Evangelicalism & the New, 1889, p. 52.

2 W.G. McLoughlin, Modern Revivalism, pp. 191, 196-7.

3 D.W.R. Bahlman, The Moral Revolution of 1688, pp. 79-80.

4 H.J. Ellison, The Temperance Reformation Movement in the Church of England (first published 1689), 1878 Edn., p. 27.

Father Mathew publicly to shake hands with the Anglican Bishop of Norwich, and the Unitarian Henry Solly to co-operate with Shepton Mallet dissenters in temperance activity when he could associate with them in nothing else.¹

Many late-Victorian dissenters, however, were more impressed with the need to pull down the Established Church than with the dangers of advancing infidelity. From the Anglican point of view, then, teetotal activity performed a third function - it helped to ward off disestablishment by publicly demonstrating the usefulness of the Established Church. Denominational temperance societies, according to Whittaker, were created "not by true religion, but by the want of it" - by religious rivalry not by universal charity.² Anglican participation in teetotal agitation was partly designed to win the admiration of nonconformists and thus vindicate her right to stand as the National Church.³ "Let the Nonconformists look to their laurels, - the Church of England is taking the wind completely out of their sails" said Hugh Price Hughes of the C.E.T.S.⁴ If Anglicans failed

1 H. Solly, These Eighty Years, II, p. 2.

2 T. Whittaker, Life's Battles, p. 340.

3 H.J. Ellison, op. cit., p. 22.

4 R.V. French (Ed.), United Temperance Mission, 1879, pp. 47-9; cf. W.S. Caine, quo. in H.J. Ellison, Sermons & Addresses on Church Temperance Subjects, 1895, p. 245.

to participate in the temperance campaign, the ranks might be strengthened of those who felt that the nation had little to lose by Disestablishment.¹

The increasing activity of late-Victorian clergymen in moral reforming causes is as much a sign of weakness as of strength. Church Defence organisations were not the means through which the Establishment could be saved, declared the prohibitionist Canon Wilberforce: "True Church Defence is not platform agitation, but...Church Aggressiveness in the face of evil".² Fluctuating fears of disestablishment may well lie behind Anglican willingness to support the B.F.T.S. in the dangerous years of the 1830s, its neglect of the temperance movement in the 1840s and 1850s, and its renewed interest in the 1860s and 1870s.

A fourth motive influencing all mid-Victorian Christians was the need to divert attention away from the shaken intellectual foundations of their faith: in a whirl of reforming activity, the Christian would have little time for thought.³ The sentimental hymn devoid of theological content

1 Cf. R.T. Shannon, op. cit., p. 147.

2 Canon Wilberforce, The Established Church & the Liquor Traffic, Manchester, 1882, p. 3; cf. T.E. Kebbel, The Old & the New, pp. 26-9.

3 J. Marlowe, The Puritan Tradition in English Life, 1956, p. 119; cf. I. Sellers, 'Nonconformist Attitudes in Late Nineteenth Century Liverpool', Trans. Lancashire & Cheshire Hist. Soc., 1962, p. 220.

flourished in the late-Victorian period for similar reasons.¹ The church began to embrace teetotalism at precisely the time when the ideal of "godliness and good learning" was giving way to the cult of manliness at the public schools.² The position of Christians in the 1860s in some ways resembles that of Christians in the 1730s: Evangelicalism, born partly as a response to the threat of Deism in the 1730s,³ transformed itself in the 1860s in response to the threat of atheism and disestablishment.

Christian espousal of teetotalism in the 1870s was one aspect of the battle being fought in other spheres at this time , especially in the field of education , to retain for religion its traditional responsibilities. Christians thought they saw in the teetotal society a means by which they could retain their traditional supervision of morality . But J.H. Newman correctly saw that in doing this they were helping to achieve precisely the reverse of their objective.⁴ The temperance society was a form of half-way house between participation in and rejection of Christian association.

1. T.Hughes, James Frazer, p.217.

2. D.Newsome, Godliness & Good Learning, 1961, p.228.

3. Information in an unpublished paper by Dr. John Walsh.

4. See above, p.318

"A good deal of what passes as religion nowadays", complained Bishop Fraser in 1875, "seems fond of parading behind bands and flags through the streets, but is seldom found in a place of worship".¹ Evangelicals had never relied heavily on material aids to Christian worship, but their willingness to preach the Word in theatres, public-houses and temperance societies was more of a concession to irreligion than they imagined. By the 1880s religious organisations were even promoting cricket clubs, a policy which half a century before would have been unthinkable.² It is curious that the two leading institutions suffering by 19th century institutional specialisation - the public-house and the religious meeting-place - should turn against each other in their decline.

