

DRINK AND THE TEMPERANCE
MOVEMENT IN NINETEENTH
CENTURY SCOTLAND.

DANIEL C PATON

PH.D.

UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH

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IN MEMORY OF MY FATHER

GEORGE MOFFAT PATON

REGULATION DECLARATION

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ABSTRACT

This thesis sets out to record and explain the opposition to the use of alcohol in 19th century Scotland and its implications for social attitudes and legislation.

Section I (three chapters) explains the national preference for spirits and emphasises the importance of qualitative changes in alcohol use such as the divergence in the drinking habits of the middle and working classes. The motivation for working class drinking is explored by means of a comparison of two occupational groups, the miners and fishermen.

Section II (three chapters) considers society's awareness of the drink question and the reaction of different social groups to it. Indifference to the problem in the 1830s gave way to widespread concern in the 1840s manifested among working people by support for total abstinence societies and among the middle classes by demands for stricter legislative controls.

Section III (three chapters) examines the progress of the temperance movement in the second half of the century. The division between licensing reformers and prohibitionists is explained in terms of different views about the social orientation of the movement. It is shown how political involvements after

1868 led to the gradual reconciliation of former rivals.

Section IV (one chapter) traces the change in the position of the Churches on the temperance question from an attitude of indifference to a leading role in the campaign for temperance reform by the end of the century.

Section V (two chapters) looks at the extent and social basis of support for the temperance movement and the activities of temperance organisations. It indicates that support for the movement had not yet begun to decline by 1900 and that the movement received much of its support from groups at the margin of the middle and working classes. The activities of temperance societies provide an interesting example of the use of recreation and the arts in the service of social reform.

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Looking back through files of letters, I realise how many people have helped me with this research. Pride of place must go to the many members of Scottish Temperance organisations who have answered my enquiries and opened their records to me. I am particularly indebted to Mr. Gordon Milne of Aberdeen, Mrs. Elizabeth Morrison, Miss Margaret Smith and the late Miss E.M. Mein of the British Women's Temperance Association, Scottish Christian Union, the late Mr. Colin Palmer of the Scottish Temperance Alliance, Mr. Robert Gibson, Grand Secretary of the International Order of Good Templars, Mr. William Reid and Mr. Francis Laidlaw, district secretaries of the Independent Order of Rechabites and Mr. Fielding of the Glasgow Abstainers Union.

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The production of the thesis was assisted by Mrs. Betty Paton who typed some of the early drafts and Miss Carol Shortland, who helped with the occupational analysis and disrupted by my daughter Miss Camelia Paton who single handed held back completion by about two years. My typist Mrs. Angela Norris deserves special praise for the way she has made sense of my untidy drafts and illegible scrawl.

Last of all I have to thank my wife Marie who has contributed to this thesis in more ways than I have room to mention.

ABBREVIATIONS USED

B.F.T.S.	British and Foreign Temperance Society
B of H	Band of Hope
BWTA/SCU	British Women's Temperance Association, Scottish Christian Union.
Cong.	Congregationalist
C of S	Church of Scotland
Ec.H.R.	Economic History Review
E.S.A.U.	East of Scotland Abstinence Union
E.U.	Evangelical Union
F.C.	Free Church
F.C.T.S.	Free Church Temperance Society
I.L.P.	Independent Labour Party
I.O.G.T.	International Order of Good Templars
I.O.R.	Independent Order of Rechabites.
J.R.S.S.	Journal of the Royal Statistical Society
O.S.A.	Old Statistical Account
S.A.S.D.	Scottish Association for Suppression of Drunkenness
S.H.R.	Scottish Historical Review
S.P.B.A.	Scottish Permissive Bill Association
S.T.L.	Scottish Temperance League
T.A.S.	Total Abstinence Society
T.S.	Temperance society
U.K.A.	United Kingdom Alliance
U.P.	United Presbyterian
W.S.T.U.	West of Scotland Temperance Union

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INTRODUCTION

'Few subjects are more difficult to handle and few are more interwoven with strands of predudice, of bad reasoning and of deliberate falsehood... small wonder that many well fitted to elucidate the problem shun it and devote their energies to subjects which have not excited so many and so ignoble passions.' 1

There is no need today now that ignoble passions have cooled and Sunday opening is soon to be allowed again in Scotland to begin a discussion of the drink question with an apology.

Thanks to Brian Harrison and other scholars it has become a respectable academic subject. Whether embarrassment accounts for its relative neglect by Scottish historians is the kind of speculation not allowed in an examinable thesis. Apart from Professor Saunders's perceptive comments on early temperance societies, articles by William M. Walker on the eccentric Dundee

1. E.L. Collis and A. Greenwood.

The Health of the Industrial
Worker London 1921

prohibitionist Edwin Scrymgeour and Stewart Mechie's biographical sketch of John Dunlop, little has been written about the organised opposition to alcohol in 19th century Scotland.^{1,2,3.} The only recent work to deal at any length with an aspect of the 19th century temperance movement in Scotland still incorporated many of the attitudes and assumptions of teetotalism.⁴ We are now well informed about the production of whisky and there is a considerable recent literature celebrating the glories of the product.^{5,6.} Writings on the mystique of malt whisky have however little relationship to alcohol as it is commonly drunk in Scottish pubs. Our poets and music hall artists have probably contributed more useful insights into its consumption

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1. L.J. Saunders Scottish Democracy 1815-1840, Edinburgh 1950.
 2. William M. Walker Dundee's disenchantment with Churchill, a comment on the downfall of the Liberal Party.
Scottish Historical Review Vol 49. 1970
" The Scottish Prohibition Party and the Millenium
International Review of Social History Vol 18. 1973
 3. Stewart Mechie The Church and Scottish Social Development
1780 - 1870 Oxford 1960
 4. Rev. M.B. MacGregor Towards Scotland's Social Good. Edinburgh n.d.
C 1949.
 5. R.B. Weir The Distilling industry in Scotland in the 19th
century and the early 20th century.
Unpub. Ph.D. thesis Edinburgh University 1974.
 6. David Daiches Scotch Whisky London 1969- is a good example.

than our scholars.¹

It is not the case that the Scottish situation was so similar to the English that separate consideration is unnecessary. In every major aspect of the drink question the Scots displayed distinctive national characteristics. . . They were different in what they drank, how they drank it and how they conducted themselves afterwards. . . Those who organised themselves to change social attitudes to alcohol and attempted through legislation to control its consumption, carefully guarded their independence from their English counterparts. . . At a time when the tendency was for Scottish social legislation to approximate more closely to the English model the arguments for a separate system for the control of alcohol in Scotland were accepted by Parliament. . . Although the distinctive features of that system are now disappearing, Scotland has been unique in the United Kingdom in having experienced both the great aims of 19th century temperance reformers, Sunday closing and Permissive Prohibition.

1. Notably Robert Burns, Will Fyfe and Hugh McDairmid.

The 'drink problem' although no longer known by that emotive term and no longer of 19th century magnitude has not ceased to exist. The most recent enquiry into the Scottish licensing system called for more research into Scottish drinking habits.¹ Drink continues to hold an important place in Scottish culture and Scotland retains a certain alcoholic notoriety, reinforced at the popular level by the behaviour abroad of football fans and among the more informed by the incidence of alcoholism.² There are good reasons to think therefore that this is potentially a valid and worthwhile subject for study.

It is an interesting comment on the subject that when Brian Harrison submitted his 1965 thesis on the temperance movement in England he should have felt it necessary to announce his lack of personal involvement in temperance reform.³ Perhaps I should admit therefore to having been at the age of nine or ten a member of the Band of Hope. I do not believe that this has prejudiced me in either direction.

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1. Report of the Departmental Committee on Scottish Licensing Law (Dr. C. Clayson) 1973 Cmnd 5354
 2. In 1959 rates of alcoholism in Scotland were seven times as high for men, five times for women as comparable rates for England and Wales. N. Kessel and H. Walton Alcoholism. London 1965 p 19
 3. Brian Harrison The Temperance Question in England 1829 - 69 unpublished Oxford D.Phil Thesis 1965

NOTE:

MAJOR TEMPERANCE ORGANISATIONS AND TEMPERANCE

PERIODICALS IN SCOTLAND

The organisational structure of the Scottish temperance movement is sufficiently complex to justify an explanatory note. Throughout the 19th century the characteristic vehicle of temperance reform was the local temperance society, sometimes short lived and often subject to fluctuations in support. These were generally linked to regional or national organisations which represented the movement politically, published most of its periodical and propaganda literature and employed professional agents.

The first temperance societies opposed only to spirit drinking were founded in 1829 and the most important of these, the Glasgow and West of Scotland Temperance Society, assumed a position of national leadership and took the name Scottish Temperance Society. It was national in name only, the organisational weakness of the anti-spirits movement being one of the reasons for its total collapse in 1835. The Temperance Society Record, published by William Collins from 1830 to 1835, is the only Scottish temperance periodical for this phase of the movement.

The Total Abstinence phase of temperance reform was marked by the rapid growth and proliferation of local total abstinence societies in 1838 and 1839. Recognition of the need for unified action led to an attempt to form a Scottish Temperance Union in 1839, foundering on the Glasgow Edinburgh rivalry. Regional Unions were set up, the West of Scotland Temperance Union publishing the Scottish Temperance Journal, the East of Scotland Abstinence Union publishing the Scottish Temperance Herald, the Fife and Kinross Temperance Union publishing the Fifeshire Teetotal Courant, the North of Scotland Temperance Union publishing the Northern Temperance Record. All the periodicals were monthly, only the Journal and the West of Scotland Temperance Union survived beyond 1842, finally winding up in 1846.

The Scottish Temperance League, founded in 1845, was the first truly national temperance organisation in Scotland. Throughout the 19th century it remained one of the leading organisations; the chief publisher of temperance literature in Scotland and employer of the largest body of full-time agents. The Scottish Temperance Review (monthly) was started in 1845 followed by the Adviser (monthly) for children in 1847. The Review was superseded by the Abstainers Journal (monthly) in 1853, in turn replaced by the Weekly Journal of the Scottish Temperance League (1857 to 1861), continued as the League Journal (1862 to 1902), continued as the Temperance Leader and League Journal (1903 to 1922).

Between 1853 and 1863 the League published the Scottish Review, a quarterly aimed at a middle class readership. In addition the League Register was published annually, becoming in time a record of the movements progress.

The formation of the United Kingdom Alliance in 1853 and the passing of the Forbes Mackenzie Act in the same year led to divisions within the Scottish temperance movement over the question of legislative action. Teetotalers opposed to any form of legislative action formed the Glasgow Abstainers Union which took a notable part in the provision of temperance entertainment. It is still in existence. A Scottish auxiliary of the Alliance was set up but Scottish prohibitionists, desiring independence from England, formed in 1858 the Scottish Permissive Bill Association. The S.P.B.A. began publication of the Social Reformer (monthly) in 1866, becoming the Reformer 1885 to 1892 (weekly from 1887) and the Scottish Reformer (1892 to 1922). The former rivals the S.T.L. and S.P.B.A. amalgamated in 1922 to form the Scottish Temperance Alliance which still exists.

Temperance friendly societies were begun in 1838. Two of them, the Sons of Temperance and the Independent Order of Rechabites, had Scottish sections. The Rechabites was the more important, even so it did not attract a large membership until the last quarter of the 19th century. A number of periodicals

were published by the Rechabites but none was peculiar to Scotland. The I.O.R. still exists and there are three Scottish districts.

Similar to the Rechabites in employing pageantry and ritual, the International Order of Good Templars was brought to Scotland from the United States in 1869. The Good Templars was the first national organisation in Scotland to operate a branch structure. It was also a truly international organisation, being particularly strong in Scandinavia. The Good Templar (1892 to 1952) was the organisation's main periodical but it served the whole of Britain. The Grand Lodge, Scotland published the Scottish Temperance Annual from 1899 to 1919. The I.O.G.T. Grand Lodge Scotland still exists.

A separate womens temperance organisation, the British Women's Temperance Association, was formed in 1878. Scottish women showed their independence from England and sympathy with their American sisters by appending Scottish Christian Union to their title. Publication of the Scottish Women's Temperance News began in 1897.

Children were first organised in juvenile sections of local adult societies and these came to be known as Bands of Hope after that organisation was founded in England in 1847. The Scottish Band of Hope Union still exists but did not answer my requests for information. An indigenous children's temperance organisation, the British League of Juvenile Abstainers,

was founded in Edinburgh in 1846, but remained essentially a local organisation.

In the late 1840s the three main Presbyterian denominations in Scotland, the Established Church, the Free Church and the United Presbyterians, all formed denominational temperance societies. These had a largely nominal existence until late in the century. The reorganisation of the Free Church Temperance Society in 1884 created the first active denominational temperance organisation with a network of congregational branches. From 1891 it published the Free Church Temperance Society Yearbook.

On the fringe of the temperance movement were organisations which advocated legislation to control drinking but did not require their members to abstain from the use of alcohol, nor engage in the social and propaganda activities characteristic of temperance organisations. The most important of these were the Scottish Association for the Suppression of Drunkenness founded in 1850 and not heard of again after 1860 and the Scottish Threefold Option Alliance, founded in 1896, later the Scottish Temperance Legislation Board. Both these pressure groups had small but socially and politically influential support.

The last Scottish temperance organisation to come into existence was the Scottish Prohibition Party in 1907. Despite the name it was something of a one man band and had strong

support only in one or two towns, notably Dundee. It is best known for the election of its founder Edwin Scrymgeour as Prohibitionist M.P. for Dundee in 1922.

The brief outline is not comprehensive. Regional temperance organisations were revived from time to time. Much the most important of these was the Highland Temperance League which published ⁿthe Highlander^h. Local temperance papers such as the Northern Temperance Cresset (1845 to 1848), the Temperance Advocate (Edinburgh 1866), the Dawn of Peace (Dundee 1871), the Temperance Advocate (Dundee 1878 - 1880) and the Aberdeen Templar (Aberdeen 1888) enjoyed a transient existence.

SECTION 1

DRINK AND SCOTTISH SOCIETY IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

The unifying theme of this section is the place of alcohol in Scottish society in the 19th century. An attempt is made to distinguish the characteristic features of Scottish alcohol consumption, to explain why the Scots differed in this respect from their nearest neighbours and show how industrialisation influenced alcohol usage in Scotland. The nature of Scottish drinking habits and the manner in which they were changing help to explain social attitudes and reactions to the drink question in Scotland. Section 1 therefore is an essential background to the whole of the thesis.

The most obvious distinguishing feature of the Scots was their preference for whisky. This is explained in terms of the relative price advantage enjoyed by whisky in Scotland up to the 1850s, a result of difficulties in administering excise taxation rather than comparative advantage in the usual economic sense. The national preference for spirits, although modified after 1860, remained the outstanding characteristic of Scottish drinking throughout the century. This influenced drinking styles in Scotland and may have influenced drunken comportment. Since spirits were generally believed to be more dangerous and less wholesome than fermented drinks this characteristic influenced social attitudes against drink in Scotland and underpinned the widespread belief that the drink

problem was worse there than in England.

It was widely believed in the 19th century that there was a great increase in whisky consumption by the Scots after the reduction in excise duty in 1823. The argument advanced here is that this was a statistical illusion resulting from a transfer of supply from illicit to legitimate channels. Even so per capita consumption of alcohol in Scotland was at its peak in the period 1830 to 1850. This invites the explanation that high alcohol consumption was a response to social conditions in Scotland during a period of rapid industrial growth. The evidence points however to the importance of qualitative changes in alcohol use as rural drinking patterns were displaced by new patterns formed by the rhythms of industrial life. An important feature of these new drinking patterns is that they were likely to result in more frequent drunkenness among working class men. A case study of miners and fishermen, two occupational groups which showed a marked divergence in drinking behaviour, indicates that drunkenness in industrial society has to be explained in terms of the overall circumstances facing many industrial workers, resulting in low motivation for sobriety and understandable incentives for escapist drinking. The conclusion tends to support the traditional view, usually traced back to Engels, that drunkenness increased as a result of industrialisation, but for more complex reasons than the reaction to specific evils such as bad housing and unemployment.

