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THE DRINK TRAFFIC

AND THE

PERMISSIVE BILL

FROM FRASER'S MAGAZINE, FEB. 1872

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THE UNITED KINGDOM ALLIANCE

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THE
DRINK TRAFFIC
AND
THE PERMISSIVE BILL.

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the Publishers.]

THE *Daily News* informs us that the Permissive Bill is become a serious nuisance and danger to the Liberal party. Its advocates are disagreeably in earnest, and do not sufficiently understand the vast advantage of having in power Liberals who pass and sustain evil Acts, which would be impossible to Tories if the Liberals were out of office; Liberals, who in their forty years' ascendancy have continuously intensified the evils of the Drink Traffic, with its revenue to the Exchequer, and have effectively kept up the National Debt. Hence at length the writers for the Liberal party are alarmed, lest the zeal of a small faction (?) for Sir Wilfrid Lawson's Bill frighten the publicans, and turn the scale at elections the wrong way. The Right Hon. Mr. Bruce is scolded for having left too long an interval between the first and second readings of his Bill. To allow the country time to discuss and understand it, was (it seems) his fatal mistake. In the previous year he avoided this error; for he declined to furnish Sir Wilfrid with any hint as to the contents of his bill, saying, he did not wish it to be 'the football of discussion' to the country. The *Daily News* urges

him to bring in his new Bill early, and push it through quickly. The people at large are not to have any voice in the matter.

If any apology were needed, this would be a sufficient apology for discussing the whole subject at present as fully and as accurately as we can. The popular opponents of the Permissive Bill constantly advance against it pretended axioms of a most sweeping character, such as, that all Trade ought to be Free; that Morality is no concern of Parliament; that it is impossible to restrain Vice; that it is tyrannical to put difficulties in the way of gratifying the palate; and so on. Even in Parliament itself such extravagant assertions are heard. Without wasting our limited space against such adversaries, it seems desirable to treat the subject under two heads—*first*, the Nature of the Trade; *next*, the History of the dealings of our Government with it; for out of these springs the justification of the Permissive Bill. The abstract objections may be sufficiently disposed of by the way.

The trade in intoxicating drink has great peculiarities, which admit of separate comment. There is no trade which needs so little skill, ex-

perience, or toil in the seller. A publican orders his beer or his spirits of a brewer or distiller with less discrimination or trouble than any other shopman who can be named; and in numberless cases willingly submits to the arrangement, that a particular brewer or distiller, in return for favours, shall have the exclusive right of supplying the liquor. A licensed victualler who sells no victuals, seems to the public to have an enviably idle life. A real victualler must use judgment as to his supplies of butcher's meat, fowl, bacon, eggs, bread, butter, milk, and confectionery. He is ever in danger of having stale food left on his hands. He needs careful, skilful, economical cooks, with kitchenmaids and waiters; and watchful superintendence. But the mere liquor-seller never fears that his goods will spoil by keeping: he needs a minimum of attendants, and no skill. If from a magistrate's house an old servant marries, the trade which he covets is apt to be that of a publican; and it is a common complaint, that a community has a drink shop forced upon it against its will, because a magistrate is resolved to reward some dependent by giving him a license.

One peculiarity of the trade is the length of time at the command of a seller of intoxicating drinks. By English law he may open at 4 o'clock in the morning and keep open, for 21 hours, until 1 A.M. of the following day; and on Sunday, when most other shops are compelled by law to close, his exemption from business is but partial. This might seem to make his trade very gainful. But the enormous competition which the law and the magistrates have allowed, at once keeps his house open, and deprives him of a large part of the advantage. Practically, unless he is himself a capitalist, as happens in some great spirit-shops, any excess of gain does but swell the rent which

he pays to a brewer or distiller or house-owner behind him. If we could believe the rumours of the trade, so sharp is the competition, and so insatiable the demand of rent, that no publican could make a living if adulteration were effectually stopped. But through the remorseless acting of competition, even adulteration cannot in the long run benefit the retail seller. Unskilled agency and light labour, under mutual rivalry, cannot hold fast the gains of trade. They do but ooze out into the purse of the rent-receiver, probably some great brewer. Indeed, it is a belief widespread among enquiring and observant persons, that publicans oftener lose than make fortunes in their idle and monotonous life. Moreover, the occupation induces habits so unwholesome, that two publicans die for one grocer.

A second peculiarity of this trade is its tendency to lessen the power of the customer to judge of the articles supplied by it. Total abstainers (unless they happen to be converted drunkards) have no desire at all for burning or bitter liquors; but, except when some fine flavour overpowers that of alcohol, regard it as unpleasant. So far from being to them a necessary or a coveted aid to the stomach, it is not even a luxury. On the contrary, the habitual drinker soon becomes dependent upon the liquor, misses it if it be withheld, needs it to keep him in what he thinks his normal state, and fancies that without it he cannot get through the day. Moral considerations and strength of will may keep him from exceeding that modicum which he lays down to himself as sufficient. Happily, this is a true description of the great majority of drinkers; else we should indeed be a lost nation. Not the less is it certain, that in each successive cup the alcohol is tasted less and less; for it dulls the perceptions. The palate, throat, and

stomach become less sensitive to it. Hence, on the one hand, many who think themselves moderate, and are never visibly affected in the brain by the amount of their drink, nevertheless drink an undeniably pernicious amount; on the other hand, a painfully large fraction of drinkers lose all power of moderating their potations. Frauds of the trade add, no doubt, to the terrible evil. It is said that salt is put into ale, various drugs into porter; all wines are specially primed for the English market: but while the trade exists under competition, no superintendence of it by Government will succeed in suppressing such fraud, except by an outrageous public expense, and by a vast establishment of spies, very dangerous and wholly unconstitutional. After two drams of spirits the drinker loses discernment of all taste, except the burning taste; to it also he is duller than at first: and there is nothing so nasty but he will accustom himself to it, as the French to their *absinthe*. In trades which are not of primary necessity, it is unreasonable to expect Governmental inspection of the articles sold. The enormous expense and the vast patronage are sufficient objections: hence *Caveat emptor* is the rightful rule. The *Saturday Review*, a scorners of the Permissive Bill, in deploring female drunkenness, asks: 'Shall there be a medical inquisitor at every ball, an inspecting doctor in public places to measure the alcoholisation of suspected fine ladies? to investigate Mrs. C.'s jollity, and to report if Lady D.'s manner is due to Eau-de-Cologne or fatigue? &c. &c.' One might ask why not, when policemen are set about every drinking shop to investigate whether poor men and women are jolly, frisky, half-seas over, or drunk? The expense is enormous; the system is already corrupting to the police. Yet Mr. Bruce recently wanted to load us with a new army of spies to inspect

the liquor, of which the victims are inevitably such poor judges. For in 'drinking on the premises,' after one or two cups, the customer loses discrimination; indeed, every habitual drinker becomes accustomed to some adulteration, so as even to demand it. Wine merchants find that English palates reject unsophisticated wines, and that the usual cooking is indispensable. A very general result of these peculiarities of the liquor is, that the more a man drinks, the more he is likely to drink. The tendency exists in all, and wins the victory over a fraction of mankind so large as to be a vast national calamity.

Concerning mere drink-shops, another peculiarity may be here deserving of notice: that no one, if he can help it, will ever endure such a shop near his own house. Let those who dread lest the Permissive Bill enact 'one law for the rich and another for the poor' have the candour to look this fact in the face. Some honest trades are physical nuisances, and are not permitted in towns. This is a moral nuisance, yet greater than physical, which no rich man endures. The squire or the peer does not wish his coachman to be made drunk, his horses ruined, the necks of his family broken; therefore, he keeps every such shop at a long distance from his house. No magistrate in the kingdom—not one of those who *force the shops on a reluctant public*—sets one up side by side with his own house. All that the Permissive Bill demands is to destroy that cruel inequality between rich and poor, which refuses to a community of thousands self-protection against that from which every magistrate carefully shields *himself*.