The Christian emphasis on the need for social and moral reform was, said Gosse, "quite recent as a leading feature of religion".³ Those who, in the 1840s, had recommended Christians to adopt a policy favouring earthly amelioration had been branded as unorthodox; in the 1880s nobody questioned their orthodoxy.⁴ Indeed, in some respects, late-Victorian Christians,

1 T. Hughes, James Frazer, p. 219.

2 J. Lawson, Progress in Pudsey, p. 73.

3 E. Gosse, Father & Son, Penguin Edn., p. 237.

4 J. Lawson, Progress in Pudsey, pp. 74, 80-2.

in embracing teetotalism were doing all that Early Victorian atheists required of them. They were turning away from doctrinal quarrels and converting religion into a means of upholding morality, as Tom Paine had always wished them to do.¹ "Few of us differ in our religion", said George Combe, arch-opponent of religious sectarianism, in 1847: "our real differences lie in our theologies".² Like G.J. Holyoake, late-Victorian teetotal Christians were labouring "to establish the coincidence of Religion with Morality".³

It is arguable that the alliance between organised religion and the temperance movement damaged both parties. From the Christian point of view, it failed permanently to arrest decline, and actually increased the unpopularity of Christianity by linking it in the public mind with negative killjoy policies.⁴ From the teetotal point of view the prophecy of the secularist National Reformer in 1861 that Christians would only use the temperance movement "for their vile and selfish ends" and then abandon it, was not entirely inaccurate.⁵ On the other hand, the new alignment of religion

1 T. Paine, Rights of Man, p. 251.

2 C. Gibbon, Life of George Combe, 1878, II, p. 233.

3 Reasoner, VI, No. 145, p. 145; cf. R. Owen, New View of Society, p. 32; F.W. Newman, in B. Willey, op. cit., p. 40.

4 E.R. Wickham, Church & People in an Industrial City, 1957, pp. 194ff.

5 National Reformer, 11 May 1861, p. 2.

behind liquor restriction did help to interest religious groups, however superficially, in questions of social reform.

III

Whatever the effect of the alignment between teetotalism and the religious denominations after the 1860s, it is clear that if the temperance question is regarded purely as a question of social amelioration, the liquor restrictionists took several wrong turnings. In what ways would the ideal temperance campaign have differed from the efforts of the 19th century temperance movement? It would have involved, firstly, a pronounced change in attitude.

It would have required an abandonment of the association between temperance activity and religious recruiting; the concentration, as Francis Place had recommended, on the medical and practical arguments for moderation; the adoption of the association of abstainers only as one branch of the temperance campaign; the abandonment of the idea of any sudden and complete removal of drunkenness; the recognition of the continuous popular need for relaxing forms of recreation; the rejection of any a priori approach to the complex problems of drunkenness; research by doctors, social workers, administrators and manufacturers, together with detailed survey work on conditions overseas and on pilot experiments in limited areas of Britain designed to test the various remedies proposed;

recognition of the inadequacy of purely negative policies - of the importance of creating a favourable environment before virtue can be enabled to display itself.

In this ideal temperance programme for 19th century England, liquor restrictionist policies would not need to be entirely abandoned. Total abstinence would still be needed for the alcoholic anxious to be cured, though he would probably be required to reside in a special sanatorium; written and oral propaganda against unfounded physiological arguments for consuming intoxicants, together with attacks on drink customs and encouragement of expenditure on the home would still be required. Given prevailing public attitudes, the opening hours of drinking places would still need to be curtailed.

But greater attention would need to be paid to reducing the obstacles to sobriety. The consumption of non-intoxicating drinks would need to be encouraged by removing the taxes on tea, coffee, and cocoa; commercial experiments would be needed not only with their sale, but also with developing more palatable types of drink. Taxes on intoxicants would need to be raised on a graduated scale according to alcoholic strength, the strongest intoxicant paying the highest tax. The consumption of food and non-intoxicants in drinking-places would require promotion, and a few model public-houses might be established to show that such a policy was commerc-

ially feasible. Wilberforce had, after all, suggested the formation of a company to show that slavery need not enter into trade with native populations, and Cobden had suggested the establishment of a model farm whose proprietors would teach the farmers the benefits to be won from capital investment in agriculture.¹

Furthermore, many more counter-attractions to the drinking-place would need to be provided - including alternative places for paying wages, an improved water supply obtained by encouraging research and investment, improved accessibility of drinking water through the establishment of drinking fountains, the establishment of alternative forms of recreation - of parks, libraries and improved working-class housing. Important branches of this programme were actually carried out by Shaftesbury, Gladstone and others. Indeed, Shaftesbury and Gladstone were far more effective 19th century temperance reformers than any liquor restrictionist - than Gough, Lees, Pope or Lawson.