One of the most striking changes discussed in this section is the increasing restraint in the use of alcohol by the middle and upper classes. The developing pattern of alcohol use among the leaders of society was characterised by sobriety and privacy. This was in marked contrast to working class styles which inclined towards drunkenness in public. Complications are introduced by the existence at the margin of both middle and working class groups of a third category more abstemious in the use of alcohol than the middle class and markedly different from the working class. This group is difficult to define but its existence is understandable given that it contained men who had greater opportunities for independence, respectability and a degree of social mobility than the majority of working men but were sufficiently close to their standards of life for these opportunities to be threatened by alcohol.

The existence of these three very general categories is bound up with the emergence of the drink problem and the temperance movement in 19th century Scotland. The class divergence in drinking habits was a prerequisite for the identification of a drink problem and ensured that it would be seen by society's rulers as a working class problem. The existence of a third category, consisting of men whose circumstances predisposed them to reject alcohol but whose political sectarian and class loyalties identified them with the working class, ensured that a simple administrative solution to the drink problem was impossible.

CHAPTER I

THE RISE AND PROGRESS OF WHISKY DRINKING IN SCOTLAND.

'Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise'.

Proverbs 20: 1.

Whisky has become so closely intertwined with the very name of Scotland that it is now hard to conceive of a time when it was not the national drink. Whenever the drink question was raised in the 19th Century the preference of the Scots for spirits was noted. Edwin Chadwick and J.C. Symons both commented on the fact that the spirits consumption of Scotland was far higher than that of England and Ireland.^{1,2} The availability of accurate government returns of drink consumption from around 1830 makes their conclusions incontestable for the rest of the century.³

The pre-eminence of whisky is far less obvious in the 18th Century before reliable statistics are available. Scots had been renowned for their love of claret.

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1. Report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons on Drunkenness. Parl. Papers 1834 Vol VIII subsequently. S.C. on Drunkenness 1834. Evidence of Edwin Chadwick Q. 325
 2. J.C.Symons. Arts and Artisans at Home and Abroad. Edinburgh 1839. p 14 subsequently. J.C. Symons. Arts and Artisans.
 3. G.B.Wilson. Alcohol and the Nation. London 1940. Tables 3 and 4 pp 336 - 345. Subsequently referred to as G.B.Wilson.

Alan Ramsay found it gave better poetical inspiration than whisky.¹ In 1725 ale was an important enough article of diet for the extension of the malt tax to Scotland to lead to bitter rioting in Glasgow.²

'Ale was unquestionably the ancient and general beverage of Scotland, but wine was also introduced at an early period; and our intercourse and alliance with France, and the cheapness of the wine, appear to have led to its being by no means a rare beverage, even amongst persons of little wealth'.³

But by the time the Old Statistical Account came to be written, this situation was changing.

'It is not twenty five years ago when nothing but the ale brewed in the town was drunk by the trades people' --- now 'the general use of whisky is arrived at an alarming height among many of the lower ranks of life'.⁴

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1. Alan Ramsay 'In Praise of Claret and not Whisky'.

'The dull draff-drink makes me sae dowff
A' I can do's but bark and youff
Yet set me in a claret howff wi' folk that's chancy
My muse may len' me then a gowff to clear my fancy'.

2. D. Bremner. The Industries of Scotland. Edinburgh 1869 p.435.
3. Duncan McLaren. The Rise and Progress of Whisky Drinking in Scotland. Glasgow (STL) 1859. p16.
4. Old Statistical Account. / Dunfermline / subsequently O.S.A.

By the 1790's the rise of whisky drinking was already well under way.

Since the Scottish preference for spirits was a subject of remark in the 19th Century, indeed the most obvious characteristic feature of national drinking habits, it is of considerable importance to explain as far as possible how and why it came about. It was certainly the accepted view that a great expansion of whisky drinking took place in the 1820's, whatever qualitative changes had taken place earlier.¹ Obviously this has a direct bearing on any possible relationship between increasing drunkenness and economic change and on understanding of the developments which led to the emergence of the temperance movement in 1829. The statistical sources of this period are extremely suspect and while the Old Statistical Account is valuable it contains inevitably, subjective local impressions. One way of supplementing the evidence from other sources is to look briefly at the distilling industry itself, the source of supply of whisky.

1. Report of the Royal Commission on the Licensing System and sale of Excisable Liquors in Scotland
Parl. Papers 1860 Vol XXXII p XI
Subsequently R.C. Licensing Scotland.

Distillation of spirits was not a discovery of the age of Enlightenment, though in Britain the large scale manufacture and the general use of spirits was an 18th Century development. Whisky had certainly been produced in the Highlands in the 17th Century. The loss of the Ferintosh privilege, lamented by Burns, to produce duty free whisky was one of a series of steps taken by Parliament to end private distillation in Scotland.¹ This facilitated the growth of a large scale distillery on industrial lines convenient for purposes of taxation, such as those of the Stein brothers at Kilbegie, Clackmannanshire and the Canonmills distillery at Edinburgh. Government's motives for encouraging distilling, apart from the pressure of interested landowners and entrepreneurs, ^{wer} ~~was~~ ^{al} fiscal, though lip service was paid to the need to control consumption.

'It is indeed the general Opinion that it is wise, in a political as well as a financial view, to impose such a duty on the Manufactory as will raise the Price to the Consumer high enough to prevent the excessive Use of it by the Poor'.²

Almost from the onset therefore, the distilling industry in Scotland was regarded as an industry which would provide a valuable source of revenue but whose output and selling price required to be controlled for social reasons. In the event both the fiscal and social considerations of Government were beyond the administrative competence of the Scottish Excise office in the 18th Century.

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1. Robert Burns. 'Scotch Drink'.
 2. Report of the Select Committee regarding the Scotch Distillery Duties. Parl. Papers 1797/98 Vol. XXI p 12. Subsequently S.C. Scotch Distillery Duties.

From 1776 to 1785 duty was imposed by the 'mode of Survey'.¹

A sum ranging from 3s.9¼d. to 2s. 1d. was levied on - 'each gallon of spirits of the Second extraction'.² Thus the assessed duty per gallon was fairly high. In practice it was lowered by widespread corruption of officials and evasion of taxation.³ The mode of Survey gave way in 1785/86 to a Licence system under which an annual licence fee was levied on the capacity of the implement of manufacture, the still.⁴ This method had even less chance of success. Annual fixed payments on still capacity gave a direct incentive to technological innovation in the industry. The more whisky each still produced, the less actual duty was paid per gallon. Excise regulations, it was admitted, caused 'ingenious men to work against time'⁵ and resulted in an emphasis on quantity of production. Progressive increases in the still license only spurred manufacturers to greater efforts.⁶ Thus the Canonmills distillery in Edinburgh in November 1796 had only 3 of its 8 stills actually in operation but they were each discharged every 8 minutes, 24 hours every day, seven days a week. The small fines imposed by the Kirk Session for outraging the Sabbath were cheerfully paid.

1. Ibid. Appendix 2.

2. Ibid. Appendix 2.

3. Ibid. p144 Evidence of Mr. Alex. Miller 'Were there at your distillery any false keys or seals'? - 'We had both'.

4. Ibid. Appendix 2.

5. Ibid. p 38 Appendix I (A)

6. Ibid. Appendix 2.

	<u>Duty/gal./annum</u>	<u>Highland District</u>	<u>Lowland District</u>
	<u>Still capacity.</u>		
1786		£1	£1. 10/-
1796		£2. 10/-	£54

Even at £54 per gallon still capacity per annum the actual duty paid at places like Canonmills was given by knowledgeable witnesses at about 4d. per gallon of spirits produced.¹

Theoretically it was possible to go on increasing the licence duty on stills until the rate of duty per gallon was much higher. In practice this was rendered impossible by the existence of the Highland whisky industry, operating smaller stills, separated from the Lowlands for excise purposes and paying a much lower still duty.² If increased license fees in the Lowlands resulted in higher prices of whisky to the consumer, this only encouraged smuggling from the Highland area which threatened the viability of the Lowland producers. It was not possible to increase greatly the burden of excise taxation on the Highland producers because they simply resorted to illicit distillation, tacitly encouraged by Highland landowners. Sir Archibald Grant of Monymusk made the situation brutally clear to the Parliamentary investigators.

'If whisky exceed half-a-crown per Scots pint, it will be smuggled from the Highlands if ten times the number of excise officers were stationed there'.³

1. Ibid. Appendix I A. Evidence of Adam Whyte, Surveyor of Excise in Edinburgh.
2. Note. In 1785 the Highland excise boundary was 180 miles long, only 14 miles north of Glasgow, and passing near to Perth and Aberdeen. Complexity was compounded in 1796 by the creation of an Intermediate area and another boundary line, 240 miles long, apart of course from the English border.
SC on Scotch Distillery Duties P.P 1797/98 Vol XXI
Appendix I A. Evidence of John Bonar Solicitor to the Board of Excise.
3. Ibid. p 182 Appendix II Evidence of Sir Archibald Grant of Monymusk.

Ultimately, therefore, the general level of taxation on spirits was determined by the rate which could be levied in the area of weakest administration. The widespread evasion and large scale smuggling which existed during the Napoleonic Wars shows how attempts to levy high duties tended to discriminate against the respectable large scale industry of the Lowlands and lead to 'lawlessness' in the Highlands.

When the actual duty per gallon of whisky was a few pence the excise was clearly not maximising potential revenue, while declarations of the need to restrain spirits consumption were mere expressions of piety.

'it has always been considered by the legislature as an object of primary importance, to restrain as far as possible the common use of spirits among the lower orders —— but under the licence system this is hardly practicable: let the duty on the still be raised ever so high'.¹

The result of low effective duties was whisky retailing at 4/- to 5/- per gallon in the main towns of Scotland in the 1790's and as low as 3/- to 3/6d. according to some witnesses.² Highland whisky, generally considered more wholesome and of better quality, sold at a shilling or two per gallon dearer. Whisky was much cheaper in Scotland than comparable spirits in England.

1. Ibid. App. 2 p.189

2. Ibid. p389. Appendix 26.
Memorial of the Heritors Freeholders and Justices of the Peace of the County of Edinburgh on the Abuses arising from the low price of spiritous liquors in Scotland.

'It may not be improper to add that while British spirits distilled in Scotland were sold to the retailers at 2/6d. to 3/- per gallon, British spirits distilled in England were currently selling at ~~6/11¼d.~~ 6/11¼d. to 7/1½d. per gallon one to ten over proof'.¹

As the justices of Edinburgh pointed out, this price differential was the result of a duty on spirits in England of 3/8d. per gallon compared to about 7d. in Scotland.² What was needed in their opinion was a higher level of duty which would both preserve the morals of the people and benefit the revenue.

The exigencies of war only added to the difficulties of the excise and the urgent need for a solution to this problem. Higher rates of licence duty, increased malt tax and in some years complete prohibition of distillation were all wartime factors which stimulated illicit production.

'In the year 1820 illicit distillation had become so prevalent in Scotland ———— that more than half the spirits actually consumed there were supplied by the smuggler. The regulations had been found inadequate to the collection of duties so high as were then imposed. They were at the same time so stringent and ill-constructed as to prevent the licensed distiller from producing₃ spirits equal in quality to those of the smuggler'.

1. Ibid. p.213 Appendix 3. Evidence of John Bonar.

2. Ibid. p.389.

3. Report of the Commissioners of Inland Revenue for years 1856-1869 Vol 1. Parl Papers 1870 Vol XX subsequently Inland Revenue Report 1870.

A committee of enquiry was set up in 1821 and recommended the abandonment of methods of taxation based on the source of production. Instead, excise supervised bonds were set up from which spirits were released for consumption on payment of duty. Soon afterwards in 1823, the duty on spirits in Scotland was reduced from 6s.2d. per gallon to 2s.4 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. per gallon, a level of effective taxation far higher than those of the 1790's yet sufficiently low to discourage illicit distillation on a large scale.¹

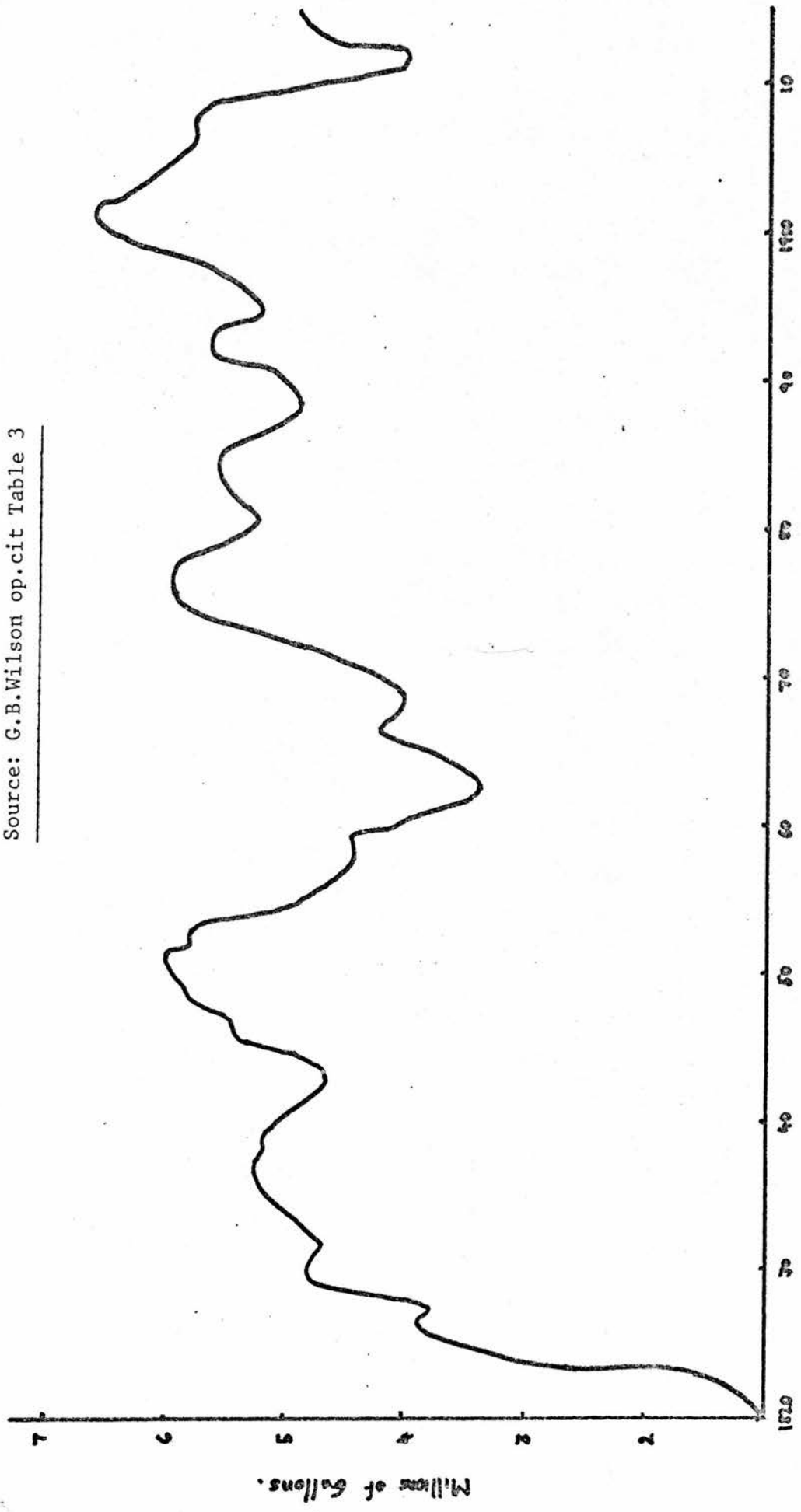
Between 1823 and 1830 spirits consumption in Scotland, as officially measured, increased nearly threefold.² This apparent steep rise in the amount of whisky drunk by Scots which loomed so large in later discussions of the problem of drunkenness was largely a statistical illusion. Its real significance is that it marks the transfer to legality of an industry which had been operating to a large extent outside the law. After 1823 excise statistics of consumption approximate to reality for the first time. Rapid population growth would lead one to expect some increases in total consumption and presumably a legitimate industry has some advantages in increasing output over an illicit one. On the other hand effective taxation at a higher level than before was bound to increase the price of whisky to the consumer. The admission by the Inland Revenue that more than half the whisky consumed immediately prior to 1823 was smuggled, helps to put the sudden increase in perspective, but was obviously only a guess.