Further, the drink-seller, in manifold cases, knows certainly that his customer is transferring to him money which is not morally his own to spend. Every married working man employs his wife as his cook

and housemaid. In these characters *she* has a right to food and wages from him, which must be paid before *he* has any right to indulge his palate. When he has children, they too have a prior right; and the mother, during her times of weakness, ought not to be worked. A labourer who neglects wife and children to gratify his appetite for liquor, is morally guilty, as though spending the money of another. It is quite impossible that the liquor-seller should be ignorant that in a vast number of cases he is enticing a man to the dreadful sin (if we may not call it crime) of defrauding those whom it is his first duty to cherish. No one can enter the trade ignorant of the fact that he will have to make his gains out of the misery and pauperism of neglected children and defrauded wives. Of course, as the law stands, he cannot be prosecuted as one who receives stolen goods, or connives at accepting stolen money; yet in countless cases the guilt is the same in species and immeasurably more cruel. Much less can any magistrate set up a public-house with new license, ignorant on what fraud to wives the publican has to live. Every man of common sense must be aware that if every married workman did his duty from his earnings to wife and children *first*, and spent on his love for drink only what remained, three quarters of the sales would be at once cut off. Undeniably, so many shops could not possibly be sustained except by the gross and heartless neglect of primary duty by scores of thousands of heads of families—neglect which should be called *wickedness*, only that it is a form of insanity. Into this insanity the drinkseller and the magistrate deliberately and knowingly entice them. Is such a trade deserving of tender consideration? Most notoriously it makes men sottish and worthless—bad citizens, dishonest to wife and children, even *short* of drunkenness.

For one drunkard there are five who spend their earnings wrongfully on drink. Men who would be quiet and peaceful, nowise blamable, are converted by the enticement of the drink-seller into immoral, ill-tempered, riotous, or dangerous characters. Hence orphanhood and pauperism, seduction of girls, foul vice and violent crime: wife-beating, wife-killing, broken hearts of wives, and insanity of drunkards.

Hence, in short, this trade makes high wages a curse, years of plenty more disastrous than years of famine, holy days more corrupt than common days. It lies in wait for the children of the poor, when it cannot catch the parents; and there is nothing that self-controlled and right-minded parents feel more bitterly. 'If a rich man dies while his children are young,' complained a small tradesman, 'they are kept from evil by guardians and tutors; but if *my* life were cut short, what could possibly keep my children from the drink-shop? Only by constant effort and care can I keep them safe now.' It is not at all rare that young people have been carefully trained by teetotal parents, yet when they reach the age of fifteen or sixteen, and can no longer be kept under a parent's eye, they are allured by company into the drink-shop, and morally ruined. At Manchester, less than two years back, such a youth, under age, got intoxicated in a gin-shop, and (as the law commands, for the comfort of those *inside* the sacred precincts) was expelled into the street after drunkenness showed itself. He drew a clasp-knife from his pocket, and stabbed the man who was ejecting him. The wound proved fatal, and he was hanged for it. His parents were total abstainers, and had reared him in a 'Band of Hope' and in the Sunday-school. At Leicester, in the last spring, a young man, in a state of intoxication, stabbed four men and one woman in the street.

One of the men died of the wound in a quarter of an hour. When secured by the police, he was found to have about 98*l.* in his pocket. Many volumes would be needed to contain the mass of crime and misery printed under the head of 'Barrel and Bottle Work' in the columns of the *Alliance News*. Week passes after week, year after year, with no cessation or diminution of the ghastly columns, although temperance lecturers, temperance societies, temperance newspapers, with an immense organisation and devoted religious zeal, have been thirty-five years at work over the whole land, and strict teetotalers are estimated at from two to three millions.

All these phenomena of the trade have been notorious to English statesmen for four centuries at least. We read bitter complaints in Parliament for full two centuries and a half. Our ancestors were quite in earnest, at that distance of time, to prevent the ravages of this traffic; but there were two things which they did not understand. *First*, they supposed that the only evil was drunkenness, and that drunkenness could be legally defined. The *Saturday Review* now knows that jollity and drunkenness are not legally discriminable. It is now also notorious that a man is most liable to commit outrages *before* he can be called positively and certainly drunk. As Judge Martin recently observed, it is not men when drunk, but men who have been drinking, from whom most of the crime proceeds. Here again we find Saul among the prophets. The *Saturday Review* solemnly warns us that 'what may be called moderate drinking is the wide door to disgraceful excess and nearly incurable vice' (Jan. 21, 1871). This vagueness of the evil makes it hopeless to suppress it by any superintendence of open shops, or by any armies of police. *Next*, our forefathers did not know what the chemists and physiologists of the

last forty years have revealed, that beer has the same intoxicating element as wine, less only in degree; and that this element, alcohol, neither warms nor nourishes the body, as they thought; but chills, benumbs, and paralyses, and is what even the contemptuous sneerers at the Permissive Bill call a narcotising poison. Yet our old Parliaments took very energetic measures, establishing that system which to the present moment is legal. Totally suppressing all idea of *right* to trade in the dangerous article (for the idea of free trade in it is the fiction of newspaper scribes), they entrusted to the local magistrates a *despotism* over the traffic. By them license of sale is given at pleasure. At one time there was a maximum of three shops fixed for market towns; but the system finally settled down into the absolute discretion of the magistrates, who can set up *any number* of shops that they please, or *not even one*, if that please them more. Thus a local permissive veto has been entrusted to them, besides the permission to select any person as the receiver of a license without giving reasons. One thing only the jealousy of Parliament refused to the magistrates—the right to give licenses that should last beyond a year. Every license is made out in express terms to last *for twelve months and no longer*—words intended to secure that the license should lapse of itself, without any act of the magistrate. Hereby the legislators aimed to hinder the possession of the license from being interpreted into a right by virtue of long use, or from being continued in the same hands through mere habit, without any reconsideration, through the sleepiness of those to whom this high despotism was entrusted. It need not be added, that as the law does not require that the magistrate should assign reasons for granting the license to an individual, so neither does it require

him to give reasons for not renewing a license. The high executive which appointed him charged him solemnly to restrict the trade to a minimum of what the public needed, and reproved or dismissed him if he was too lax; but of reproof for *too severe* restriction no example is extant. Such was the posture of the King's Ministry, or the king himself, towards the trade, until the ill-omened Parliament of Charles II., which conferred on the Exchequer a tax upon beer, as a compensation for exempting land from its feudal dues to the Crown! Thenceforth the Ministry became an accomplice with the brewers, and has disgracefully connived at inveterate, continuous, fatal malversation of the magistrates, especially in the towns.

It would be too tedious, and somewhat away from the purpose, to follow the administrative behaviour to the trade, since the Ministry has had the initiative of legislation. It suffices to speak of that modern era, which is within the easy memory of men advancing in life.

We may fix on the year 1825 as the date at which political economy first manifested itself as a power in Parliament, under the Tory financier, Mr. Huskisson. His economy was not ostensibly that of Adam Smith, nor yet was it that of James Mill. He avoided committing himself to any abstract doctrine, by pleading the evils of smuggling as his great argument. The apophthegm, 'It is the smuggler who enforces free trade upon us,' came from his lips, if we do not mistake. By this argument he persuaded a Parliament prevalently ignorant of economic principles to accept free trade in silk. 'Every gentleman who listens to me has a contraband silk hand-

kerchief in his pocket,' was too true an assertion to be contradicted. Probably the same argument was decisive with him for the fatal measure of lowering the duty on spirit from 12s. 7d.¹ the imperial gallon to 7s. The average consumption of the three years previous to this change was four and a quarter millions; in the three years following, it rapidly rose to nine millions, and crime rose one-fourth. In fact, in consequence of the reduction of the duties, the new gin-palaces flared out, to the consternation of the public, and indeed to the alarm of the Parliament. Huskisson was very learned in commercial legislation, and cannot have been ignorant that the lowering of the duty on spirits in Ireland some fifteen years earlier had been very fatal; but some theories about the necessity of low duties over-persuaded him. In 1828 the laws appertaining to the sale of intoxicating drinks were consolidated, but with no relief to the plague of gin-palaces. A terror of gin seized all our politicians, and no other remedy occurred to them but to try to supersede it by beer. Tories and Whigs agreed in this project, and Henry Brougham, then the most prominent of Parliamentary Radicals, was zealous for it. How can they have forgotten (it may naturally be asked) that ale-houses had always been notorious 'pests' to England? It may be that the Tory argument was a simple desire to get back to the old state of things, as at least better than the odious gin-palaces; but Henry Brougham and the most active section of the Whigs were misled by the *ignis fatuus* of education. Mechanics' institutes had just been set up, a Whig Radical Free Uni-