Yet such a programme would of course be totally impracticable, given mid-Victorian social reforming attitudes, methods and sources of income. To demand so positive an approach to recreation, for instance, requires a concern with purely worldly happiness, an undemanding approach to popular leisure

¹ R.S. & I. Wilberforce, Life, I, p. 305; R. Cobden, Speeches, I, p. 268.

and a willingness to promote popular enjoyment which were quite foreign to many members of the temperance movement. They came from a different world - a world which, by the very prevalence of drunkenness, encouraged negative and pessimistic attitudes.

Again, the programme could only be carried out by subscribers whose religious beliefs contrasted strikingly with those held by the 19th century temperance movement; it would require, indeed, that the religious public should, in the early Victorian period, follow men like Holyoake or Combe. An impossibility. Even if placed in charge of the temperance campaign, how could such men ever have raised the funds? Only the religious public gave generously to mid-Victorian reforming causes. Anxious primarily to save souls, to assure their social position, to acquit themselves of responsibility for Sin, early Victorian Christians could never have found their needs fulfilled through a temperance campaign conducted on the above lines. Nor could any campaign with such disparate and gradualist aims have roused the enthusiasm and the funds which the 19th century campaign for liquor restriction inspired.

While the criticisms made by Hodgskin, Holyoake and others of the liquor restrictionist campaign were shrewd and precocious, it is difficult to see how contemporary liquor restrictionists could have accommodated them without fragmenting or destroying their movement. The appeals even by Livesey

and Dunlop for a less sectarian policy had little effect. Furthermore, despite its inadequacies in modern eyes, the 19th century campaign for liquor restriction assisted social amelioration in several respects. The campaign against drunkenness was, after all, at least partly a matter of educating working people into new patterns of recreation and consumption, and of exposing the fallacies inherent in traditional attitudes to alcohol. Here the liquor restrictionists performed important services.

Again, the temperance movement extended the area of human compassion by making a serious effort to cure the drunkard - just as Shaftesbury at the same time was extending compassion to the lunatic, Josephine Butler to the prostitute. Through the Church of England Temperance Society the liquor restrictionists continued the tradition of Livesey's personal visitation and made important contributions to the development of social casework. As the restrictionists emphasised, the counter-attractionist remedy did little for those who had already fallen victims to drink. The temperance society was one of the agencies through which the early Victorians performed their remarkable achievement of catering for industrialisation and a population explosion without disrupting existing institutions, and without interrupting their simultaneous campaign for humanising a coarse and cruel society.

Some liquor restrictionists helped combat outworn attitudes - the belief in the inevitability of poverty, for instance: the traditional indifference to dietary questions: the assumption that the state was incapable of promoting moral improvement in the citizen. The temperance movement also helped to remove restrictions on individual liberty which it truly branded as "a disgrace to a free country".¹ Dietary freedom may now seem a trivial liberty, yet it was secured often at the cost of great personal suffering by early teetotalers who courageously refused to conform to traditional dietary habits and drinking customs. Again, the liquor restrictionist platform was "one of the best schools for training any one ambitious of public life this country offered".² Many prominent 19th century working men owed their start in public life to it.

In several respects, the 19th century liquor restrictionist was precocious: he recognised the importance of socialising demand. If teetotalism became universal, argued Benjamin Parsons, "then a sum of money equal to twice the value of our foreign trade will be spent on the produce of our agriculture and manufactories".³ Liquor restrictionists admitted

1 Bristol Temperance Herald, Aug. 1838, p. 58.

2 T. Whittaker, Life's Battles, p. 373.

3 B. Parsons, Anti-Bacchus, 1840, p. 53.

the need to raise the dignity of women, the need to adjust consumption patterns in the face of continuous prosperity, the importance of reconciling the Evangelical party to the belief in progress, the need to tackle the cultural problem of urban leisure, the desirability of state intervention to moderate the rigours of life in the industrial town.

Teetotalers' recognition of the importance of rationalising diet was important. It was, said Parsons, "the first application of science to diet on a large and popular scale".¹ A respectable mid-Victorian labour aristocrat could consume a remarkable amount of alcohol with his meals. Thomas Okey's father, a respectable Spitalfields weaver regularly consumed in the 1860s and 1870s a tumbler of gin-and-water at lunch, a pint and a half of old ale at 1 p.m., another tumbler of gin-and-water at 7 p.m. and a pint and a half or a quart of old ale at 9 p.m.² The health of many individuals must have been promoted when these dietary patterns were altered.