1. Ibid p. 12

2. See Fig. 1.

Figure 1 British Spirits charged for home consumption in Scotland 1820 - 1913 (triennial averages)

Source: G.B.Wilson op.cit Table 3



Estimates of whisky consumption in 1797 provide the best point of comparison and they indicate a per capita consumption not much less than that of 1830.¹ It is impossible, therefore, to estimate with any certainty the real extent of increased whisky consumption after 1823, although it seems to have been far less than is usually supposed. Even so spirits consumption in per capita terms reached levels in the period 1828 to 1834 never equalled thereafter and probably never before.² In the long run what was of greater significance for the problem of drunkenness in Scotland was the recognition by Government of its limited powers to enforce drink taxation in Scotland and the decision to fix a level of duty which was one third that of the duty on spirits in England.³ The much lower price of spirits in Scotland compared with England, established in the 18th Century, was thereby perpetuated until the 1850 s.

Cheap whisky in Scotland was bound to be a formidable competitor of other alcoholic drinks, particularly beer. That people did readily substitute one for the other is well shown by the experience of England in the early 19th century. Beer producers were hard hit by the dear corn and higher malt duties of the war. Customers reacted to dearer or weaker beer by turning to gin.

1. Report of the Committee on the State of the Laws relative to Distillery of Spirits and the Duties thereon in Scotland. Parl Papers 1798/99 Vol XXIV p.47. The consumption figure used here is an average of 8 estimates made around 1798. These however varied considerably and the per capita figure quoted must be regarded with caution.

1797	2.30 Galls/head/annum.
1830	2.54.

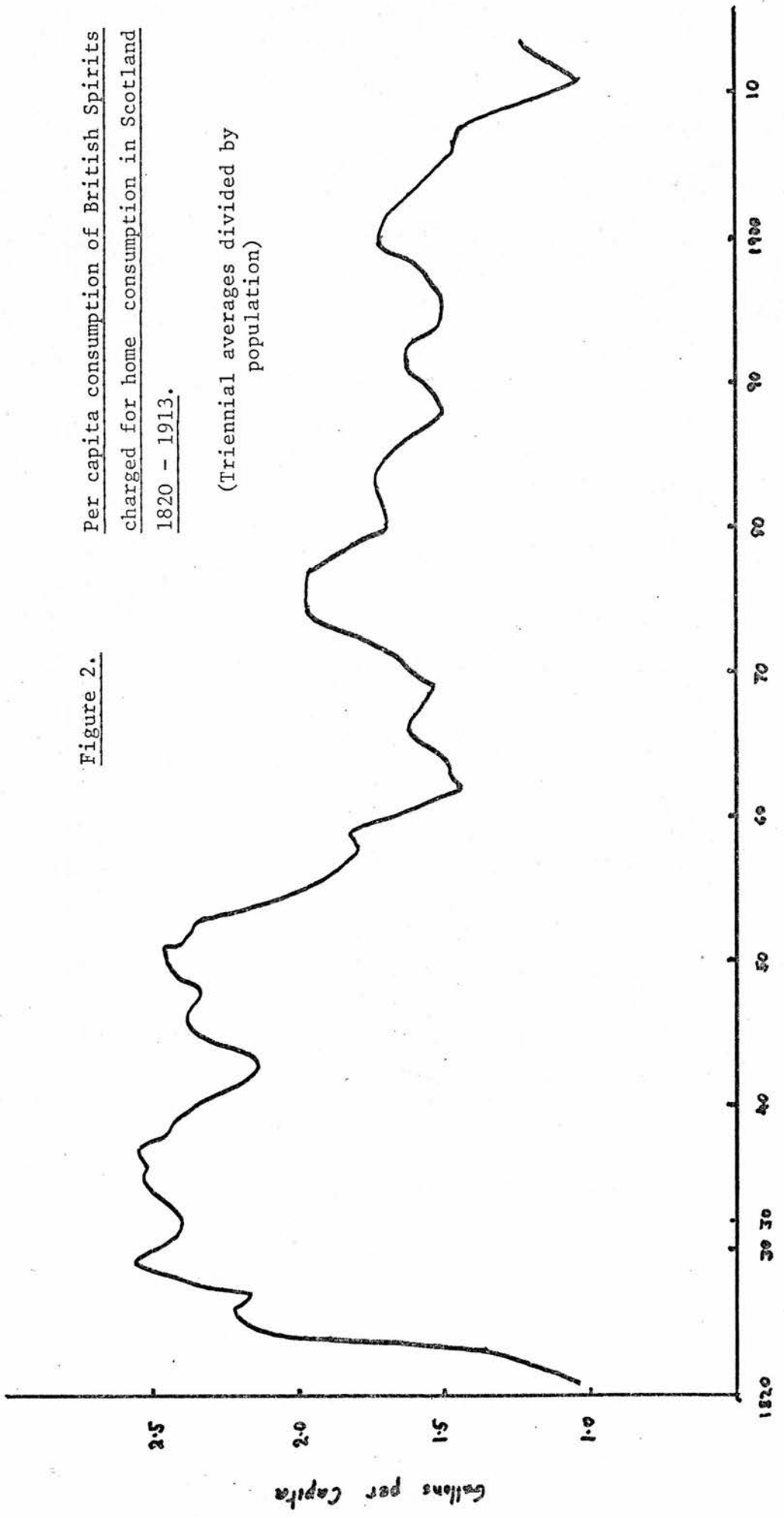
2. Figure 2

3. Op.Cit. Inland Revenue Report 1870. P.P.1870 Vol XX p.12. Duty on Spirits/gal.

	<u>1823</u>	<u>1825</u>
England	11s.8 $\frac{1}{4}$ d.	7s.
Scotland	2s.4 $\frac{3}{4}$ d.	2s.4 $\frac{3}{4}$ d.

Figure 2.
Per capita consumption of British Spirits
charged for home consumption in Scotland
1820 - 1913.

(Triennial averages divided by
population)



'Decline in the trend growth of beer production after 1800 must have owed something to a reversal of this demand towards spirits..... gin consumption in the early 19th century, particularly in the 1820 s, showed a marked increase'.¹

How much worse was the competitive position of Scottish brewers in the face of a rapidly growing, technologically progressive distilling industry, able for reasons of comparative advantage and excise inefficiency to sell its product at a far lower price than its English equivalent.

English brewers had by the late 18th century already developed large scale production, and benefitted from a relatively stable and efficient excise administration. Scottish brewers complained that the absence of the latter in Scotland led to an uncertain trading climate which favoured the small operator.

'Thus though a brewer might do tolerably well while he carried on his works on a small scale, yet the moment he began to enlarge them, he found himself in quite a different situation'.²

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1. P. Mathias The Brewing Industry in England 1700 - 1830 Cambridge 1959 p.375.
Subsequently Mathias. Brewing Industry.
 2. An Impartial Account of the conduct of the Excise towards the Breweries in Scotland, particularly in Edinburgh etc . (attributed to Hugh Bell, brewer) Edinburgh 1791. pp.83/84
subsequently An Impartial Account .

The result of small scale semi-clandestine operations was bad Scottish beer which led to 'the pernicious custom of drinking spirits to excess'.¹ Beer in Scotland does not appear to have been cheaper than its English equivalent, despite lower malt duty, and there is evidence that it was being imported from the South.^{2,3} This would suggest that, compared with England, the price of beer in Scotland relative to spirits was high. Contemporaries seem to have been aware of the situation.

'Let the revenue laws be reviewed. By them the people have been in a manner compelled to use spiritous liquors, for want of wholesome beer. The present mode of gauging the the brewer and of farming the duties to the distiller, has had the unavoidable effect of ruining the former and encouraging the latter. The consequence is, that the breweries in most parts of Scotland produce a thin sour stuff, under the name of small beer, which is all the common people can possibly get for their money, unless they go to the expense of English porter, now become the beverage of the more opulent. The poor labourer, finding that the beer he purchases neither warms nor nourishes him, flies unavoidably to ardent spirits, now selling at a very reduced price'.⁴

Scottish beer in the 1790's, therefore, both from the point of view of quality and price differential was particularly hard put to it to compete with whisky.

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1. Ibid. Introduction pp iii-iv
 2. Ibid. An Impartial Account p.35 Porter 30/- barrel 1790.
Mathias Brewing Industry p.162 Porter 30/- barrel during latter half of 18th century.
 3. Op.Cit. An Impartial Account. .VI
Op.Cit. S.C. on Scotch Distillery Duties P.P. 1797/98. Vol XXI
p. 144 Appendix 1A. Evidence of Alex Miller.
 4. O.S.A. VIII p.294 Stirling.

'The low Price of Spirits and the High Price of brewed liquors.....unfortunately occasioned the preference and increased consumption of the former.'¹

Wartime difficulties intensified rather than alleviated the problem of the brewers. Beer prices in England increased rapidly as corn rose in price and taxation reached emergency levels, causing a renewal of demand for spirits. Scottish brewers were, if anything, less fortunate. The malt tax, half the English rate in 1800, was made uniform in the two countries as it was increased.² Faced with rising costs, the Scottish brewers followed the usual practice of the industry in reducing the strength and quality of the beer. The realisation that this accelerated the substitution of whisky for beer led them to demand a reduction in the malt duty after the war. This, testified a Scottish brewer, 'would be greatly to the advantage of the brewer to be able to make his beer better and thereby able to compete with the raw grained whisky, the people have got very much into the habit of drinking that, which I think is very bad for them.'³

Not surprisingly the quantity of beer consumed in Scotland seems to have declined between 1740s and the 1820s . The quantity of malt which paid malt duty annually was certainly greater before the war than in the five years after.⁴

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1. Op.Cit. S.C. on Scotch Distillery Duties P.P. 1797/98 Vol XXI Appendix 26 p289. Memorial of the Heritors etc. of Edinburgh.
 2. Report of the Select Committee on Petitions complaining of the Additional Duty on Malt in Scotland. Parl. Papers 1821 Vol VIII. pp 84/85 Tables 11 and 12 subsequently S.C. on Malt Duties 1821.
 3. Ibid. Evidence of Thomas Jopland. p.35.
 4. Ibid. Table II p.84. Malted grain was used for making whisky in Scotland. Distillers also complained about increased duty. The important effect of this was to give further incentives to illicit production in the Highlands.

In the city of Glasgow, beer production fell by one quarter at a time when the population nearly doubled. By the early 1820's the total beer production of Scotland had stabilised at an annual figure of around 330,000 barrels, of which about two thirds was small beer.¹ English production, predominately of strong beer, exceeded 7 million gallons.² Thus for a population 6 times that of Scotland, beer consumption was 22 times as great. Well might a Scottish M.P. explain to an English select committee in 1830:

'beer is not the common drink of the lower orders of Scotland. They do use beer along with their spirits, but an alehouse for the purpose of selling beer alone is a thing almost unknown. A certificate is only valuable in giving the power to sell spirits'.³

Beer in Scotland had been relegated from the position of a substitute for whisky to that of a drink for washing it down.

Nothing occurred to change this established pattern until the 1850 s. There were minor increases in the duty on spirits, but the large differential between England and Scotland was maintained.⁴ When government became convinced that there was no longer a danger of reversion to illicit distillation in Scotland, the excise duties were equalised. Between 1853 and 1857 the excise duty on Scottish

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1. 2. An account of the Number of Barrels of Strong and Table beers chargeable on the Duties of Excise brewed in England, Scotland and Wales from 1817 to 1822. Parl.Papers 1822 Vol. XXI Tables 1 and 2.
 3. Report of the Select Committee on the Sale of Beer. Parl.Papers 1830 Vol X Avidence of Hume Drummond, M.P. for Perthshire subsequently S.C. Sale of Beer.
 4. Op .Cit. Inland Revenue Report 1870 P.P. 1870 Vol XX P 21.

spirits rose from 3s.8d. per gallon to 8/-. Gladstone raised the United Kingdom level to 10/- per gallon in 1861. In less than a decade therefore the excise duty on whisky rose by 275%. The actual increase in taxation was somewhat less, since concessions were made to the distillers, in the form of a repeal of the malt tax and allowance for evaporation losses in bond. In 1850 the 'Scotsman' had estimated that these added 8d. per gallon to production costs.¹ The burden of taxation was approximately doubled therefore and already the modern position had been reached in which it accounted for the largest proportion of the purchase price.

Inevitably the increase was reflected in retail prices, but in no straightforward way. There were at that time wide variations in the quality of whisky and the common practice of retailing from the cask made it easy for the publican to adulterate or water his stock. Prices in public houses are therefore difficult to compare. The 'Social Reformer' describing 'How public house profits are made' quoted William Paton, landlord of the Fifeshire Inn :

'I sell my 8d. whisky as I get it from the merchant. I have got a profit of 6s. per gallon off that whisky. I water my 7d. whisky to the extent of reducing it to proof'.²

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1. The Scotsman June 22, 1850.
 2. Social Reformer Feb. 1870 p167

The Stormont Arms Hotel had three prices, 6d. 7d. and 8d. per gill and it was generally agreed that watered whisky was more profitable to the retailer. When prices rose in the 1850's there was an added incentive to dilution, in order to minimise the additional price of the standard measure to the consumer.¹

'The old retail price of whisky, before 1855, used to be 3d. per gill so that the vendor if he sold the same liquor ought now to charge 5d per gill. But he does no such thing - he only charges 4d. ———He waters down the 5d. worth of whisky till he can afford to sell it for 4d.'²