¹ 'In the latter year (1825) the duty [on spirits] was lowered from 12s. 7d. to 7s. the imperial gallon: and what followed? During the next three years eight and a quarter millions were consumed annually (in 1828 indeed above nine millions), and crime rose one-fourth.'—Dr. F. R. Lees's *Prize Essay*, 3rd ed. p. 57.

versity in London was inaugurated with enormous expectations, the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge was planned. Mr. Brougham had obtained a Parliamentary enquiry into the Scottish funds bequeathed for education; no doubt he intended such measures in 1830 as have barely got to work in 1872. He cannot have been ignorant what ale and beer had done in old England; but *the future was not to be as the past*; national education was to make all things new. Robert Owen, a few years earlier, had laid before Parliament his scheme for a new moral world. It was received with high respect, but was judged quite impracticable. In fact, Robert Owen aimed to make virtue easy to the many, and thereby prevalent, by institutions which should deliver them from temptation, and train them in right outward habits; but to start with, he required a total subversion of existing industrial organisation and family life.¹ Brougham and his associates claimed a robuster and loftier virtue, which should be proof against carnal and mean temptations; but in supposing that this state could be brought about by education, they forgot two essential things: first, that the education of life itself, which combines training with learning, and teaches things abstract by application in the concrete, is necessary for success on a great scale to men surrounded by temptations; next, that owing to divisions of opinion, to religious and political sects, and general inexperience, even a scholastic instilling of knowledge for two or three years was a matter very difficult of national attainment. It may be added, that for the poor,

industrial education was and is more urgently needed than scholastic. Be that as it may, Whigs and Tories in 1830 deliberately flooded the land with a new temptation, before the new education was set up; and the drink-sellers educated the nation to drink, faster than mechanics' institutions and cheap literature could educate it to self-restraint.

The evils of the Beer Bill of 1830 manifested themselves so rapidly, that it was never extended to Scotland or Ireland; yet thirty-nine years passed before any modification of it could be obtained. Then at last, by immense popular pressure, and with no aid from right honourables on either side of politics, a very partial repeal was obtained, by which the shops have been considerably lessened in some towns, yet with no considerable results for good. Evidently, when the taste for the liquor is once widely spread and inveterate, to cut off one-tenth of the shops will not lessen the consumption of the evil article by one-tenth. *Facilis descensus Averni; sed revocare pedem—!*

In 1825-30 a new spirit of reform was rising, after that long dreary stagnation which had benumbed domestic politics, ever since the great French Revolution had fixed the gaze of England on its—first exciting, then appalling, progress. At that time it was natural, and almost inevitable, that the leaders of the movement should exaggerate the power of the new influences with which they were (so to say) in travail. Having vast educational schemes,—seeing the decay of old Toryism,—believing that ascendant science would regenerate religion, dispel bigotries, and establish a

¹ The Review so often quoted seldom errs on the side of old-fashioned philosophy or religion; but it is a hopeful sign of the day, that for half of mankind (the women), it deprecates expecting much from mere intellectual teaching. 'Strong and noble women will become rare [if cleverly tempted by nice and light alcoholic mixtures], however much they sharpen their intellects in competitive examinations. . . . They should avoid undoing what has been done for their improvement by training and social restraints.'

really national teaching with new modes and new masters;—it was a comparatively venial error to overrate the power of the education which was to be. To expose frail multitudes to temptations so often proved fatal, before the educational system was established which was to regenerate them and fortify their virtue,—was a rashness difficult to palliate. But, after the experience and enlarged knowledge of the last forty years, now to overrate the power of mere scholastic information as a security against the drink-demon, is, in men who have political influence, a blunder almost equivalent to a crime, and far more fatal to the nation. Mr. Gladstone makes no such blunder in his theory, whatever other mistakes he has made. Taking up Robert Owen's extravagant formula, 'Man is the creature of circumstances,' he has modified it into truth and wisdom, saying, that 'The law ought to make it easy for men to go right, and difficult to go wrong.'

When a very short experience had proved that the Beer Bill of 1830 caused drinking in wholly new classes of persons, and prepared undergraduates in beer for graduation in gin, a new panic arose, until in 1834 Mr. James Silk Buckingham obtained his memorable Parliamentary Committee of Inquiry. Its report is a solemn judicial condemnation of the traffic especially in spirits, a condemnation in so accumulated detail that it is hard to quote. In describing the evils to individuals the Committee might seem to be copying out a list of diseases from some medical book. They proceed to 'Irritation of all the worst passions of the heart, with a brutalisation of disposition that breaks down and destroys the most endearing bonds of nature and society; extinction of all moral and religious principle, disregard of truth, indifference to education, violation of chastity, insensibility

to shame, and indescribable degradation.' Under the head of 'Consequences to National Welfare,' it names 'the destruction of grain given by a bountiful Providence for the food of man, which is now converted by distillation into a poison; the highest medical authorities examined before your Committee being uniform in their testimony that ardent spirits are absolutely poisonous to the human constitution. So that not only is an immense amount of food destroyed, while thousands are inadequately fed, but, &c. &c.' They go on to the loss of productive labour, loss of property by sea from shipwrecks, foundering, fires, and innumerable other accidents traceable to drunkenness; next, to the comparative inefficiency of army and navy, and assert that one-sixth of the effective strength of the navy and a much larger fraction of the army is destroyed by intoxicating drinks, as much as if the men had been slain in battle; and that seven-eighths of the sickness, invaliding, and discharges for incapacity, nine-tenths of the acts of insubordination, floggings, and shootings for such crime, are due to drunkenness alone. Next, the direct increase of pauperism and bastardy is elaborately traced to this fount of evil; and the spread of crime and the creation of criminal classes: finally, the retardation of all improvement, inventive or industrial, civil or political, moral or religious; entailing on the nation, as a mere pecuniary fine, little short of fifty millions sterling annually.

Some improvements in the navy did soon follow, beginning from merchant ships; in the army nothing was done nor is done to this day. Whig economists, with guilty zeal, proceeded to force our national vice on India. Mr. Macaulay, speaking in the name of the Board of Control, had informed Parliament in 1833 that for every act of Govern-

ment in India, small or great, legislative or executive, the King's Ministry was directly responsible; for, by means of the Secret Committee and Governor-General, it could do, or undo, anything or everything, without the Directors of the East India Company knowing either the reasons or the fact. We also, therefore, must treat all great evil acts done in India as done by the English Ministries. India, with all her moral weaknesses, had no taste for strong drink. We have beautiful testimony from enlightened Hindoos as to the prevalent domestic virtue in their simple villages. No native tyrant king, much less any of the gentle and wise Indian queens, would have dreamt of raising a revenue by spirit shops. The glory or infamy was reserved for English 'economists' (?), who take no cognisance of vice as a cause of pauperism or a concern of Government. Virtually, they said to the Indian people, 'If our measures happen to demoralise you, that is your look-out, not ours; we find it convenient to set up these shops—if they prove a temptation, it is your business to resist the temptation.' Thus we, the high, proud, intellectual, dominant race, lead those whom we treat as religiously imbecile and politically children, out of simplicity and nature, into artificial corruption.¹