If many of the liquor restrictionists' responses to social problems now seem crude and inept, this is partly a sign of their success; "to be outgrown by the organisation you create is the ultimate test of victory", wrote Beatrice Webb in another context.³ The 19th century liquor restriction-

1 B. Parsons, Anti-Bacchus, 1840, p. iii.

2 T. Okey, A Basketful of Memories, 1930, p. 149.

3 B. Webb, Diaries, 1923-32 (1956), p. 12.

its campaign was in its various forms espoused by many imaginative and talented men - by John Bright, John Cassell, Richard Cobden , Joseph Sturge, Francis Newman, T.H. Green, Thomas Carlyle , Cardinal Manning, Edward Baines, Samuel Morley , Frederick Temple, Thomas Cook and many other distinguished individuals now better remembered than the pioneers of the movement they supported.

John Morley's assessment of the place of phrenology in the 1830s applies equally to the liquor restrictionist movement between 1828 and 1869: "to accept phrenology to-day would stamp a man as unscientific", he wrote, "but to accept it in 1835 was a good sign of mental activity".¹ Before the temperance movement is lightly dismissed, it must be remembered that drunkenness was far more common , even in the 1860s , than it is today.² "I have seldom gone home", wrote Engels in 1844 of his Saturday evenings in Manchester, "without seeing many drunkards staggering in the road or lying helpless in the gutter".³ Engels of course regarded the teetotal remedy as inadequate, though he seems to have felt some respect for the movement. But he never precisely outlined his own remedy , and it was difficult at that stage of economic growth to devise an alternative to the teetotal remedy without envisaging some radical and probably painful transformation of the social order.

1. J. Morley, Richard Cobden, p.40.

2. G. Kitson Clark, The Making of Victorian England, 1962, p.128.

3. F. Engels, Condition of the Working Class, 1958 edn., p.143.

Despite its sectarian aspects, the campaign for liquor restriction constitutes one of the forces making for social harmony in 19th century England. Such institutions deserve more attention and respect than they often receive from 19th century historians. Although by the early 20th century the temperance movement appeared to working men to be little more than an attack by the rich on the pleasures of the poor¹, it bore quite another complexion in its teetotal phase between 1834 and the 1860s, and it flourished on the genuine desire for respectability and independence which prevailed among the labour aristocracy and among those labouring men who aspired to follow their example. The movement was in its early days forward- rather than backward-looking. And if, at times, its members displayed sour, one-eyed and negative attitudes, there were often good contemporary reasons for doing so. There were also many individual exceptions; many of the early temperance leaders were active in other reforming causes.²

A German miner who visited Newcastle in the 1890s found two aspects of British society unfamiliar: he noted, firstly, that "the middle and the working classes are on very friendly terms.... because they are brought together

1. S.Reynolds et.al., Seems So!, 1911, chapters 7 & 8 for the attitudes of working people to temperance legislation in the early 20th. Century. I owe this reference to Mr. Henry Pelling of Queen's College, Oxford.

2. See above, pp. 235, 516.

in clubs and religious organisations". Secondly, that "the sects strive to outdo one another in the exercise of practical Christianity".¹ Both statements perhaps exaggerate the degree of social harmony prevailing in late-Victorian England ; but insofar as the contrast the miner describes between the English and German social situations has any truth , it brings some credit to the 19th century liquor restrictionists , who sought so vigorously to foster both these developments.

The prime aim of the social historian , however, is not to assess the relative validity of the various mid-Victorian remedies for the drink problem , let alone to provide recommendations for the contrasting social situation of the present day . His aim is rather to resurrect a forgotten social situation, a forgotten complex of social attitudes, which could generate and bring to such prominence a movement whose glories have now passed; to explain why the attempt to counter drunkenness took its precise form; and thence to gain some insight into the workings of 19th century society as a whole.

The three liquor restrictionist campaigns between 1828 and 1869 appealed both to altruism and self-interest; they

1. E.Duckershoff,How the English Workman Lives,1899,pp.55,87.

displayed ingenuity and absurdity, compassion and indignation, superstition and rationality, fanaticism, triviality and high seriousness. On such a many-sided movement it is difficult to pronounce with simplicity or assurance. Perhaps it will be fair to conclude in phrases borrowed from Sir James Stephen:¹ criticise , for there is no lack of extravagance. Laugh , for there is no stint of absurdity. Yet refuse not to believe, that , grotesque as her aspect may occasionally be , the mid-Victorian temperance movement has a history, a doctrine, and a prophecy, of no common significance.

1. cf. Sir J. Stephen, Essays in Ecclesiastical Biography, II, 1849, pp. 380-1.