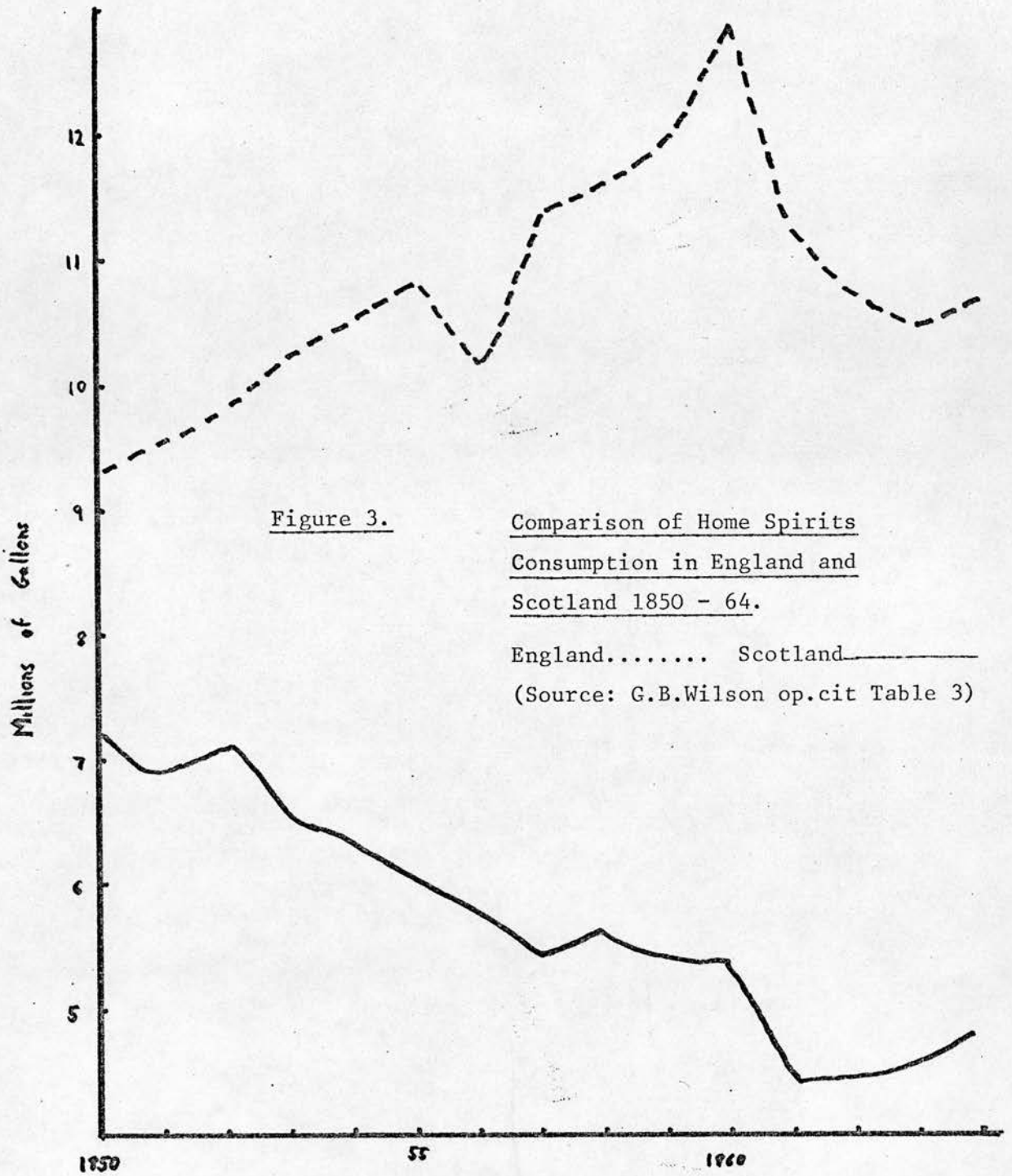
In 1794, according to the Edinburgh magistrates, 'the lower Orders of Persons purchased a Half Gill, or one Eighth of a Pint for a Halfpenny'.³ 3d. per gill seems to have been about the lowest retail price in the 1830 s. Andrew Douglas supplemented his income as village schoolmaster by under-cutting the publicans with whisky at 3d. per gill.⁴ In 1839 best malt whisky purchasable in Scotland 'such whisky as would bring above a guinea per gallon in England' sold at 11/- to 12/- per gallon, while inferior grain whisky sold at 6/- to 7/- per gallon, 'or probably threepence a gill'.⁵ The effect of additional taxation, the 'Scotsman' declared, had been to double the price of whisky in the last few years.⁶

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1. Note Although whisky was sold in the 19th century in very small measures, e.g. by the pennyworth, the gill or $\frac{1}{2}$ gill seem to have been the common quantity bought in public houses. This was not necessarily the imperial gill however, but the 'small gill' or 'glass gill' 38 to 42 to the gallon.
 2. Saturday Review. Vol. 6 Aug. 21 1858. p 182.
 3. Op.Cit. S.C. on Scotch Distillery Duties. P.P. 1797/98 Vol. XXI Appendix 26 p 389.
 4. Andrew Douglas. History of the Village of Ferryden . Montrose. 1857 p 15
 5. Scottish Temperance Journal March 12 1839 Extract from Chambers Journal .
 6. The Scotsman 5th May 1858.

Gladstone's 1860 budget was followed by meetings of the publicans of Glasgow and Edinburgh and Leith to fix new retail prices. Both groups agreed on an increase of 1d. per gill. In Glasgow this meant that whisky which cost the publican 13s.6d. per gallon wholesale brought in 18s.6d. by selling it at 7d, per 'small gill'.¹ The new minimum price fixed in Edinburgh was 5d. which may indicate that Glasgow drinkers preferred their whisky undiluted.² By the end of the decade the general price for whisky in Edinburgh seems to have been 6d. per 'glass gill', two parts water to 5 whisky.³ The 3d. gill had risen to 6d. and whisky no longer enjoyed the competitive advantaged in Scotland which had pertained since the early days of its large scale manufacture and consumption.

As far as the price of whisky was concerned the 'Scotsman' was not far out, but in its zeal to discredit the licensing laws it forgot political economy and maintained that there had been no significant fall in consumption.⁴ The number and rapidity of duty changes complicate interpretation of the annual statistics of whisky consumption.⁵ Overall however they show a significant decline in total Scottish consumption between 1852 and 1860, at a time when English consumption was growing.⁶ No exact figures of beer consumption are available for Scotland.

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1. Scottish Temperance League Weekly Journal. July 21st 1860. p.950.
 2. Ibid. July 28th, 1860 p.959.
 3. Social Reformer April 1867, see also Rev. John Kirk Social Politics London and Glasgow 1870 p.83.
 4. The Scotsman 5th May, 1858.
 5. Op.Cit. Inland Revenue Report 1870. P.P.1870 Volc XX. p 21.
 6. Figure 3.



Changes in duty per gal.

		<u>England</u>	<u>Scotland</u>
	1849	7/10	3/8
	1853	7/10	4/8
8 May	1854	7/10	5/8
26 May	1854	7/10	6/-
	1855	8/-	7/10
October	1855	8/-	8/-
	1860	10/-	10/-

'Although the number of brewers in Scotland is not unduly small, the larger ones send a lot of beer to England and export it and it is known that the consumption per head in Scotland is much smaller than in England, though no official figures are available to support this statement'.¹

Like the distilling industry the Scottish brewing industry looked to external markets, and specialised in strong bottled beers with good keeping and travelling properties. 'Messrs. Calder & Co. export largely' reported Barnard of one of the largest Alloa firms, and the practice has continued into recent times. 'The amount of Scottish beer exported is a much larger proportion of the total output than in England'.^{2,3} Even so there is little doubt that beer consumption in Scotland rose in the 1850's as whisky became dearer. It is possible to calculate the annual production of the Scottish brewing industry and estimate the proportion of its output which was consumed at home.⁴ Using this technique the Inland Revenue were able to show a 60% increase in beer drinking by the Scots and congratulated themselves on the social benefits as well as the fiscal of heavier taxes on spirits.⁵ While beer consumption per capita was still far

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1. M.G. Kendall Sources and Nature of the Statistics of the United Kingdom 2 Vols. London 1952 Vol. 1 p124.
 2. Alfred Barnard - Noted Breweries of Great Britain and Ireland London 1890 p393 subsequently Barnard Noted Breweries.
 3. M.W. Fogarty(ed) Nuffield College Social Reconstruction Survey. London 1948 Ch.IV
 4. Op.Cit. G.B.Wilson, Ch. 5.
 5. Op.Cit. Inland Revenue Report 1870 P.P. 1870 Vol. XX p 23.

larger in England, between 1852 and 1864 per capita consumption in Scotland had been growing much faster. Increase of the relative price of whisky diminished consumption 'While the demand for ale and porter has proportionately increased'.¹

Table 1

	Beer consumption England. gals/capita	Beer consumption Scotland gals/capita	Home spirits England gals/capita	Home spirits Scotland gals/capita
1852	30.6	7.2	0.57	2.35
1864	34.2	11.5	0.79	1.50
1891	27.2	10.5	0.89	1.63
1900	28.2	12.1	0.99	1.73
1908	23.6	9.3	0.75	1.46

Sources 1852/64 Inland Revenue Report 1870 P.P.1870 Vol XX p23
1891/1908 G.B.Wilson.

1. Scottish Temperance League Weekly Journal. Aug. 25 1870.
p.1028 Quoting Allca Advertiser .

An important change had taken place in the drinking habits of the Scots, but it was not a fundamental one. Unlike England there remained few public houses in Scotland which sold only beer, 573 in 1859 compared with 52,590 in England and Wales. Producer areas like Alloa with its 'hard ale' houses were exceptional. A doubling of the price of whisky caused the Scots to use it a little more sparingly which meant washing it down with more beer. After 1860 there were no large increases in the duty on spirits until 1909. Over this half century the proportions of beer and whisky consumed in Scotland changed little from the pattern established in the 1860 s. There was no marked swing to beer as there was in Ireland and Scottish drinking preferences remained noticeably different from those of England.¹ It could still be said in 1910 as in 1830 'the national drink of Scotland is spirits not beer'.²

The influence of the excise administration does not of course provide an adequate explanation of the pre-eminence of distilling in Scotland; that is a task for historians of the industry, although it would not be the first time that its inadequacies had assisted the development of a major Scottish industry. Any study of the drinking habits of Scotland must, however, account for the national preference for whisky almost to the exclusion of other drinks. Taxation has

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1. G.B. Wilson. A statistical review of the Variations during the last 20 years in the consumption of intoxicating drinks in the U.K. 1890-1909. Journal of the Royal Statistical Society 75, 1911-12.
 2. Ibid. p 229.

been historically a major constituent of the retail price of spirits and has thereby influenced the extent of their consumption. Gin drinking in 18th century England was eventually brought under control by fiscal measures after attempts to regulate retailing had failed.¹

In Scotland at a time when rising incomes and improvements in the organisation and technology of distilling favoured the increased consumption of whisky, taxation could not be effectively levied. The heritors and magistrates of the County of Edinburgh understood this situation very well.

'There are two circumstances which affect this part of the Country in a particular degree: the Low Price of Spirits and the High Price of brewed Liquors, which unfortunately occasioned the preference for the former.' ²

Their explanation is essentially that offered here. The relative cheapness of whisky in Scotland between the 1780s and the 1850s accounts for its supremacy in competition with beer. Thus during the period of intense social and cultural change whisky became established as the characteristic form of alcohol consumption in Scotland.

Now that whisky is almost a national symbol along with the thistle and the saltire, to explain away the Scotman's love for whisky in terms of differential prices will appear sacrilegious to some.

1. Op.Cit. P. Mathias Brewing Industry P 126.

2. Op.Cit. S.C. on Scotch Distillery Duties, P.P. 1797/98 Vol XXI Appendix 26.

It is further evidence at least of the shrewdness of our forefathers where value for money was concerned. Inevitably, however, it lacks the glamour and universality of other explanations. Whisky has been regarded as almost necessary for the support of life in a country noted for the severity of its physical and religious climate.

'The fact seems to be that Scotland, being an inclement country, the people have naturally a liking for ardent spirits. This is a climatic fact. All northern peoples are great consumers of alcoholic drinks and it is useless to attempt to deal with this fact by coarse material arguments.' 1

A similar correlation was drawn between spirit drinking and the Protestant religion.

'The hardy races, whose weakness is alcohol, exhibit their mental strength in resistance to superstition'. 2

One drawback with such explanations is that they cannot satisfactorily account for the changes that have taken place in Scottish drinking habits. Steep rises in whisky prices in the 20th century, greater than those of the 1850's have been mourned by national bards with quite as much feeling as Burns' lament for Ferintosh.

'Twelve and a tanner a bottle
That's what it cost me the day
Twelve and a tanner a bottle
Man it tak's a' the pleasure away'

sang Will Fyfe at the
end of the Great War. Hugh McDiarmid was saying exactly the same

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1. Saturday Review Aug. 21 1858.
 2. Fortnightly Review. 1873 Vol XIII p 478.

thing to a more intellectual audience.¹ The consequences of steep sudden additional taxation appear to have been similar to those experienced in the 1850's, a decline in consumption of whisky and a switch to beer.

'in Glasgow pubs today, at least ninety per cent of the drinking is of beer - and mere "swipes" at that; 'beer' which never saw a hop. I can remember the time when it was the other way about. What beer was consumed was used simply as a 'chaser' to the whisky.....For of course you get drunk quicker on whisky plus water than neat whisky'.²

Scots today drink annually a much smaller quantity of whisky than their 19th century antecedents, and gradually they have drawn closer in their libations to the habits of the English.

Climatic changes have hardly been sufficiently great to explain this and it would bring small comfort to the Church of Scotland to attribute it to the failing powers of our national faith.³ Coarse material arguments have their advantages therefore, but their limitations too. They offer no explanation of the continuing differences in national drinking habits after 1860 and the tenacity with which the Scots have held to their preference for whisky. A

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1. Hugh McDiarmid 'A Drunk Man Looks at the Thistle'.
 2. Hugh McDiarmid The Dour Drinkers of Glasgow in The American Mercury March 1952, repub. in Uncanny Scots London 1968.
 3. European troops in warmer climates did not show signs of greater sobriety. See Remarks on a paper by Mr. Marshall, deputy inspector-general of army hospitals (published in Edinburgh Medical and Surgical Journal) on the abuse of spiritous liquors by the European troops in India. Edinburgh 1834.

nip and a half pint is even now the characteristic Scottish drink. The conclusion must be therefore that the propensity to spirit drinking, formed in the 18th and early 19th centuries, became part of the cultural pattern of Scottish alcohol consumption and has been modified only slowly by economic factors.

Scotland's preference for spirits was no light matter to the 19th century. Arguably it affected the way alcohol was used in Scotland. Certainly it had direct and important influence on the attitude of society to drink in that country. The belief that spirits were harmful to the health and morals of the lower classes had its origins in the Gin Age of 18th Century London, and was indelibly imprinted on the national conscience by Hogarth. That conclusion was not necessarily without foundation. Gin drinking was sufficiently different in a society inured to intoxication to be called 'a new kind of drunkenness'.¹ Such controlled experiments as have been carried out have tended to support the view that there is a direct relationship between the rapidity of intoxication and the concentration of the alcohol consumed.^{2,3.} It is not surprising therefore that Sir John Sinclair, with the evidence of the Old Statistical Account before him, should have expressed concern at the changes taking place in Scottish drinking habits. It was certainly assumed in the 19th

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1. Henry Fielding. An Inquiry into the causes of the late increase of Robbers. London 1751 p 27.
 2. E.L. Collis and M. Greenwood, The Health of the Industrial Worker London 1921. pp 272-274.
 3. Recent work by social anthropologists tends to throw doubt on such experiments on the grounds that the Factors which determine the effects of alcohol are sociological rather than physiological, implying that the rapidity of intoxication is less a function of the property of the drink than the expectations of the drinker.
see D.G. Mandelbaum Alcohol and Culture Current Anthropology
Vol 6 1965

Century that ardent spirits led more quickly and certainly to physical intoxication.¹ It was also believed that spirit drinking resulted in particularly undesirable forms of drunken behaviour. Thus, the Report of the Royal Commission on the Licensing Laws of 1899 included whisky drinking in Scotland under the heading of special causes of drunkenness in that country.

'As the subject of whisky has been referred to, it is obvious that the national drink of Scotland is more potent in producing disorderly drunkenness than the National beverage of England'.²

The temperance movement itself, in its initial phase, was a product of this assumption and was opposed to spirit drinking only. Long after the movement committed itself to total abstinence, ardent spirits continued to be condemned by those who were not teetotalers but were concerned about the intemperance of the lower orders. Anti-spirits sentiments were thus a consistent feature of upper class attitudes to the drink question while whisky was believed to be the drink of the working class. It was characteristic of the members of a ruling class that they should believe that the vice of the working classes lay in not being like them. A group of M.P s in Parliament in the 1850 s was dedicated to encouraging the use of wine by the working classes. Lord Kinnaird, the architect of the Scottish licensing laws spoke for many when he advocated the spread of beer

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1. Sir John Sinclair. Analysis of the Statistical Account of Scotland. Edinburgh 1825. p 142.
 2. Report of the Royal Commission on the Licensing Laws. Part II (Scotland) Parl. Papers 1899 Vol XXXV . p 175

drinking among the working population of Scotland. There was a happy coincidence of free trade and the promotion of morality in Gladstone's 1860 budget which reduced the duties on imported wine as it raised those on home spirits. Gladstone justified this action as encouraging the use of more wholesome beverages and the Inland Revenue, echoing their master's assumptions, congratulated themselves on the outcome. Influential opinion, which had no truck with teetotalism, was nevertheless sensitive to spirit drinking.