Anyone, not quite indifferent to the good fame of England, as represented by her Government, would gladly exculpate our Ministries of this hideous and ruinous sin. But the phenomena of our Opium Traffic (for there is no space here to comment on our dealings with the Turks in the matter of spirit shops) wind up the humiliating tale. A whole article would be needed to

expose the evasions to which the unfortunate inheritance of misconduct drives after-Ministries. When Sir Wilfrid Lawson, on May 10, 1870, spoke against the immorality of the Opium Traffic, he spoke before a Prime Minister profoundly learned in Parliamentary lore, and beyond a doubt abhorring the traffic and the three foreign wars entailed by it on unhappy China, besides the consequent inward anarchical desolations, as much as Sir Wilfrid himself. An old Tory Ministry did or allowed the thing originally; another acted on it: it grew into system: illegality connived at enriches the Exchequer. Perhaps the date may be 1826 at which Parliament was officially informed that the Honourable East India Company's revenue largely rested on a contraband opium trade, carried on in direct violation of our treaties with China. The thing was notorious in 1833, when the Company's charter was renewed. We fought a terrible war in 1840 in favour of the smugglers, and enforced by treaty the legalisation of the trade! Of course it is now entangled inextricably with the habits and almost the existence of the Indian Exchequer, which is much in the position of the English gin-distillers. Who can wonder, that when Sir Wilfrid brings forward a measure *in the only form possible* to a private member of Parliament, condemning the Indian opium trade as immoral—an epithet eminently proper for a true legislator—no Government (on the immoral principles now dominant) can do anything but shuffle disgracefully; and Mr. Gladstone coming to the succour of his subordinates, has to say *something*, however weak? He did not deny the immorality, but objected to the motion because it was an abstract one, and

¹ Those who desire to see how modern Hindoos grieve over the ravages of the Indian spirit shops, may see somewhat in the pages of the *Journal of the Indian Association*, published every month by W. H. Allen & Co., 13 Waterloo Place. Miss Mary Carpenter is the editor, but many pieces are written by native Indians.

because Sir Wilfrid had no Chinese statistics. Sir Wilfrid interpreted the collective reply of the Government to be, 'We do not say it is moral, but only that we cannot afford to give it up;' which is the dry, frightful truth.

A king's speech used to be his own. George III. highly resented the incipient treating of it as his Ministers'. Nicolas of Russia declared constitutional royalty to draw after it hypocrisies from which he thanked God for delivering him by the Polish war of 1831; all words from a king's mouth should be from his heart. Our George IV. had no political thought, and while the Ministers pleased him in detail, down to making a favourite bishop, he got through the ordeal well; but William IV. fretted dreadfully under it. Nowadays, it is not only the Sovereign, but the Minister also, who officially speaks words not his own. Earl Grey, on a certain small fracas with Lord John Russell, explained to the House of Lords, with unedifying frankness, what sort of truth is to be expected from the lips of a Minister who has to speak for his Cabinet, and pretend that he speaks for himself. But when a Sovereign reads a speech, all understand that his Ministers are responsible, eminently his Prime Minister. Our ancestors hated 'backstairs Cabinets;' Camarillas, as the Austrians and Hungarians called them; we now have them innumerable. The words may be Mr. Gladstone's, the inspiration from some fixed holders of office, with whom the Cabinet will not let him quarrel: or, who shall say it may not be some coterie of lords and bankers, unknown to the nation and irresponsible to Parliament? as indeed are the medical doctors in office and all the fixed officials. Those who do not wish the existing institutions to fall in a heap by national contempt of an effete obstructive inertness, should look with

earnest hope on any rise of *sincere moral* enthusiasm in the nation, free from all admixture of party rancour or personal greed, such an enthusiasm as now surges up against this detestable Drink Traffic.

After the memorable Parliamentary Report of 1834, years passed by, and after the great Opium War the cause seemed hopeless in Parliament. It was evident that English statesmanship was frightfully materialised, and that to make revenue, at whatever moral cost, was the first instinct of Government. Dr. Arnold of Rugby had already sounded the alarm several years earlier, when many Dissenting ministers joined with Whigs and Radicals in celebrating Joseph Hume's axiom, 'The State must limit its functions to defending person and property.' Of course when Dissenters begin to desire *national* education or any *prevention* of crime, such as all laws which will not be quite Draconic must enact, this astonishingly naked formula is abandoned. But Dr. Arnold saw that to destroy the *moral* functions of the State (which was the darling idea of the ascendant Benthamites) was to destroy all *sacredness* of law, all political *reverence*, all reason for love of country or self-sacrifice for it. Our country is turned into a joint-stock company, with private interest as the sole political cement. He did not live to see the full culmination, as we have, of this disastrous public materialism. He had not to shudder at learning how carefully harlots are furnished by authority to our troops in India and Hong Kong, in order to display the exigencies and beauties of Christian civilisation to benighted heathens. But, probably, our political materialism was the idea dominating with Arnold, when Mr. Gladstone was maturing his book on the Relations of the State to the Church, in his deep-thoughted, but tangled, brain. He is like the Jupiter of Æschylus:

δαυλοὶ γὰρ πραπίδων
δάσκειοί τε τείνουσιν πόροι,
κατιδεῖν ἄφραστοι.

The book was crude, was premature: its author has signified his conviction that so it was; but in that day of earlier unripe materialism, before Saturday Reviewers existed or London clubs had culminated, it was a true-hearted protest. Twenty years passed after the Opium War. Mr. Gladstone was Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1860, and was planning a French commercial treaty, when a deputation from the United Kingdom Alliance sought an audience of him, and was graciously received. They deprecated his scheme of weaning us from strong wine by adding new shops for light wine, as a repetition of the blunder of 1830 concerning gin and beer. They could not convince the great Chancellor of the Exchequer, and did not at all deceive themselves; yet they came away persuaded of his deep moral earnestness. Dr. F. R. Lees, the leading mind in alcoholic chemistry among them at that time, declared that his utterances had all the ring of coming direct from the heart. He avowed as a broad axiom, that the interests of national morality were paramount; that he would not for a moment endure that they should be sacrificed for the convenience of the Exchequer; that he was seeking those interests, as in the Russian war, when he raised the duties on spirits; that he intended to encourage by law all lighter, in preference to heavier, potations of alcohol; and when one of the deputation wanted to prove to him that the Exchequer would not suffer by the Permissive Bill, he majestically waved his hand, saying, all such argument was quite superfluous: a man would be a very poor Chancellor of the Exchequer who, when a nation was enriched by sobriety, did not know how to get money out of it.

His talk and theories were for

God, yet his actions apparently have been for Mammon. Who were those drinkers of foreign wines whom the Chancellor would wean from strong to weak? Only the richer classes (who, we were told, were nowadays sobered by education) drank wine at all. It presently appeared that the Chancellor was counting on an enlarged area of wine-drinkers—new toppers, who should, as Cowper sings, drink for their country's good, not for their own. He treated with scorn the expectation of the licensed victuallers that they should have the selling of his new importations. A vast number of new shops were licensed (though even the Parliamentary Committee, of which Mr. Charles Villiers was Chairman, urgently declared that the number of such shops is the greatest fountain of evil), and placards about the Chancellor's claret flared up everywhere. In the London omnibuses one heard young curates and other smug personages talking with ladies about the great advantage they were to have from cheap French wine. It soon appeared that even temporary licenses to sell were to be granted for two or three days, lest some chance be lost of pouring in the precious liquor at every regatta or agricultural gathering, where the fair sex were to share the advantage; especially inasmuch as confectioners would be allowed to accommodate them with single glasses of wine, to sip nicely between the buns. The Chancellor laid stress on the doctrine that the evil had been the separating of eating and drinking: his system would redress the balance. But since it was open to the light of day that the licensed victuallers were no longer victuallers, simply because the drink of which the victims are insatiable pays far better than the food of which one pennyworth may satiate the customer, nothing was more reasonable than to fear that

confectioners might follow the same course. A few stale tarts and buns, to save appearances, with plenty of glittering wine decanters, full of negus, punch, liqueurs, weak and strong, to suit our ladies in their progress towards the fatal goal, might ere long display the counterpart of the gin-palace. Grocers, milliners, any shop in short, may have wine to sell in corked bottles: a careful provision for domestic morality and economy! Whether this traffic is more baneful when it stands out alone, or when it is joined with other sales, is a knotty argument. Lord Keeper Coventry, in the reign of Charles I., charged the circuit judges against 'alehouses and tipping houses, the greatest pests in the kingdom. . . . Let care be taken in the choice of alehouse-keepers, that it be not appointed to be the livelihood of a large family.' We shall now agree that such form of care is nugatory. For if effort be made that the sale of alcoholic drink shall not be at present the seller's chief business, but a mere accident, yet whether it shall remain secondary must depend on its success in debauching the public taste. If the wine sell better, more profitably than the other goods, it will displace them. Assuredly, the changed aspect of grocers' shops under Mr. Gladstone's laws is a melancholy spectacle. But the facility of fraud induced is a fresh and great evil. A grocer's bill may put down bottles of wine as pounds of tea and sugar, a draper may reckon them as muslin sleeves, and the husband or father be deceived: and witnesses not teetotalers attest that *so it is*. Young ladies who get a taste of wine at a confectioner's enjoy it at lunch-time elsewhere; thus the social custom of drinking grows stronger among the female sex.

It is hardly necessary here to reproduce the painful and galling description of alcoholised (i.e.

tipsy) fine ladies, which the Saturday Reviewer initiated, usefully, in January 1871. The subject was largely discussed in the London press, and Dr. Anstie, in the *Practitioner* for February, wrote as follows:

We must notice the fact that many girls of the wealthy middle, and of the upper classes, especially the former, are of late years taking to consume all kinds of wine, and particularly champagne, to an extent which used never to be permitted. At many modern ball-suppers champagne flows like water; and the attentive observer will soon perceive that it is not the men, by any means, who do the larger part of the consumption. The same young ladies who have so freely partaken of *champagne* over night, will next day at lunch take plenty of *bottled beer*, or a couple of glasses of sherry. Dinner comes round, and again either champagne, or hock, or port, or sherry is drunk, not less than a couple of glasses being taken. And then the evening very often brings a party of some kind, with the inevitable champagne or sherry. *We are speaking of things which we have seen*, when we say that many girls who live among rich (especially *nouveau riche*) and gay society are in the habit, during six months out of the twelve, of taking (in the shape of wine &c.) a daily average of two, two and a half, or three ounces of absolute alcohol, a quantity which, if expressed in cheap beer, would be equal to six or seven pints.

The general moral is, that light wine gives the taste for strong wine, beer for gin. This is fatally experienced in France, in the United States, in Germany, in England. Our Saturday Reviewer remarkably comments: 'Education and intelligence are rather against a woman than otherwise; for they make her believe that *she* at least is safe,' while gradually and unawares imbibing the fatal propensity. Mr. Gladstone before long found that stronger wine won on light wine in the market.

If it be asked how it was that so able and religious a man could not see all these terrible evils, to which he deliberately opened the door, the question answers itself. He had to make his French Treaty a political

success; he had to please the Emperor of the French; and this blinded him morally. The best excuse for his error is that it was shared by Cobden, a teetotaler by repute, but consistent neither in practice nor in theory, and one who indolently wished that Englishmen would not drink. But Cobden was not only hurtfully unacquainted with the strength of national passions; he was justly open to the imputation flung at him of loving the 'breeches pocket argument.' He believed too much that you can regenerate men by appeals to self-interest, and rarely strove to lift an audience up to his own elevation.

The argument is here all but completed against the conservation of the existing routine. The tree is known by its fruit. For full forty years the Government and the magistrates, whose official duty it is to moderate this trade, have done the contrary wilfully and pertinaciously in all the great centres of population, to the vast disaster of the country, terrible suffering, and enormous pauperism, all against the express advice to lessen the trade steadily, with a view to its ultimate extinction, tendered by the Parliamentary Committee of 1834. Whether a Prime Minister be this or that man, of whatever moral temperament, makes no difference. Sir Robert Peel, who was on the Committee of 1834, acted like all the rest. We must wait many years for Mr. Gladstone's equal in moral worth. But the system overpowers the man: all act alike. The behaviour of Ministries, Parliaments, and magistrates in this long period has been a most culpable malversation and grave moral offence in the belief of the supporters of the Permissive Bill, who allege that the richer classes can no longer be trusted to regulate the traffic, but that the people must have self-defence by their own direct veto on licenses.

In the years since 1835, two movements have gone on in the country itself, singularly contrasted. The one, that of temperance zealots, humble men, who have worked like coral insects to throw up solid barriers against the deadly inundations, devoting the whole leisure of their lives to the task. Thousands of such have lived and died, with great local results which collectively are national; but with frequent reason to mourn that their labours are ruined by some new evil Acts of an obstinate, ignorant, fanatical Government. On the other side, in rural districts, we see peers and baronets, squires and titled ladies, who quietly extinguish the drink traffic over their estates to the vast benefit of the people. The town world and the 'educated' were at first long ignorant, next incredulous: bold denials used to be made. 'If it were true,' said the *Times*, 'it settled the question in favour of prohibition.' When no longer to be denied, the importance of the precedent is under-rated. Observe, that the great landlord who so acts, seldom dreams of expelling wine from his own cellars. There are several other phenomena deserving attention. When the Permissive Bill is claimed, our educated writers are shocked at its many atrocities.

1. It deprives the poor man of his beer.
2. It allows the rich man to import his wine, thus introducing an unendurable distinction between rich and poor.
3. It establishes a different state of law on different areas, splitting up the United Kingdom into a Federation.
4. It most unjustly confiscates the property of the publicans! They do not tell us why it is lawful and right for a Duke of Argyll, or a Lord Palmerston, or the Prince Consort, to do all these things by their private will, and quite improper and 'out of the question' (to use the phrase of the Right Hon. Mr. Bruce) that the inhabit-

ants themselves be permitted to do the very same things ; but we know perfectly well what it means. In the sacred cause of the landlord's pocket, all such acts of despotism are surely permissible ; but in so contemptible a cause as the morals, quiet, prosperity, and happiness of thousands, the sacred interests of capitalists ought not to be touched. No publican has yet pretended that he ought to be able to call magistrates before judge and jury for not renewing his license, or for giving no other cause for non-renewal than that the shop was not wanted ; nor has he petitioned to Parliament as an injured man. Nor has any community in which the trade is stopped petitioned Parliament that the poor man be allowed to get his beer. What else but sheer hypocrisy or culpable ignorance can such outcries against the Permissive Bill be ?

Our Honourables or Right Honourables are apt to treat the supporters of the Permissive Bill with no small contempt. Very recently, one gentleman told his constituents that when we think of the stopping of the traffic as possible, we show entire ignorance of the first principles of human nature. Whether he was wholly unaware that the trade is actually stopped over large areas of England, Scotland, and Ireland, it is not easy to conjecture : but evidently he cannot have ever heard that it is stopped among Mohammedans, among Hindoos, among Buddhists, and has been so for many long ages. Their number collectively is estimated at eight hundred millions. Who then is 'entirely ignorant,' he or we ? Moreover, these great nations live in widely different climates. China itself has the extremes of heat and cold. The lofty table-land of Thibet is as cold, as India and Ceylon are hot. Persia and Turkey, Kúrdistân and Anatolia, have enormous internal variety of temperature. It is now well es-

tablished that alcohol does not warm but chills the blood and depresses vitality ; scientific enquiry coincides with the experience of Arctic explorers and of the Russian armies ; but the popular error of its giving warmth is so hard to eradicate, that it is well to insist on the severity of many climates in which the prohibition is tranquilly accepted. When we have legislators as wise as the great legislators of the East, to sip laudanum as a luxury after dinner will be placed on the same footing as to sip glasses of wine. The national taste has to be altered, if a great national sin and calamity is to be eradicated. Total disuse alone can enable us to regain the unsophisticated taste of childhood. Any partial use will but insure the recurrence in the next generation of a curse which only law and religion in combination can subdue.