In England roast beef and good ale was part of the emotional symbolism of traditional conservatives. In Scotland whisky was not yet championed by patriots who were, indeed, quite likely to be teetotalers. Burns praised in all honesty its intoxicating qualities, but this was unlikely to commend it to respectable opinion in the 19th century. Whatever its other merits, nobody sang of the wholesomeness of whisky and folk songs often hint at the destructive nature of the drink.

'Come aw ye weavers ye Calton weavers
Come aw ye weavers where'er ye be
Beware of whisky, Nancy whisky,
She'll ruin you as she ruined me'.

There could be no counterpart in Scotland to that large and influential body of opinion in England which defended the right of the freeborn Englishman to his beer as a valuable food and a wholesome beverage necessary for the support of hard labour. By contrast the belief that ardent spirits were especially pernicious made the drinking habits of Scotland difficult to defend.

'There is a marked difference in the social habitudes of the two peoples in relation to intoxicating drink.....the "milder liquors" of England are recognised by society as "wholesome or needful beverages"'. 1

The absence of this was used by Scottish teetotallers to explain the earlier success of their cause in Scotland. This goes some way towards explaining the attitude of public opinion in Scotland which at certain periods was much more unanimous in opposition to drink than it was in England. If drink was to be condemned the assumptions of the 19th century especially condemned the drink of the Scots. Scotland's reputation as a spirit drinking country strengthened the view that drunkenness was an especially serious problem there and provided justification for more stringent measures of control.

1. Temperance Congress of 1862, Proceedings. London 1862 p 146

CHAPTER 2

Industrialisation and Scottish Drinking Patterns.

When the Temperance movement first got under way in Scotland in the early 1830's, there was a natural tendency, familiar to historians, to see the new concern about drunkenness as the natural outcome of a recent objective increase in the extent of the problem. Erroneous official statistics of whisky consumption were a convenient/^{ex} post facto justification of this concern. The 1860 Royal Commission on the Licensing Laws (Scotland) observed in its report

'It is well known that there was in Scotland a great and sudden increase of intemperance consequent on the reduction of the spirit duty in 1823 from 6s.2d. to 2s.4 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. per imperial gallon'. 1

This may be taken to mark the acceptance of the idea into the conventional wisdom. Since police statistics of arrests for drunkenness were only beginning to become available there was no alternative means of quantifying drunkenness in a society still at an impressionable age in the use of statistics.

A relationship between quantity of alcohol consumed and the extent of drunkenness is not necessarily an invalid one.

1. Op.Cit R.C. Licensing Laws (Scotland) P.P. 1860 Vol XXXIII Report

In a country as culturally diverse and undergoing as rapid social change as Scotland in the first half of the 19th century, it is however unsafe to assume such a relationship. Well before industrialisation drink was used differently in different areas of the country and by different social groups. Travellers in the Highlands had long commented on the ability of the natives to consume enormous quantities of whisky without becoming intoxicated. 'Always drinking but never drunk' was the maxim of the Highlander according to Lord Teignmouth.¹ The explanation of the remarkable ability of the Celts to hold their liquor lies in the patterns of alcohol usage in Highland society. Whisky, by the late 18th century, was of great importance to the Highland economy. Distillation provided an outlet for the poor quality barley of the area and enabled tenants to pay their rent. Hence the connivance of landlords at illicit distillation until they realised the potential profits in operating distilleries themselves. Its place in the economy was paralleled by its place in Highland culture. This was recognised by the excise and used as a justification for a lower still duty on the grounds that

'the moderate consumption of spirits is reckoned as a necessary and not as a luxurious or pernicious article of life'.²

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1. Lord Teignmouth. Sketches of the Coasts and Islands of Scotland and the Isle of Man. 2 Vols. London 1834. p.201 subsequently Teignmouth Sketches
 2. Op.Cit. S.C. on Scotch Distillery Duties P.P. 1797/98 Vol XXI Appendix 22.

Mrs. Smith described with retrospective horror the frequency with which whisky was used in a well-run Highland household.

'At every house it was offered, at every house it must be tasted or offence would be given, so we were taught to believe..... whisky drinking was and is the bane of that country; from early morning till late at night it went on. Decent gentlemen began the day with a dram. In our house the bottle of whisky, with its accompaniment of a silver salver full of small glasses was placed on the side-table with cold meat every morning. In the pantry a bottle of whisky was the allowance per day, with bread and cheese in any required quantity, for such messengers or visitors whose errands sent them in that direction. The very poorest cottages could offer whisky; all the men engaged in the wood manufacture drank it in goblets three times a day, yet except at a merry making we never saw any one tipsy'. 1

The exception made in the last sentence is an important one.

Highlanders certainly did get drunk as the legendary stories of Highland funerals testify.² Teignmouth also thought that most heavy drinking took place at public meetings, fairs and festivals.³

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1. Mrs. E. Smith. *Memoirs of a Highland Lady.* London 1898. p183
subsequently Mrs. E. Smith *Memoirs.*
The period referred to is about 1812.
 2. H.G. Graham. *The Social Life of Scotland in the 18th Century .*
London 1899. One volume reprinted edition 1964.
pp 52-55.
 3. Op.Cit. Teignmouth. *Sketches* p.201

Whisky was in regular and constant use as a beverage, taken as a refreshment and with meals. It was especially important as a symbol of hospitality and as a reward for small services. The economist, McCulloch, remarked that the 44,000 gallons accounted by the excise statistics of 1821 as the entire annual consumption of the Highland area:

'would hardly be sufficient for the demand of two moderately populous parishes'.¹

Certainly, given the consumption patterns of the Highlanders, very large quantities of whisky could be drunk without leading to widespread intoxication. What distinguished the use of alcohol by the Celts was its everyday function, in the manner of wine in France, a country notable for its sobriety in the eyes of the early temperance reformers. The drinking customs of the Highlands might therefore be described as typical of those of a producer area. Highland drinking habits remained largely unchanged at the end of the 19th century and retain their distinctive features up to the present day.^{2,3}

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1. Edinburgh Review. Vol. L 1829-30 p.491.
 2. Sir Archibald Geikie. Scottish Reminiscences. Glasgow 1904. p.312.
 3. Rev. R.J. Henderson The Whisky Culture of Speyside
Journal of the Camberwell Council on Alcoholism
Vol. 2 No. 3 Sept. 1970.

In a number of respects the drinking habits of the rural Lowlands differed from those of the Highlands. For one thing there were not the supply advantages which inhabitants of a producer area enjoyed and the need to purchase drink from very meagre incomes imposed restraint. Alexander Somerville's father, a prototype of the patriarch of the 'Cottars Saturday Night' 'had not spent 40 shillings on drink in forty years'¹. He should not be regarded as untypical.

It was often observed in the 19th century that the inhabitants of country areas were less given to frequent heavy drinking than those of neighbouring towns or industrial settlements.² Not all of this can be dismissed as the sentimental idealising of a passing rural Scotland or false impression created by the concentration of population in the towns. A number of the Local Reports on the sanitary condition of the labouring population of Scotland, by men who were far from being of Dr. Chalmers' frame of mind, commented on the sobriety of agricultural workers.³

'Sobriety forms one of the characteristics of the Hind. Many of these people seldom taste whisky, but this arises not from any artificial tie such as the abstinence-pledge, which they in general despise, but from a horror they possess at the practice of "drinking".'⁴

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1. Alexander Somerville. Autobiography of a Working Man. First published London 1848. New Ed. London 1967 p.19.
 2. Autobiography of Thomas Guthrie DD. 2 Vols London 1874. Vol I Part V subsequently Dr. Guthrie Autobiography.
 3. Local Reports of the Sanitary condition of the Labouring Population of Scotland. 1842 subsequently Local Sanitary Reports 1842 Tranent, Lanark, Musselburgh, Inveresk.
 4. Ibid. Tranent p 91

This horror did not lead to total abstinence and was sometimes relaxed, for drunkenness was not unknown among farm workers. Markets, funerals and other festive events were legitimate occasions for alcoholic excess. Above all the Bacchannalian character of hiring fairs became notorious once the question of drunkenness was established in the public consciousness. Even so Temperance critics of the behaviour of labourers at hiring fairs admitted

'many of them take little drink at other times'¹.

Old Statistical Account reports of the replacement of beer by whisky seem to suggest that it was not entirely unknown at meals and as a refreshment in the South. Farmers gave whisky to workers in the exceptionally strenuous conditions of the harvest.² Even so one of the major differences between the drinking customs of the rural Lowlands and the Highlands was the absence of the frequent daily use of alcohol. Where they resembled each other was in the existence of periodic events which gave licence to excessive drinking.

Drunkenness at fairs and festivals, funerals and Hogmanay was general throughout Scotland and extended to the population of the towns. Far less is known about the use of alcohol by urban workers in pre-industrial Scotland, compared to their social superiors.

1, Scottish Review 1854 p 373

2, Op.Cit. Alexander Somerville. Autobiography of a Working Man.
p 44.

Fortunately many of the 'drinking usages' assiduously collected by John Dunlop in the 1830_s were evidently of some antiquity and help to supply the deficiency of evidence.¹ Drink was closely bound up with the employment of craftsmen in the traditional trades. A fee of whisky was demanded at each stage of an apprentice's career. Roofing pints, founding pints, joist money, marked in a broadly similar way, stages in the completion of a job. The offering of a drink to seal a bargain was a common practice at a time when the producer often sold his own goods and bargained with the purchaser over the price. In this way whisky oiled the wheels of commerce. Drinking was thus attached to many of the common economic activities of the town in a way not exactly paralleled in rural society. Not all of these customs by any means led to outright drunkenness but the urban worker had more opportunities for intoxication than his rural counterpart. Drunkenness was more likely to be encountered in towns outwith the generally observed festivals.

This is of course a much oversimplified picture of the differences and similarities of drinking habits among the lower classes of Scotland before 1820. It does permit, however, a few tentative general conclusions about the place of alcohol in Scottish society and the way in which its most harmful effects were controlled. What for example were the main uses of alcohol? Alcoholic drinks are usually considered to be a food. Beer in England was regarded as a valuable

1. John Dunlop The Artificial and Compulsory Drinking Usages of
 North Britain Greenock 1836
 subsequently Dunlop Drinking Usages of North Britain.

and necessary part of the diet of workers performing hard labour.

'In Scotland the state of matters in this respect is widely different. Liquors are not at all to the same extent recognised there as food but rather as mere special ministrants to sociality or jollity'.¹

Whisky also had important associations with courtesy and hospitality and its use in these respects was strictly defined by rules of etiquette.² This aspect of Scottish drinking was not, of course, peculiar to Scotland but it was in Dunlop's view observed with a strictness unparalleled in any other country.³ Drinking to the point of intoxication was condoned at fairs and holidays, funerals and festivals. Whisky was thus intimately associated with many of the things most dear to the Scots, with hospitality, with expressions of equality among men of similar standing, with the great occasions of family life and the enjoyment of what brief recreations existed. It was not surprising that John Dunlop emphasised the difficulty of breaking the hold of such strongly rooted conventions.

One other feature of pre-industrial Scottish society helps to explain why drunkenness was not singled out as a problem. Excessive drinking had traditionally been the mark of rank and wealth and the leaders of Scottish society were slower to abandon their traditional attachment to heavy drinking than their English counterparts.

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1. Rev. John Guthrie (Greenock)
Restrictive legislation in regard to the strong Drink Traffic - its history and results in the North and its prospects in the South .
in Temperance Congress of 1862, Proceedings. London 1862.
p146.
 2. Op.Cit. John Dunlop. Drinking Usages of North Britain esp p3 and p 64.
 3. Ibid p6

Stories of the alcoholic excesses and escapades of the Scottish ruling class have filled many books and have now passed into the considerable folklore associated with the place of drink in Scottish culture.¹ They need no repetition here. Two points have to be made: that although change towards more temperate habits was underway by 1800, heavy drinking remained a feature of upper class conduct in town and country into the 19th century: that no attempt was made to conceal this state of affairs, taverns for instance being openly patronised by the cream of Edinburgh society.² Social conventions governing the use of alcohol were especially lax among the upper classes and external sanctions affected them least. The petty tyranny of Church courts and the pressures of the local community were less relevant to them and there was no restriction of means to ration their consumption. Drinking, on occasions to the point of intoxication, was a custom therefore common to all classes, but it was most prevalent among the ruling class.

Within the social and economic framework of the period between the 1770's and the 1820's the general consumption of alcohol posed fewer problems than it would in a more socially and technologically complex society. Since the Highlanders, with their temperate drinking habits, still accounted for a quite large proportion of the population and consumed a disproportionate share of the whisky, the quantity used annually provides no indication of the extent of drunkenness.

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1. The best of these books giving original sources are
H.G. Graham *The Social Life of Scotland in the 18th Century*
4th Ed. London 1964. Chs. 1 - 4.
Marjorie Plant. *The Domestic Life of Scotland in the 18th Century*
Edinburgh 1952. Ch. 5.
 2. Op Cit. H.G.Graham *The Social Life of Scotland in the 18th Century*
pp 104 - 107.

Drunkenness was not uncommon but the taking of alcohol was governed by a complex system of social and institutional controls which ensured that a good deal of intoxication took place at times and occasions of general licence. This tended to reduce any potentially harmful economic effects of alcohol consumption in the days before factory organisation made the effort of all dependent upon each. As long as intoxication was part of the social behaviour of all social classes, those in authority were not in a good position to condemn the occasional excesses of their social inferiors. It is possible to understand how the consumption of more, and more concentrated, alcohol could take place in pre-industrial Scotland in the absence of a licensing system or effective control by the excise, without arousing anything like the concern that marked the mid 19th century when per capita consumption of spirits was actually falling. By then, the failure of traditional institutions like the Church courts, the breakdown of the sanction of small communities in the new industrial areas and the opportunities presented by higher money wages in industry were removing the old controls. Thus the cultural legacy bequeathed to industrial Scotland contained strong alcoholic traditions but a weakening system for mitigating their harmful effects.

In pre-industrial Scotland, wealth, leisure and education removed constraints on drunkenness rather than strengthened them. In the 19th century the reverse came to be true. How swift and complete was the change in the drinking habits of the upper classes can be seen in the way old manners and customs were chronicled by those who had experienced them. In Lord Cockburn's reminiscences the "three bottle men" and upper class frequenters of taverns and clubs were already a

quaint and faintly embarrassing memory of coarser antique times. Mrs. Smith recalled the old days of frequent imbibing in the Highlands with a new righteousness.

'I am sure now that had we steadily refused compliance with so incorrect a custom, it would have been far better for ourselves and might all the sooner have put a stop to so pernicious a habit among the people'.¹

Why the leaders of society became more restrained and decorous in the first quarters of the 19th century is beyond the scope of this study. Greater moderation in the use of alcohol was only one aspect of fundamental changes in conventional behaviour. The banishment of drunkenness from polite society observed Dean Ramsay

'involves more than a mere change in the custom or practice of social life. It is a change in men's sentiments and feelings on a certain great question of morals'.²

It was a change however which was not emulated by large sections of the working classes of Scotland, for whom physical intoxication did not become unacceptable conduct.