Mr. Gladstone learned new lessons from the sad effects of his Wine Laws ; and apparently revealed that in the secret of his heart he was a convert to the Permissive Bill : for he alluded to it in his phrase 'Local Option'—an excellent title—and declared that he saw no objection to that. What then is that which the Right Hon. Mr. Bruce declares to be 'quite out of the question,' to which nevertheless his Premier sees no objection ? Behold the case in a nutshell. About three years ago, in a meeting at Bristol, called to favour the Permissive Bill, a gentleman among the audience asked leave to oppose. The chairman gladly accorded his desire, and Mr. James Raper, Parliamentary Agent of the United Kingdom Alliance, explained to the audience that the speaker was Mr. Darnton Lupton, a highly respected magistrate of Leeds, to whom they would be sure to listen attentively. Mr. Lupton thought the Bill needless, because its objects could be effected by merely restoring to the magistrates their power over the

beerhouses, which the Act of 1830 had so lamentably taken from them for thirty-eight years. (It is one of the grotesque phenomena in these sad affairs, that the two branches of the trade, the Licensed Victuallers and the Beershops, each depicts the wickedness of the other in brilliant and true colours. Each believed that if not molested by the rivalry of the other, it would conduct England to virtuous enjoyment.) Mr. Lupton was sure that the magistrates, now reinforced by public opinion, would keep the victuallers in good order. When he sat down, Mr. Raper begged to ask him one question: 'Sir, if, sitting on the bench and about to give a license, you suddenly discovered that the majority of the population had a vehement aversion to any license at all being granted, would you force the shop on the neighbourhood in spite of public opinion?' 'Certainly not,' replied Mr. Lupton; 'I should think it extremely wrong.' 'Well, then,' rejoined Mr. Raper, 'if all magistrates were, and would always be, like Mr. Lupton, we should not need a Permissive veto for the population. But inasmuch as many are unlike him, we demand a veto concurrent with the magisterial veto; either veto sufficing against licenses; not by taking special applications separately; but before selecting persons to receive licenses, let it be ascertained whether the neighbourhood desire any licensed houses at all. Here is the whole of our claim.'

The claim is small and clear. At present, in many cases, one man, a magistrate, is despotic over the whole question, to give or not to give licenses, many or few, to any one he pleases, or to no one. We claim that the people shall have a practical share of the same despotism, for mere self-protection, viz. the power of total veto, which he exercises at pleasure. Instantly this is called a tyrannical claim by 'educated' men, economists, radicals,

philosophers, newspaper-writers, and what not! It has long been a scandal against our Universities that the academicians were sure to be on that side of politics which events proved to be wrong. If our 'educated' writers go on with their game, we may, before long, have workmen saying to one another, 'Friends, these educated prigs do not suit us. We must go in for having a majority of men in the Queen's Cabinet from our own order, and elected into it by us.' They would but follow the course of Roman plebeians against the patricians: how much of aristocratic institutions would survive if once such a cry echoed through England others must judge.

And who is the real originator of the Permissive Bill? None other than the philanthropic brewer, the late lamented Charles Buxton, who wrote against his own trade words too cruelly severe for its most active assailants to surpass. When hard pressed by those whose interests were his interests, he could not quite stand firm, and made a partial and apparent retrogression from his noble and frank article in the *North British Review*. But the amended edition which he published had only nominal changes. Substantially, he held out on every main point; and though in so very trying a position he had not strength to vote in Parliament with Sir Wilfrid Lawson, yet he did not vote against him.

For ten years the successive Ministries promised an improved licensing measure of their own, not without breaches of faith. At length, after ten years' gestation, the Right Hon. Mr. Bruce last year brought into the world the much-expected bantling, prefaced by an important speech. He recognised discontent with the existing laws to be national, as are the frightful evils, and confessed the utter enormity of the number of shops. Who would not expect that he would propose to reduce the number? On the con-

trary, he proposed to give to all of them a ten years' tenure; invented the idea that they have a moral right to a renewal of license, and proposed that at the ten years' end licenses should be held up to auction. He allowed the right of the public to a voice, but so limited that voice, that it should be impotent against the existing preposterous number of shops. All was so prepared as practically to give to the holders of licenses handle for demanding an enormous pecuniary compensation from Parliament.

The publicans were perhaps as much pleased as they pretended to be disgusted. Their violent outcry made the careless imagine that the Bill was such as the advocates of prohibition ought to support. If any little enthusiasm for it could have been elicited from these, the publicans might have rallied to its support and carried the second reading triumphantly. Yet their objection to its army of spies for ferreting out adulterations of the liquor was unquestionably genuine and intense, and substantially just. The result of it was, that the Minister did not dare even to present it a second time to Parliament, and withdrew it because the Session was not long enough to pass it against the opposition which was to be expected. We now know how little aid the Premier's theoretic approval of Local Option brings to us. The Philistines have caught our Sampson, have blinded him, and make him grind in their own mill.

Meanwhile, new National Associations arise to the rescue of a people afflicted by the Drink Traffic, and high among their great names appears the veteran Earl Russell. It required much coolness, much of what is called brass, to come forward now to our rescue, considering the conduct of Lord John Russell in the long years during which he or his coadjutors were elaborately creating, moulding, and giving permanence to this enormous,

ever-increasing, and vicious traffic. Not even when Prime Minister did he utter a word or do a deed against that clause of the English Beer Bill about drinking on the premises, which had from the first met with all but universal condemnation, and was afterwards regarded by Lord Brougham as cardinally ruining the Bill. Nor did Lord John take any steps to hinder our forcing spirit shops on the Turks and Indians. Moreover, as leader in the House of Commons, he bore a chief responsibility for the infamous Opium War. When an unrepentant veteran sinner offers himself as our saviour, we know that he fears lest we shall succeed too well without him.

But what is his new association presenting, short of the Permissive Bill? It refuses to the people the direct use of the magistrate's veto, but affects to give it them indirectly by an elective Licensing Board, having first carefully stript the Board of the magistrate's right of non-renewal, except in case of proved abuse by the publican. The jealousy of Parliament for four centuries has forbidden any license for the sale of intoxicating drink to run for more than twelve months. The National Association quietly, slyly, without a word of argument, seeks to confer on every publican a *life* tenure of his license! When professed reformers act thus, who would not imagine that experience had proved the caution of Parliament to be erring and superfluous, and that the trade had been honourably acquitted of all with which the Parliamentary Committee of 1834 charged it? The evident object of the National Association is, in any case, to hinder the poor sufferers by the trade from abolishing it, as so many rural magistrates have done most beneficially. It likewise worms-in excuse for voting a good lumping sum under the name of compensation, so soon as the national eagerness for settling the contest somehow shall make it possible to carry a

vote of fifty millions sterling in Parliament. It is easy to imagine the sweet simplicity with which Mr. Bruce would smilingly tell us that he thought it was exactly the thing which we wanted.

But the people are already stern, and some of them exasperated. The writer of these lines was present at a deputation to Mr. Bruce concerning the Permissive Bill, when the deputy from Dublin, Mr. Sullivan, addressed him in nearly the following words :

Right Hon. Sir, I come before you sent by twenty-three Temperance Societies in and round Dublin, and they charged me to put two questions to you, which I hope I may do without offence. On account of the prevalence of violent crime your Government is abridging our constitutional liberties. It is notorious that with the removal of drink shops such crime vanishes, so that one policeman suffices where a barrack-full was needed previously. My *first question* is: Why does your Government with one hand put down crime at the sacrifice of the constitution and of our liberties, and with the other hand keep up what is confessedly the main cause of crime? Ireland charged her representatives to vote for Sir Wilfrid Lawson's Permissive Bill with so great effect, that two out of three supported the second reading. My *second question* to you is this: Do you not think, that if Ireland were left to legislate for herself, she would manage a little better than *this*?

It will be well for the Gladstone Cabinet not to drive that section of Irishmen which is working for the Permissive Bill into the ranks of the Fenians. The Irish horizon is darker every month, ominously reminding the landlords of the worst days of rural violence in the first French Revolution. That is a calamity to be digested as we best may; so is the burning indignation of the English working men when they find how Parliament has violated its first duty of preserving their daughters, their wives, their babes, from the despotism of the Executive Government, which does the bidding of a sect of medical fanatics. Never was so great a change for the worse

brought about in two years in the loyalty of the workingmen: through guilt or insanity, this Cabinet is preparing forces of wrath and contempt which may upheave the very foundations of Parliament. But that does not much concern the Permissive Bill. If, however, the Government propose to settle this controversy by a Parliamentary grant to the publicans (for which the brewers are pressing), the Right Hon. Messrs. Gladstone and Lowe will be regarded as, more and more, breaking faith with the country by a profligate waste of public money.

After a Permissive Bill meeting recently, the writer was accosted on the platform by a local brewer, who said :

B. I attended hoping to hear something practical. No one of you has spoken a single practical word.

A. What is practical?

B. Well, I expected you to come forward and offer the trade some compensation.

A. Indeed! and did the Duke of Argyll, or any nobleman who refused to renew licenses on his estates, ever offer compensation to the publicans displaced?

B. I know nothing of that; but this I know—we mean to have compensation; and if not, you will not get your Permissive Bill.

A. We enter into no compromise. What is to be our success, time will show.

The elaborate pamphlet of Professor Leone Levi, dedicated to Mr. Bass, on the capital involved in the Drink Traffic, is nothing but a plea for compensation. If Mr. Gladstone wish finally to disgust his admirers, and Mr. Lowe to renounce his fame as a zealot for public economy, a ready way is, to open their ears to suggestions of compensation for non-renewal of licenses, every one of which is jealously made out to last for twelve months and no longer.

FRANCIS WILLIAM NEWMAN.

APPENDIX.

The MS. of this article was destroyed, before the writer discovered that the Editor (no doubt, to shorten it) had entirely cut out an argument of three or four pages, which showed that *educated men have no excuse for pretending that national education is a sufficient remedy for the evils of the drink traffic.* The substance of the argument may be here noted.

It began from the Old Parliament, which thought less of statistics, and dealt much in classical arguments. Philip II. of Macedon, and his son Alexander the Great, were the two most wonderful statesmen and generals in the highly intelligent Greek nation. Each of them was disgraced by intoxication. Why? Simply because of the *Macedonian drinking customs.* National customs overpower even great men. So in 1830 there was plenty of proof at hand from the educated classes of England, both in eminent individuals and in masses of the gentry, that education was an insufficient security. How long will it take to educate our millions up to the point which our gentry had reached a hundred years ago?

Since 1832 neither classical argument nor moral argument (alas!) has much weight with Parliament. Reliance is placed chiefly on national statistics, earned generally by national suffering. Parliament judges from the outside, as if it had no eyes from within. Nevertheless, broad national facts are plain enough. It will be many years

before English education is brought up to the level of the Scotch; yet the Scottish people feel the need of a local Permissive veto as vehemently as any part of England: and the Duke of Argyll claimed a central control over Scotch *school-masters*, because, when they become addicted to drink, they are continued in their office by local tenderness. The American Congress is a picked body, whose education is far superior to that to which the average of the English working classes can by any possible effort be raised; yet Congress will not permit a glass of wine to be drunk by its own members in its own dining halls.

Prussian education has attained a high pitch; yet in the late war, in spite of military discipline, brandy was named with tobacco by newspaper correspondents as the article most coveted by soldiers; and Berlin is reported to exhibit increasing marks of love of strong drink. Sweden was esteemed an eminent instance of a country in which the peasants honoured the clergy, were well educated, and abounded with simple virtue; which nevertheless was ruined by one vice, through the facilities of distillation. In spite of education, crime and bastardy were scandalously prevalent. In recent years, Sweden has waked up, and wisely seeks a remedy, not in mere education, but in restrictions on the facility of getting drink.

It is a very grave phenomenon,

that educated men, especially students of political economy, deliberately shut their eyes to so many moral facts. It portends manifold evil to the near future of England.

NOTE ON P. 18.

The clauses in the Bill of the National Association at which I feel indignation are these: 'Beer House License to expire with the vacation of the existing personal license from death, insolvency, or any other cause.' At present the license is vacated *at the end of twelve months*. It is here 'slyly and quietly' given for life. Again: 'Voluntary sale, or compulsory purchase of existing interest.' By slipping in such a clause, it will be for the first time admitted by Parliament that a license is *property*, and may be sold. That one clause might cost the country fifty millions sterling, if it were resolved to extirpate the existing traffic; or it might make such extirpation simply impossible. Of course it would forever deprive the *public* of the power to let licenses drop, as in so many rural districts landlord magistrates have done. Since many excellent friends of the Permissive Bill support the National Association, this made me think it a duty to speak with greater strength. The Association goes on to propose that 'fresh licenses shall be tendered for by public competition,' again sedulously converting into *property* that which has hitherto been only a *moral trust*. If the Association gave to the licensing boards the entire power of the magistrates, and this were the whole Bill, it would be a true move in our direc-

tion. But to gain whatever there is of advantage in it by converting the license into a property *bought* of the public by the individual, is a ruinous proceeding.

The last sentence in the paragraph about Earl Russell has been objected to: primarily, as implying that all who join the Association discern the retrograde tendency of these clauses. That is not at all intended or implied. Next, I am told that it is the National Union, not the National Association, which Earl Russell has joined. But the pretensions of the National Union are far more hollow, so that morally the case is not altered. Earl Russell has some excellences, and some foibles, distinguishing him from ordinary Whigs; yet, on the whole, he is a typical Whig, and just now the most eminent. In my conviction, it would be wholesome for us if we had a Theodore Parker, who on the ground of philanthropy and religion, without any bias of hostile party, would systematically attack our plausible, respectable, materialistic, hollow statesmen. It is not work for me; I am clumsy at it. Perhaps I ought to add that the chief part of this article was written under pressure for time, in weakness and pain, when I had just risen from a sick bed. When I found it was not to appear on January 1, I tried (in vain) to recover the MS. for revision; and when the printers' proof came to me, it was accompanied with earnest request for immediate return. I cannot think it right to alter that sentence in this reprint; nevertheless, I cannot wholly defend it as it stands.

CONSTITUTION, PRINCIPLES, POLICY, OPERATIONS, AND PROGRESS OF THE ALLIANCE.

The UNITED KINGDOM ALLIANCE for the Suppression of the Traffic in all Intoxicating Liquors, as beverages, was formed in Manchester on June 1, 1853. The following is the CONSTITUTION adopted at the formation of the association, and which still remains intact:—

I. TITLE.—This association shall be denominated 'The United Kingdom Alliance.'

II. OBJECT.—The object of the Alliance should be to call forth and direct an enlightened public opinion to procure the total and immediate legislative suppression of the traffic in all intoxicating liquors as beverages.

III. MEMBERSHIP.—All persons approving of its object and contributing annually to its funds shall be deemed members of the Alliance.

IV. MANAGEMENT.—The Alliance shall be under the direction of a President, Vice-Presidents, General Council, and Executive Committee.

V. ELECTION OF OFFICERS.—The General Council shall be augmented to any extent and in any manner the Executive Committee may direct. The President, Vice-President, and Executive Committee shall be elected at the meeting of the General Council, to be held in the month of October in each year. The Executive Committee shall consist of members of the General Council, and shall meet as often as may be deemed expedient, to adopt and carry out all advisable means for promoting the objects of the Alliance.

VI. LIABILITIES.—Members of the General Council, as such, shall not be held liable for any debts contracted on behalf of the Alliance; and no funds of the association shall be disbursed, nor any liability incurred, except under a minute of the Executive Committee.

VII. GENERAL BASIS.—The Alliance, basing its proceedings on broad and catholic grounds, shall, at all times, recognise its ultimate dependence for success on the blessing of Almighty God.

At the first meeting of the General Council, held in Manchester, in October 1853, when the Society was publicly inaugurated, the following propositions were unanimously adopted as a basis for the agitation, and as indicating the character and scope of the movement:—

1. That it is neither right nor politic for the State to afford legal protection and sanction to any traffic or system that tends to increase crime, to waste the national resources, to corrupt the social habits, and to destroy the health and lives of the people.