1. Op.Cit. Mrs. E. Smith Memoirs p 183.

2. Dean Ramsay Memoirs of Scottish Life and Character
20th Ed. Edinburgh 1871. p 57.

This class divergence in the use of alcohol formed the initial premise of the 1834 Select Committee on Drunkenness. Evidence from Scottish witnesses supported the committee's conclusion that intoxication had been on the decline among 'the higher and middle ranks of society' but made it clear that they still drank frequently.¹

Dunlop, the pioneer sociologist, used nothing as vague as class labels but divided Scottish society into six categories by income and social status. Of these the first two (income of over £1000 a year) had 'undoubtedly improved from what they were in the last century! 'Yet the third degree' (proprietors and merchants of the second rank and the clergy) 'are many of them given to drinking' including the females of the family.² Another witness corroborated Dunlop's evidence and added that the middle classes drank more than the working classes.

'They are better able to afford it; they keep a larger stock and drink it every day, whereas the working men drink it only once or twice a week; they may to excess at those times, but the others take it every day'.³

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1. Op.cit
S.C.Drunkenness P.P. 1834 Vol VIII Report.
 2. Ibid. Evidence of John Dunlop. Q. 4625.
 3. Ibid. Evidence of Thomas Roberts. Q. 4548.

Throughout the 1840s and 50s with the rise of the total abstinence phase of the temperance movement, temperance periodicals were much more critical of middle class 'moderate' drinking than the occasional excesses of working men.¹ The drink problem in their view was rooted in the social acceptance of alcohol and was not therefore exclusively a question of working class drunkenness. Especially singled out were drinking ministers who

'declaim against drunkenness and subject to the discipline of the Church the working man who gets himself drunk once a month as pay-night comes round',²

and philanthropic gentlemen who 'freely sip wine after dinner - pass it round the table.....order a fresh supply of old port from the respectable dealer - not the dram shop you know, they may do all this with an easy conscience, they are going to a popular lecture in the evening - to draw away the people from the dram shops'.³

Teetotalers were attacking what they regarded as a dual standard of morals but their strictures are useful in pointing out the differences of style in middle class and working class drinking. The occasions on which the middle classes could be seen

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1. Scottish Temperance Review Feb. 1852.
 2. Ibid. Aug. 1846.
 3. Ibid. Feb. 1852.

taking drink in public were becoming fewer. Public dinners in political and ecclesiastical occasions still had numerous toasts but the fashion was dying out. Outside of the working class men were rarely seen drunk in public. Indiscretions occurred as when the Guardians of the Barony Parish Glasgow had to be brought home in an omnibus after their New Years' Day meeting.¹ Apart from disreputable elements like students and journalists, the middle classes, at least in the large towns, did not patronise public houses.² Robert Kettle believed that the spirit cellars and taverns of Glasgow were the exclusive haunt of working men.³ The same assumption was made by the licensed victuallers when they attacked the 1853 licensing act as class legislation aimed only at the drinking habits of working men.⁴

'So long as the rich and the middle class may quaff their wines at which hour soever they please in their own airy and commodious mansions, their splendid club rooms and luxurious hotels, so long will poor men revolt against a different measure being meted out to them'.⁵

1. Ibid. Feb. 1852.
2. Chambers Journal in 1839 noted that there was now little drinking among the middle classes in large Scottish towns but that this was far from being the case in smaller burghs. Reported in Scottish Temperance Journal, March 1839.
3. Robert Kettle. A Kind Word to Working Men p 3. Scottish Temperance League Tract No. 18 . Glasgow n.d. C. 1850
5. Scottish Licensed Victuallers Defence Association. The Forbes MacKenzie Act - its character and effects - being a statement by the Scottish Licensed Victuallers Defence Association addressed to Members of Parliament and the Public generally. Glasgow 1857 p 5.

The middle class therefore preferred to drink with their social equals, were more likely to drink in private, in the home and with meals. The beverage assumed to be favoured was wine. According to Dr. Guthrie the upper and middle classes drank little spirits.¹ Moreover, when alcohol was taken the comportment of the drinker remained relatively controlled and drinking did not lead to anti-social behaviour.

'The man who is in what the world calls good society, does not roll drunk upon the street, does not alarm his neighbour by mad shouting, does not knock anybody down, does not drag his wife by the hair of her head, does not beat his child as a ferocious ruffian would his dog. The restraints of society prevents these grosser excesses'.²

A distinct pattern of middle class attitudes to drink and patterns of alcohol consumption had emerged by the middle of the 19th century. Drinking was still expected and the pressures to conform were no less strong. Dr. Guthrie knew that by becoming an abstainer he put in jeopardy his acceptability in the dinner party circuit of fashionable Edinburgh.³ The use of alcohol, however, was characterised by discretion and restraint and a distaste for intoxication as a betrayer of dignity and respectability. The banishment of drunkenness from polite society begun 30 or 40 years earlier was complete.

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1. Thomas Guthrie. A Plea on behalf of Drunkards and against Drunkenness. Edinburgh 1850.
p 42.
 2. Archibald Prentice. Temperance as effecting the interests of employers and employed. Edinburgh 1854
pp 6/7.
 3. Op.Cit. Dr. Guthrie. Autobiography. Vol II Ch.X pp 264/265

In 1850 teetotalism among the Scottish middle and upper classes was about as rare as public drunkenness. While the temperance movement had had very little success in its aim of shaming the leaders of society into renouncing drink altogether it may well have accelerated the progress towards greater moderation in the use of alcohol by the middle class. The movement's propaganda drew attention to the issue and rejected the middle class view that drunkenness was a working class problem. Those who criticised working men for drunkenness could not afford to incur suspicion themselves and the assumption of moral leadership called for exemplary conduct. After the 1850s the shift in emphasis from moral suasion to legislative action by temperance reformers meant that criticism of the conduct of individuals which gave social acceptance to drinking gave way to criticism of middle class institutions which failed to support temperance legislation. Temperance sources became less useful as indicators of middle class drinking habits and most other sources are mainly concerned with working class drinking. Further change in the use of alcohol by the middle classes is, however, indicated by the change of attitude in the Churches to the question of abstinence. The abstaining minister, an oddity in 1850, had become a common figure by 1900.¹ In the United Free Church, par excellence the church of the urban middle class, the majority of ministers in 1900 were abstainers.² The relationship between ministers

1. Chapter 10 Table 12.

2. Ibid.

and their congregations was such that their conduct in this respect is a good guide to the attitude of church members in general. Ministers, as teetotalers were well aware, reflected the values and attitudes of their congregations and could not afford, if they valued good relations with their session and career prospects in their denomination, to depart from conventional standards of conduct. By becoming abstainers in large numbers, particularly after 1875, they indicate a marked tendency for complete abstinence from alcohol to become socially acceptable among the middle classes, a conclusion which is supported by rising middle class membership of Temperance organisations. Even the Established Church, where abstaining ministers remained a minority and which refused to condemn 'moderate' drinking, seemed by 1900 to be defining moderation in stricter terms. Alcohol in the view of its representative before the Royal Commission on Licensing in 1899 was a dangerous commodity to be used with the utmost caution.¹ Abstemiousness in the use of alcohol, if not abstinence had become part of the image of respectability and the position was being approached in which drinking among the middle classes was more likely to be an occasional glass of wine on special occasions rather than the daily but controlled drinking which had been regarded as moderate earlier in the century. Thus the pattern of restraint and discretion in the use of alcohol among the middle classes established by mid-century had been greatly reinforced over the next fifty years. By 1900 drinking among the Scottish middle classes had become an activity carried out in private among consenting adults.

1. Op.Cit. R.C.Licensing Laws (Scotland) P.P. 1899 Vol. XXXV Evidence of Rev. J. Paton Q,52,096.



More is known about the drinking habits of working men because they did most of their drinking in public and because the repercussion of their drinking became a matter of social concern. It is easier also to see the factors which shaped their drinking patterns because they were more likely to be externally imposed. For instance the needs of an industrial economy for a regular disciplined labour force are well known and one might expect that the use of alcohol at work would come under increasing pressure in an industrial society.¹

'The complexity of society increases the need, if society is to exist, for sharp discrimination, caution, accurate responses, timing, co-operation and the acceptance of responsibilities. Alcohol, taken excessively can deteriorate all these'.²

Apart from their place in the wider social context these were qualities generally regarded as essential in the work force of a technologically sophisticated economy. Employers in Scottish industry certainly took steps to restrict the access of their men to drink in the 19th century. For instance, Messrs. Houldsworths in the iron industry forbade their furnacemen to drink spirits during working hours. The furnacemen, accustomed to 4 or 5 glasses of whisky per shift, 'remonstrated strongly' but according to the mines inspector soon saw the pecuniary advantages³.

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1. S. Pollard. The Genesis of Modern Management London 1965. Ch. 5.
 2. Selden D. Bacon. Alcohol and Complex Society in D.J. Pitman and C.R. Synder (eds) Society Culture and Drinking Patterns New York 1962.
 3. Report of the Commissioner appointed to inquire into the state of the population in the Mining District. Parl. Papers 1849 Vol XXII p 14 subsequently Mining District Reports.

The efforts of employers to ensure the sobriety of their men rarely went beyond this. Few of them saw in the temperance movement a means to get a more reliable and amenable work force. James Baird, the ironmaster, and W.E. Baxter of the Dundee textile firm were strong supporters in Parliament of licensing legislation and employers generally testified to its usefulness in reducing absenteeism.¹ The truck system, justified by employers as a means of controlling the drink consumption of their men, involved them in a conflict of interest. Many seem to have preferred the short term profits from drink sales to long term prospects of improved labour productivity.² It may simply be that work discipline and the organisation of labour were extremely loose in heavy industry. The lack of method in the Scottish mines puzzled Mr. Mundella and it had to be explained to him that the 'perfect discipline' of the cotton mills of Oldham was not essential in a Scottish pit whose operation was not dependent on the continuous and integrated activity of the whole work force.³ Coal mines were unique in a number of respects but the foundries, ironworks and shipyards which were the characteristic units of Scottish heavy industry did not require the high level of industrial

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1. Chapter 6.
 2. Chapter 3.
 3. Select Committee on the present dearness and scarcity of coal. ParlPapers 1873 Vol X. Evidence of Isiah Booth. Q. 2401.

discipline of factory production. We may accept therefore that there were pressures on workers in Scottish industry to dissociate drinking from the place of work, but not that those pressures were uniform or perhaps as strong as in other areas of Britain.

Industrial employment did however influence the way working men consumed alcohol in other ways. Workers in industry had more frequent pay-days, the general practice in Scotland being to pay by the month or fortnight compared with the term or even the year in agriculture. They existed more completely in a cash economy. All their needs, rent, food, fuel, clothing, needed to be purchased while agricultural workers were partly paid in kind. Higher money wages are not a reliable guide to increased living standards but they did mean that industrial workers had cash for disposal at frequent intervals. In a sense their range of choices in the disposal of this income was increased with a corresponding increase in the need for self discipline. The absence of this latter quality led temperance reformers to campaign for payment of wages on weekdays, with a certain amount of success.¹ Weekends remained the time when working people were most likely to have money in their pockets. Shopping habits reflected this situation. On Saturday evening Glasgow streets were crowded

'Everybody seems to have turned out to look at everybody and do business with everybody....What a "dead set" is made at workmen's wives and workers generally, as they lounge about the drapers door, or gaze up at his window, with manifest discomfort at having money in their pockets.'²

1. Scottish Temperance Review. March 1842 p 137
2. 'Shadow' Midnight Scenes and Social Photographs Glasgow 1857. p 97.

Shops and stalls remained open for business far into the night in 1857 and the pattern does not seem to have altered much by the 1870s.¹ Drinking habits were influenced by the same set of circumstances and this applied to all parts of Britain. Chief constables in Scotland certainly believed that drunkenness was a weekend problem and supported their opinion with statistics. An interesting picture of the Glasgow weekend is provided by a special set of statistics collected at the request of Lord Provost, Sir William Collins.²

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1. Report of the Royal Commission on Sale of Excisable Liquors for Consumption off the Premises.
Parl. Papers 1878 Vol. XXVI
Evidence of Mr. Wilson Q. 5713
subsequently R.C.Grocers Licences.

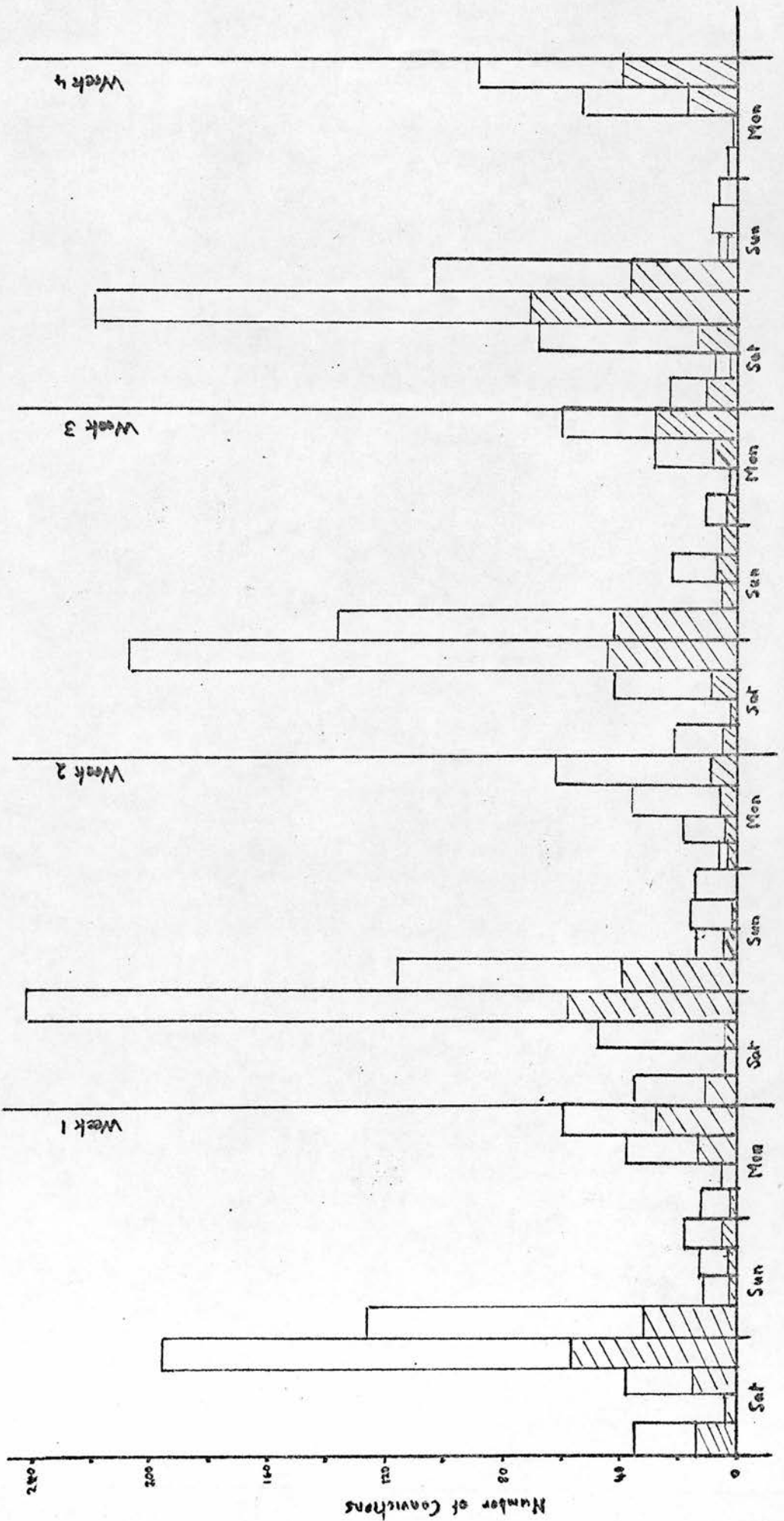
In Edinburgh shops remained open late into Saturday night up to the First World War. Interview with Mr. & Mrs. John Parker 177, Pleasance, Edinburgh. 10th Feb. 1970.