2. That the traffic in intoxicating liquors, as common beverages, is inimical to the true interests of individuals, and destructive to the order and welfare of society, and ought therefore to be prohibited.

3. That the history and results of all past legislation in regard to the liquor traffic abundantly prove that it is impossible, satisfactorily, to limit or regulate a system so essentially mischievous in its tendencies.

4. That no considerations of private gain or public revenue can justify the upholding of a system so utterly wrong in principle, suicidal in policy, and disastrous in results, as the traffic in intoxicating liquors.

5. That the legislative prohibition of the liquor traffic is perfectly compatible with rational liberty, and with all the claims of justice and legitimate commerce.

6. That the legislative suppression of the liquor traffic would be highly conducive to the development of a progressive civilisation.

7. That, rising above class, sectarian, or party considerations, all good citizens should combine to procure an enactment prohibiting the sale of intoxicating beverages, as affording most efficient aid in removing the appalling evil of intemperance.

(Signed on behalf of the Council)

WALTER C. TREVELYAN, Bart.,

President.

General Operations.—The Council of the Alliance set themselves vigorously to the work of enlightening the public mind, of creating a correct public sentiment upon the liquor traffic, and of organising the same, so as eventually to embody it in a legislative enactment.

The methods adopted by the Alliance to promulgate its principles and promote its objects are:—

1. Lectures and public meetings.
2. Essays, tracts, placards, handbills, and periodical publications, including a weekly organ, the *Alliance News* (price 1d.).
3. Petitions and memorials to Parliament, to Government, to local authorities, and to religious bodies.
4. House-to-house canvasses, to ascertain the opinions of heads of families and other adult members.
5. Conferences of electors, ministers of religion, Sunday-school teachers, the medical profession, and other important bodies.

The public meetings held by the Alliance have been usually convened in the largest buildings in the cities, towns, and villages; have frequently been called and presided over by the local authorities; have been freely open to all classes; discussion has been allowed and invited; resolutions have been submitted, embodying the principles and aims of the Association; and in nearly all cases have been affirmed by enthusiastic and unanimous votes of the people.

Resolutions and memorials from public meetings are being continually sent to the Home Office and to various influential members of her Majesty's Government, urging them to bring in a comprehensive measure, dealing with the whole licensing question, and giving the ratepayers of each parish a power of veto on the local issue of licenses by a vote of two-thirds.

The Permissive Bill.—At the Annual Council Meeting of the Alliance in October 1857 a draft of suggestions for a Permissive Prohibitory Liquor Law was adopted, and put into extensive circulation. At the Council Meeting in 1863 the draft of a Permissive Prohibitory Liquor Bill was agreed to; and in the Session following, a Bill, similar in character, was submitted to the House of Commons by Wilfrid Lawson, Esq., Member for Carlisle, and Thomas Bazley, Esq., Member for Manchester.

The Preamble of the Bill sets forth that—

‘Whereas the sale of intoxicating liquors is a fruitful source of crime, immorality, pauperism, disease, insanity, and premature death, whereby not only the individuals who give way to drinking habits are plunged into misery, but grievous wrong is done to the persons and property of Her Majesty's subjects at large, and the public rates and taxes are greatly augmented; and whereas it is right and expedient to confer upon the ratepayers of cities, boroughs, parishes, and townships, the power to prohibit such common sale as aforesaid—Be it therefore enacted, &c.

The Bill itself provides that, on application of any district, the votes of the ratepayers shall be taken as to the propriety of adopting the provisions of the Act; but that a majority of at least two-thirds of the votes taken shall be necessary in order to decide that question in the affirmative. The Act itself would, when once adopted, prohibit within that district all traffic in intoxicating liquor for common purposes.

The first reading of the Bill, though opposed by the friends of the liquor traffic, was carried by a large majority, after a brief debate. The second reading, as expected, was defeated by a large majority, although forty members voted and paired off in favour of the Bill. This was a much larger number than had been calculated upon by the promoters and movers of the measure. Petitions in favour of the Bill were sent in bearing upwards of 482,000 signatures; whilst the opposing petitions were but few, and chiefly emanated from the interested traffickers.

In 1869, on the motion for a second reading of the Bill, 94 voted and paired in its favour (an increase of 54), whilst 200 voted and paired against it (a decrease of 97 hostile votes), reducing the majority from 257 to 106. In 1870, on the vote for second reading, 115 votes and pairs were recorded in support, and only 140 against, reducing the hostile majority to 31. In the last Session, Sir Wilfrid Lawson again divided the House, on a motion for a second reading of the Bill, when 136 votes and pairs were given for the Bill, and 208 against it. Nearly 4,000 petitions (including 1,041 from corporate bodies, officially signed) were presented in support of the Bill, having nearly NINE HUNDRED THOUSAND signatures.

The Alliance Tactics.—The Alliance opposes all extensions of facilities for sale of intoxicating liquors, whilst it welcomes and aids every measure for limitation or reform of the Licensing System. The Permissive Bill is perfectly consistent with all schemes and efforts to amend the License Laws, and is indeed the just and needful complement of measures falling short of its grand aim. In 1860, the Alliance led the opposition to Mr. Gladstone's Wine License Bill; and every measure that has been before Parliament for the limitation of the traffic has had the earnest and consistent support of the Association, both in and out of Parliament.

Alliance Funds.—The Alliance is sustained by voluntary annual subscriptions from its members, who now number upwards of ninety thousand. The first year's subscription list amounted to £1,310, whilst the list for 1871 exhibited upwards of £11,000. The entire income that year from all sources, including the sale of periodicals, &c., was upwards of £17,000. A Guarantee Fund of £100,000, to enable the executive to carry forward the movement during five years, was resolved on at the Council Meeting in October 1871; and upwards of eighty-one thousand pounds had been already subscribed up to the end of January.

General Council.—The General Council of the Alliance consists, at the present time, of upwards of 600 gentlemen in various parts of the country, who meet once a year, in October, to receive the report of the Executive, discuss the policy of the movement, give a general direction as to its operations, appoint an Executive Council to act during the year, and to aid the Executive in raising funds to sustain the agitation.

District Agencies.—The entire country throughout England and Wales is laid out in districts, and placed under the charge of confidential agents of the Alliance, who lecture, organise electoral committees, correspond with the press, promote petitions, and in every legitimate way seek, under the direction of the Central Executive, to create and extend an enlightened public opinion hostile to the liquor traffic. Scotland is being worked through the agency of a special organisation, called the Scottish Permissive Bill Association, having its head-quarters at Glasgow, in close alliance with the Executive of the United Kingdom Alliance. In Ireland the work is carried forward by aid of the Irish Temperance League and Permissive Bill Association, having its head-quarters at Belfast, and by the co-operation of the Irish Permissive Bill Association, Dublin.

Present Restrictions on the Traffic.—The sale of intoxicating liquors is prohibited on the Sunday throughout Scotland, also in the Isle of Man and Guernsey. In England and Wales the traffic is prohibited during fifteen and a half hours of the twenty-four on Sunday; and the local authorities have power to close licensed drinking-houses from one to four A.M.

Membership.—The Alliance has no test of membership bearing upon the personal habits of its members, their religious creed, or political party. It invites the aid and co-operation of all good citizens, whether abstainers or not. It has but one object—the annihilation of the liquor traffic by a law, enacted by Parliament, and enforced by public opinion, armed with executive power.

PERSONS may join the United Kingdom Alliance, and receive cards of membership, on subscribing one shilling and upwards. This may be forwarded to any of the agents, or to the Secretary of the Alliance, 41 John Dalton Street, Manchester, from whom documents and tracts explanatory of the movement may be had, gratis, on application.

* * A copy of the *Alliance News* is sent gratis to every subscriber of Ten shillings and upwards.

✂ A copy of the Permissive Bill may be had, gratis, from the Secretary of the United Kingdom Alliance, 41 John Dalton Street, Manchester.

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