2. Fig. 4.

Four Glasgow Weekends October 1873.

Total apprehensions for Drunk and Incapable and drunk and disorderly made every 6 hours
 Total Females apprehended.

Source: Select Committee of the House of Lords on Intemperance P.P. 1878 Vol 14, Appendix D



It was from experience like this that the Chief Constable of Glasgow concluded

'The most drinking takes place upon the Saturday and the Monday: those who have not spent all the money they had on Saturday may not go to their work on Monday but return to drinking until their money is finished'.¹

The practice of the drink trade provides further evidence. Small spirit shops, against which the Forbes MacKenzie Act was aimed, depended largely on the weekend traffic.² In Edinburgh the shebeens which succeeded them opened only between Saturday night and Monday morning whereas shebeens which were also brothels were open all week.³ The tendency for industrial employment to exclude drink from the workplace and, more importantly, to produce a conjunction of income and leisure at weekends, shaped the drinking habits of working men.

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1. Op.Cit S.C.Intemperance. P.P. 1878 Vol XIV
Evidence of Capt. McColl, Chief Constable Glasgow.
Q. 1382
 2. Chapter 6.
 3. Op.Cit. S.C. Intemperance. P.P. 1878 Vol 14,
Evidence of Thomas Linton, Chief Constable of Edinburgh
Q. 1182

The middle classes, we have seen, increasingly consumed alcohol in domestic privacy. In the 1840s, G.A. Haig adopted the policy of putting Haig in every working class home. At present, he protested, high duties on beer and spirits prevented

'the honest hard working artisan from enjoying it in his own home. He can only afford to use a very limited quantity of it and therefore he drinks it in a new state over the counter'.¹

It was a policy which seems to have had relatively little success. Temperance men were at pains to point out that the Licensing Act of 1853 had had little effect in increasing drinking at home.^{2,3} Some licensed grocers did supply small quantities of whisky to working class customers for consumption at home.⁴ Labour leaders, whatever their views on the temperance question, questioned the prevalence of this practice. Asked about the use of spirits at meals William Paterson replied

'My own experience is entirely the opposite - that cases of that kind are certainly the exception'.⁵

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1. The British League July 1847
quoting the Chronicle .
 2. Abstainers Journal Nov. 1855.
 3. Op.Cit. R.C.Licensing Laws (Scotland). P.P. 1860, Vol XXXII
Evidence of J.S. Marr, Sec. Scottish Temperance League.
 4. Op.Cit. R.C.Grocers Licences P.P. 1878 Vol. XXVI
Evidence of Mr. Redpath. Licenced Grocer, Parkhead Q. 5582-5
Q. 5573.
 5. Ibid. Evidence of Alexander McDonald. Sec. of Miners Union.
Q. 4059

Alexander McDonald had never seen

'in homes of the industrious working men of this country, strong drink used as a beverage to meals. If it was used at all it was used on the occasion of a friend being there'.¹

Even those who would have welcomed it as a desirable change in habits agreed.² The exclusion of drink from Scottish workmens' homes applied even to 'wholesome beer' in Paterson's opinion and the idea that it should be otherwise was regarded as a quite foreign custom.

'You think it is a lamentable change of custom that they should store their liquor in their houses"?

'It is quite a change of custom as far as our people are concerned. In the immediate neighbourhood we have an iron works and the people there are largely English people and it is quite another style, because they have been used to it at home, getting in beer in large quantities.....It is quite a common thing for the English people but it is quite un-Scotch altogether'.³

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1. Ibid. Evidence of Alexander McDonald. Sec. of Miners Union. Q. 4059.
 2. Ibid. Evidence of James Stuart. Trade Union Official, Dundee Q. 7284 - 7
 3. Op.Cit R.C.Licensing Laws (Scotland) P.P. 1898 Vol XXXVIII Evidence of T. Dunnachie, Manager, Glenboy Union Fireclay Works. Q. 48, 839

Scotsmen preferred to buy their drink on impulse and at most purchase a 'cairry oot' at closing time.¹ Even Sunday closing did not lead them to buy in a supply for use on Sunday. As a Kilmarnock joiner explained

'They don't think of it: It is improvident. If they had it on the Saturday plenty of them would use it before the Sabbath night'.²

Whisky of course was considered less suitable than beer for taking with meals. Temperance men believed that the disapproval of wives and family kept drink out of the home and it was widely agreed that the average Scottish house was hardly suitable for social revelry. Whatever the reasons the indications are again that alcohol as generally used by working people in Scotland did not have an everyday domestic function.³

Since the working classes seldom drank at home and the middle classes rarely used the public house, it was almost entirely a working class institution. Moreover, it was a changing institution as new types of public houses grew up in the expanding industrial towns. In 1834 the Sheriff of Renfrewshire was already deploring the increase of licensed houses purely for drinking

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1. Op.Cit. R.C.Grocers Licences P.P. 1878 Vol. XXVI. Report Para XI.
 2. Op.Cit R.C.Licensing Laws (Scotland) P.P. 1860 Vol XXXIII. Evidence of David Innes. Innes was opposed to licencing restriction and considered it led to more drinking at home.
 3. Detailed studies of working class diets in Edinburgh and Glasgow in the early 20th century make no mention of beer but the attitude of the researchers may have influenced the results on this matter, see D.N. Paton A Study of the Diet of the Labouring Classes in Edinburgh. Edinburgh 1901. D.E.Lindsay - Report on a Study of the Diet of the Labouring Classes in the City of Glasgow. Glasgow 1913

'without loss of time and without the pretence of conviviality'. 1

Forty years later the old style taverns which sold food had almost disappeared in Glasgow.² Public houses were allowed to sell food but few of them did so, even though this was thought to be desirable by the middle class observers.³ Whisky was the main course where one might reasonably have expected otherwise. 'Even at many licensed hotels in Scotland you can get nothing but whisky', complained the Provost of Kilmarnock, while the president of the Glasgow Grocers Association, concerned with the image of the trade, estimated that 40 to 50 of the 247 licensed grocers in the city sold nothing but spirits.^{4,5} The separation of alcoholic drink from food applied equally in the public house and the worker's home. In the 19th century stereotype public houses attracted the customers by offering them the comforts they could not know in their overcrowded houses, an inducement therefore particularly applicable in Scotland. Bright lights, cut glass and gleaming brasswork made the gin palace a place warm and comfortable, the very antithesis of the worker's home. Curiously this was an image of the public house that the temperance movement did much to foster. These were the symbols of

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1. Op.Cit S.C.Drunkenness. P.P. 1834 Vol VIII
Evidence of the Sheriff of Renfrewshire. Q. 2923.
 2. Op.Cit S.C.Intemperance P.P. 1878 Vol XIV
Evidence of Chief Constable of Glasgow Q.1615 - 21.
 3. Op.Cit. R.C.Grocers Licenses. P.P. 1878 Vol XXCI
Evidence of Mr. McFarlane Licensed Grocer Govan Q 5471
" " Dr. Barras Q. 5605 -06
 4. Op.Cit S.C.Intemperance P.P. 1878 Vol XIV
Evidence of P. Sturrock Provost of Kilmarnock Q. 1838
 5. Op.Cit. R.C. Grocers Licenses P.P. 1878 Vol XXVI
Evidence of Mr. Ogilvie Pres.Glasgow and West of Scotland Grocers Assoc.

its temptative power drawing the unwary, mothlike, to destruction. In Scotland the reality was somewhat different. The old taverns of the 18th and early 19th centuries had been of a very low description indeed.¹ The licencing system which set the licence fee in proportion to the rateable value of the property encouraged the proliferation of public houses in low rented property. In Glasgow in 1819, 476 of the city's 885 licensed premises were in property valued under £15, 168 under £20 and 254 over £20.² In 1853 the average rental of Glasgow's 1622 public houses was £31.6s. A large number of Scottish public houses were no more than *qualid* Scottish houses turned into drinking dens. From the 1850s public houses tended to grow in size and elaboration. The 'Trongate Whisky Palace' was a new enough phenomenon to rouse special protests from temperance reformers when it opened in 1857. 'Fitted out with (unprecedented) splendour as a vast congeries of drinking booths and officially valued at £400 a year', it was of a magnificence and capital investment rare before that time.³ Between 1853 and 1877 the average rental of public houses in Glasgow trebled from £31 to £93.⁴ Temperance reformers deplored

'the gigantic dram shops after the London-gin-house pattern which are being introduced extensively into our Scottish towns and are really worse for their customers than the old fashioned taverns where food was sold as well as drink'.⁵

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1. For descriptions of these see
M.W. Stuart Old Edinburgh Taverns London 1852.
Robert Kemp Convivial Caledonia - Inns and Taverns of Scotland London 1893.
 - 2 James Cleland The Rise and Progress of the City of Glasgow .
Glasgow 1820 p 163.
 3. Op.Cit S.C.Intemperance 1878 Vol XIV, Appendix D. Number and Rental
of Licensèd Houses in Glasgow 1853 - 77.
 4. Op.Cit S.C.Intemperance 1878 Vol. XIV Appendix D.
 5. Social Reformer May 1 1871

licencing restriction policies aimed especially at the lower rented dram shops and attempts to lay down minimum standards of amenity for public houses encouraged this development.¹ On the other hand, compared with England, there was little involvement of the drink producers in retailing, which must have posed problems of capital accumulation for large elaborate public houses. Scottish publicans had a poor reputation with English colleagues for their reluctance to improve their properties.² Improvements in the size and decoration of Scottish public houses there were in the second half of the century. The failure of attempts to abolish the low rented pub, by setting a legal minimum for licensed premises, ensured that the dram shop did not disappear.

Dram shops and whisky palaces were products of an urban industrial environment.

'The dram shop proper or the house conducted on the lines of a trought palace is seldom to be found in towns or burghs with less than five thousand of a population'.³

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1. Chapter 6.
 2. E.E.Williams. The New Public House. London 1924. p 80.
 3. Scottish Temperance League Weekly Journal. April 4, 1857.

As a working class institution which helped form and was in turn influenced by the needs of its clients, the development of the pub provides additional evidence of their drinking mores. Working men did not go to these places to eat. The attraction was not always the florid comfort of the friendly pub, for many were no more spacious and grand than the Scottish one roomed house. Even the larger ones appear to have been evolving towards chairlessness as the 'long bar system' replaced the congeries of drinking booths.¹ The rapid vertical drinking which this was said to cater for may be regarded as a culmination of these developments which the Sheriff of Renfrewshire had noted earlier in the century. Attention has recently been drawn to the many functions of the ubiquitous pub as employment exchange, committee and club room, small moneylender, reading room, etc.^{2,3} In Scotland the radical reformers of 1832 met in pubs but the Chartists, perhaps mindful of the alcoholic fate of their precursors, inclined towards coffee houses.^{4,5}

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1. Op.Cit R.C. Licensing Laws (Scotland) P.P. 1898 Vol XXXVIII Evidence of D.H.Saunders Q. 52,697
 2. John Vincent. The Formation of the Liberal Party. London 1966. pp 78/79.
 3. Brian Harrison Drink and the Victorians. London 1971 esp. Chs 2 and 14.
 4. J.D. Burn Autobiography of a Beggar Boy. London 1855 pp 124/125.
 5. L.C. Wright. Scottish Chartism Edinburgh 1953 p 179
The Chartists of course experienced other pressures from wives who associated Chartism with late hours and intemperance.
see Alexander Wilson The Chartist Movement in Scotland Manchester 1970 p 133.

Although trade union meetings were still held in pubs in the 1850s the tendency in Scotland was for unions and co-operative societies to shun the public house, far more than their English counterparts.¹ The old style taverns were in any case better adapted to subsidiary social functions than the dram shops and whisky palaces which were replacing them. When efforts began in the 20th century to re-establish the social functions of the public house, its champions looked north with dismay at the enormity of the task in Scotland.

'the average frequenter of public - houses in Scotland is a whisky drinker and a public house to him does not seem to mean anything more than a place to obtain whisky away from home'.²

How in these circumstances could the public house be represented as a natural meeting place at the centre of the social life of the community? The main social function of Scottish pubs as a rendezvous for working class men drinking together in celebration of their masculinity did not fit in with this worthy new image.³ In industrial Scotland the tendency was for the public house to evolve into a specialised drinking place.

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1. Op.Cit Temperance Congress of 1862 Proceedings London 1862 p 26.
 2. Op.Cit E.E.Williams The New Public House p79
 3. The classic description is Hugh McDairmid The Dour Drinkers of Glasgow

A distinctive pattern of working class drinking can be seen emerging in industrial Scotland in the course of the 19th century, different from rural patterns of drink consumption or even earlier urban styles and different from the English working class. It was a pattern of drinking which efforts to control did little to alter. Licensing legislation helped to concentrate drinking in leisure hours by closing public houses during the hours when work commenced. Fear of the encroachment of the pernicious English custom of drinking with meals led the temperance movement to oppose successfully Gladstone's Refreshment Houses Bill which was intended to encourage the consumption of wine.¹ Similarly the movement deprecated the idea of drink being used in the home for fear of the harmful example to wives and children.² This temperance activity which helped the crystallisation of middle class drinking habits had a broadly similar effect in reinforcing existing trends in working class drinking patterns. The essence of working class drinking was its concentration, the very opposite of the old Highland motto of 'always drinking but never drunk' or the frequent but controlled drinking of the middle classes. It was not that working men drank very much, but, perhaps especially in Scotland, they had evolved a marvellously economical way of getting drunk. This was what led observers to believe that oblivion was being deliberately sought.

1. Chapter 6

2. Scottish Review 1860 p 399

'among the working classes of the Lowlands, tipsiness is a state of pleasure to be looked forward to with avidity, to be gained as rapidly as possible and maintained as long as possible. To many wretched beings it offers a transient escape from the miseries of life, and brings the only moments of comparative happiness which they ever enjoy. They live a double life - one part in the gloom and hardship of the workaday world, and the other in the dreamland into which whisky introduces them'. 1

Even if it is not accepted that intoxication was a deliberate aim, given the pattern of working class drinking it must be allowed to be a likely result.

This discussion of 19th century drinking patterns is applicable only to men. Men were expected to drink and social pressures acted to ensure that they did. Alcohol was associated with masculinity, 'the man that takes a good drink, he's a man'.² It is impossible to conceive of anybody in the 19th century changing the gender in the line of that song. Social pressures on women in regard to drink operated in the opposite direction. This attitude was bound up with the generally held conception of womans' social role as an adjunct to the male and the mother of his children and therefore a person under masculine care and protection.

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1. Op.Cit Sir Archibald Geikie Scottish Reminiscences p312
 2. Will Fyfe 'I belong to Glasgow'.

Women had to be protected from sexual exploitation and alcohol was widely regarded as a substance which loosened inhibitions. 'Alcohol ensnares the female' wrote Alexander Thomson of Banchory.¹ Fallen women confessed to William Logan that strong drink had brought them to ruin.² Temperance propaganda generally represented women as the innocent victims of the drinking excesses of men rather than the victims of drink in their own right. Drunkenness among women was one of those subjects which the Victorians found too awful to contemplate so that when it occurred it tended to be concealed. Captain Miller's police statistics of drunkenness in Glasgow in 1840 included no female cases because women found drunk were never prosecuted.³ Discussions of female drunkenness were largely confined to expressions of concern, seldom substantiated, that it was on the increase.⁴ Where female drinking was described it was usually depicted as clandestine. One of the main criticisms made of the grocer's licence in Scotland was that it enabled women to buy

1. Alexander Thomson of Banchory The Licentiousness of Scotland and the remedial measures which ought to be adopted . London 1861.

2. William Logan. The Moral Statistics of Glasgow. Glasgow 1849. p 47.

3. Capt. Miller (Commissioner of Glasgow Police) Papers relative to the State of Crime in Glasgow. Glasgow 1840. p 25.

4. Op.Cit. R.C.Grocer's Licence. P.P. 1878 Vol XXVI

Evidence of William Keith, Chief Constable of Forfarshire. Qs. 6153-55
" " William Hodge, Boilermaker, Greenock Q. 4221
" " Provost Sturrock of Kilmarnock Q. 4424

drink without the knowledge and consent of their husbands.¹ The image of women slyly substituting 'butter' for purchases of whisky in their grocer's passbook and surreptitiously consuming it in private needs to be seen in the light of police statistics of drunkenness which discriminated between the sexes. About 20% of the persons found drunk in Glasgow streets in October 1873 were female.² J.D.Burn's view that Glasgow women were particularly prone to drunkenness can hardly be accepted when Edinburgh police statistics for the 1850s show that the ladies of that city were relatively more likely to be apprehended for drunkenness than their Glasgow sisters.^{3,4} Who were all these women found drunk in public? Were they all prostitutes, or middle class female alcoholics escaped from Queensberry Lodge, or did a minority of working class women in the 19th century frequent public houses and drink in the manner of their menfolk?⁵ We may cast a little doubt on the 19th

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1. Ibid.
 2. Fig. 4. p 56
 3. J.D.Burn. Commercial Enterprise and Social Progress. London 1858 p 153.
 4. Thomas Linton. Superintendent of Police, Edinburgh. Tabular Returns as to crimes, offences and contraventions and to cases of drunkenness within the bounds of the Edinburgh Police during the last six years and remarks with the tables, prepared for the magistrates and council. Edinburgh 1858. Women accounted for approximately 40% of those found drunk and 50% of those drunk when apprehended.
 5. Queensberry Lodge in the Canongate was for a time a home for inebriate women of the middle class. Report of the Select Committee on Habitual Drunkards. P.P. 1872 Vol IX. Evidence of Thomas P. Nelson.

century conviction that women drink more sparingly than men or the temperance stereotype that women recoiled from drink as a major cause of misery to their sex, but the more accessible sources do not enable us to challenge it.

The approach adopted in this chapter has been deliberately to seek to indicate major trends in society's changing use of alcohol. The use of concepts like 'drinking pattern' obviously involves oversimplifying the actual situation. Earlier forms of drinking survived in areas not directly effected by industrialisation. More detailed descriptions of drinking habits in industrial society would reveal a more complex picture, although even this would be incomplete. There are similar obstacles in this aspect of behaviour to those encountered in research into sexual mores. Drunkenness was more often deplored than described. We may suspect for instance that intoxication was not unknown among the middle classes, alcoholism certainly was not, but it was generally concealed.¹ Will Fyfe, representing the working man staggering home drunk on a Saturday summed it up

'you see that man in the big fast motor car.
He goes by so fast you don't know whether
he's drunk or sober'.²

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1. The expulsion of ministers from the church for alcoholism was a regular occurrence about mid-century.
See Scottish Temperance Review July 1851
 2. Will Fyfe 'I belong to Glasgow'.

The behaviour of spiritual leaders indicates strongly that abstinence from alcohol was increasingly regarded as acceptable by the middle classes. However, just as the plainness of Protestant Churches represents an ideal of frugality imperfectly achieved, abstaining ministers may represent ideals of abstemiousness not universally attained by their flocks. The pattern of drinking designated here as 'working class' does not apply to all working men even in urban industrial Scotland. Within the working class the cleavage between those who got drunk and those who were teetotal or regarded drink with suspicion, was probably at its greatest. An attempt to throw light on the characteristics of working class life which inclined men to either drink or sobriety is made in the next chapter.

Even after making these reservations it is remarkable how strikingly different the classes remain in their use of alcohol. In one case drinking was private and home centred, associated with eating or in a situation in which quantities consumed and resulting behaviour were controlled by social convention. In the other drinking was a public activity, outside the domestic circle, unaccompanied by food and in a situation in which social controls were relaxed. The differences are so marked that much criticism in detail may be accepted without substantially altering the conclusion that the drinking habits of the middle and working classes became widely divergent in the 19th century.

It is not possible to show the extent of drunkenness in the 19th century, therefore we cannot be certain that its incidence was increased in industrial society. If intoxication was the consequence of drinking styles rather than a function of large per capita consumption the utility of excise statistics is limited, Police records are even less useful. The practice in Scotland was to arrest only those who were incapable or disorderly. Not all of these were prosecuted in urban areas and none at all in country districts because the five shilling fine did not justify the expense.

Unlike England, simple public drunkenness was not an offence. The Scottish system, where a person was considered legally drunk when unable to move, at least avoided problems of definition. Drunkenness on the streets of Scottish cities at a less advanced yet obvious stage was far more common than police statistics indicate.

'Sheriff Alison was not considered either facetious or alarmist when he told a Royal Commission of 1838 that "there are 10,000 men in Glasgow who get drunk on Saturday night; who are drunk all Sunday and are in a state of intoxication or half-intoxication all Monday and go to work on Tuesday"'. 1

On occasions of general licence like the 'Fair' and Hogmanay, when public houses before 1853 opened all night, that might well be an underestimate.² Working class drinking was public and obvious and concentrated in time, which must have tended to exaggerate its prevalence. Even so compared with the Highlanders or rural labourers, the drinking mores of the urban masses leads one to suspect that drunkenness was more prevalent in industrial society.

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1. T.C.Smout. A History of the Scottish People. London 1969. pp 389/390.
 2. 10,000 drunks would average less than four for each Glasgow pub in 1850.

In our own time the reaction to the use of new intoxicants is quite out of proportion to the magnitude of the problem they constitute. Somehow ~~new~~ drugs or those who use them seem to threaten the security of society. In a broadly similar way the intemperate use of alcohol by working men assumed in the 19th century a significance which it had not had when the excessive use of alcohol was part of the culture of all classes. To be drunk in public was more than a minor misdemeanour, it was to reject in an open and dramatic way the idea of respectability and the middle class way of life. Other differences between the classes, in sexual behaviour for instance, were more fundamental; none were more obvious. The sexual activities of working people could not be so readily observed, or even easily discussed. Evidence of drunkenness on the other hand was regrettably difficult to avoid on city streets at the weekend. Moreover it became the subject of a vast and sustained publicity campaign. After 1850 the most sheltered young lady, who might not have heard of the depraved appetites of country girls, could not fail to know of the intemperate weaknesses of working men. Dignity and self control, highly valued by the middle classes, were incompatible with being drunk. Yet working men were seemingly unable to use alcohol with

moderation. This was evidence of their lack of restraint. How in any case could the working man be so foolish as to squander his money when it was well known that his means were barely sufficient for the needs of himself and his family? Why did he not save for unemployment and old age? His preference for whisky rather than the rewards of thrift was further proof of his irresponsibility and irrationality. How could those who reduced themselves to the level of beasts - and there was plentiful timely evidence at each election - expect to share political power? Drunkenness confirmed middle class convictions of the moral inferiority of the masses and destroyed

'the natural equality which ought to exist between man and man'. 1

The outcome of the divergence in the use of drink was to deepen the gulf of misunderstanding between the classes. Alcohol in many periods and different societies a commodity with important symbolic properties became in 19th century Scotland a symbol of the different values and standards of different sections of society. While we can only suspect that drunkenness became more prevalent in industrial

1. Op.Cit Archibald Prentice, Temperance as effecting the Interests of employers and employed .

Scotland, we can be sure that the place of drink in Scottish society was profoundly altered by industrialisation, less because of the changing needs of the economy than from the effects of the accompanying social upheaval on the behaviour and attitudes of the emerging social classes.

CHAPTER 3

MINERS AND FISHERMEN.

'There's nothing in being teetotal and saving a shilling or two. If your money you spend, why you've nothing to lend. Isn't that all the better for you.
There's nae harm in taking a drappie. It ends all your troubles and strife.
And it gives you the feeling that when you land home, Why you don't care a damn for your wife'.

Will Fyfe 'I belong to Glasgow'.

The division in Chapter II of alcohol use into two distinctive patterns categorised as 'middle class' and 'working class' is obviously an oversimplification. It is recognised for instance that older drinking patterns were retained in rural areas and that the Highland possessed peculiar characteristics that have survived right up to the present day. Even in industrial Scotland social classes were far from homogenous and one might properly expect differences within such broad social categories to be reflected in alcohol use. Among the middle classes, evidence of a tendency towards greater abstemiousness in the second half of the century, derived from the behaviour of ministers, applies more convincingly to the 'commercial' middle class who were strongly represented in the United Free Church than to the professional and landowning classes who tended towards support for the Established Church.

The opposition to alcohol use by an important section of the Scottish working class is indicated by the policies of co-operative societies and trade unions in shunning drink and the public house. Recent research into the labour aristocrats of Victorian Edinburgh, showing why alcohol consumption was not compatible with their life style, gives a more precise indication of these groups within the working class who must be excluded from the 'working class' drinking pattern.¹ At the same time the reworking of 19th century controversies about the relationship between living standards and alcohol consumption reminds us that favourable economic circumstances, if measured in terms of wage levels alone, were no guarantee of sober life styles.^{2,3} It is necessary therefore to try to define more satisfactorily which groups within the working class evolved a life style in which drunkenness was accepted and approved. Nineteenth century discussion of the drink question in Scotland, although ranging widely, does not provide an answer to this problem. However, the drinking habits of the two occupational groups, the miners and the fishermen, were frequently commented on. The approach adopted here therefore is to use 19th century observations to compare these two groups in an effort to understand why the miners

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1. R.Q. Gray Class Structure and the Class Formation of Skilled Workers in Edinburgh. C 1850 - C 1900' unpublished Ph.D.thesis Edinburgh University 1972.
 2. A.E. Dingle. Drink and Working Class Living Standards 1870-1914 Economic History Review 2nd series Vol 25. 1972
 3. J.B. Brown The Pig or the Sty: Drink and Poverty in Late Victorian England . International Journal of Social History Vol 17. 1972

had a reputation for drunkenness, while fishermen became renowned for sobriety. While the problems of generalising from such case studies is recognised, at least tentative conclusions about sections of the working class whose conditions approximate to those of the group studied seem warranted.

The question of the influence of working class living and working conditions on alcohol use has first to be considered.

Drunkenness has been linked by ^{a leading} Scottish historian to the particular circumstances of urban industrial life in Scotland and accounted for as a reaction to poverty, unemployment and bad housing.¹

While these problems were not peculiar to Scotland, some features of 19th century Scottish society poor housing conditions and the rapid growth of heavy industry, make such explanations specially persuasive when applied to Scotland. The views of Professor Campbell are not the result of an uncritical reading of Engels but are securely based on the evidence of the period. As drunkenness came to be regarded as an essentially working class behavioural characteristic, important questions were posed as to the relations between drink consumption and the conditions of working class life, giving rise to an ongoing debate. On one side the poverty and other misfortunes of working people ^{were} ~~was~~ believed to stem directly from their excessive expenditure on drink. In this view drunkenness was simply a manifestation of a general deficiency of moral restraint among the lower orders. Radicals turned this

1. R.H.Campbell Scotland Since 1707 Oxford 1964 pp 200-202.

allegation on its head and argued that 'poverty is the cause of intemperance, crime and misery'.¹ If working men got drunk it was because they had been driven to it. These two polarised positions existed practically from the moment that the drink question came to be noticed in Scotland. Those who studied the drink problem rather than took up a stance on it tended to come to more complex conclusions regarding its causation.

For instance, one of the local reports of the 1842 Sanitary Enquiry described the mechanism of poverty thus:

'Intemperance is the chief cause of reducing the labouring poor to a state of destitution.....at the same time there is little doubt that intemperance is in a great many instances the consequence of extreme destitution. The miserable wretch in the desperation of utter want snatches eagerly a temporary respite from his sufferings in intoxication, although conscious that he is plunging himself deeper in distress and even hastening his own end'.²

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1. Herald to the Trades Advocate and Co-operative Journal. No. 1, Sept. 1830.
 2. Op.Cit. Local Sanitary Reports p 143.

If the idea that drunkenness was a response to misery were taken to its logical conclusion, drinking might have been expected to increase in periods of depression and low wages. Distinguished economists, like McCulloch and Porter, had in fact entertained this possibility according to Professor Levi.¹ This hypothesis did not stand up to examination and was finally discredited by the rise in drunkenness during the boom of the 1870s. Long before that there was ample evidence that it was not the lowest paid workers who were most inclined to intemperance. Agricultural labourers might get drunk at feeing markets yet rarely drink at all at other times.² The handloom weavers who had better reason than most to drown their sorrows remained in poverty as in prosperity noted for their sobriety.³ By contrast, the behaviour of ironworkers and miners in the expanding industrial areas of Scotland in the 1840s indicated that high wages were no guarantee

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1. Select Committee of House of Lords on Intemperance. Parl. Papers 1877 Vol II. Evidence of Leone Levi. Qs. 9746 and 9750. Subsequently S.C. Intemperance.

Levi's study of tax revenue led him to conclude that alcohol consumption was closely tied to the trade cycle. 'An increasing revenue from spirits is therefore the direct result of buoyancy in the manufacturing and mining district'.

Leone Levi Statistics of the Revenue of the UK from 1859-82 in relation to the distribution of taxation.

Journal of the Royal Statistical Society XLVII 1884.

2. Chapter 2. p 40.

3. Op.cit. Local Sanitary Report. Lanark. P. 240.

The handloom weavers nevertheless might be regarded as a group whose poverty led them to take refuge in drink.

See J.C. Symons Arts and Artisans Ch XII

Brenda Gaskin. The Decline of the Handloom Weaving Industry in Scotland 1815-45. Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis Edinburgh 1955 Ch IV

of sobriety.¹ Friends of labour expressed concern that this could be used as an argument against higher wages.² Even those ^{who} took heart from the fact that drunkenness was diminishing in the 1860s had to concede that 'in many instances it is not the worst paid trades that are most given to drink'.³

That drunkenness was a reaction to low standards of accommodation was an argument that had particular force in Scotland, the country of the one roomed house. This idea received its initial impetus from the wave of interest in the physical environment of towns following Parliamentary enquiries into sanitary conditions and health in the 1840s. The roots of intemperance, admitted teetotalers, lay more in physical factors than had hitherto been appreciated.^{4,5}

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1. Andrew Miller Coatbridge, Its Rise and Progress . Glasgow 1864 pp 182 - 186.
 2. James and William Hall (Shipbuilders Aberdeen). Men and Brethren. What Shall We Do? Footdee 1852.
 3. J.M. Ludlow and L.Jones. Progress of the Working Class . London 1867 p 258.
 4. Scottish Temperance Journal.. December 1842.
 5. Scottish Temperance Review. June 1846.

The newly founded Scottish Temperance League appointed as one of its first professional lecturers a man who specialised in the sanitary question.¹ Once established the connection between drunkenness and living conditions was reiterated and elaborated by other Temperance spokesmen, notably Thomas Knox and Dr. James Begg.^{2,3} Begg's influence, as a prominent Free Church minister, was particularly important. How, he argued, could the workers' home be a place of comfort and relaxation when it was the scene of every conceivable domestic activity? Instead the husband took himself off to the comforts of the public house and the companionship of his fellow males.⁴ With the publication of J.B. Russell's 'Life in One Room' with its dramatic vignettes of what it meant to live in grossly overcrowded conditions, Begg's ideas had become the conventional wisdom.⁵ One thing puzzled middle class observers however. Why did some people prefer to seek refuge in drink from inadequate housing rather than use the money to purchase

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1. Thomas Beggs, later Secretary of the Health of Towns Association.
 - 2,3, Dr. Begg's interest in housing is well known. Knox's main contribution on the question was a series of articles on life in the slums written for the Caledonian Mercury in 1860. Scottish Temperance League Weekly Journal 1860 p 511.
 - 4, Dr. James Begg. Happy Homes for Working Men and How to Get them London 1866. p 13 and pp 140-142.
 5. J.B. Russell Life in One Room in A.K. Chalmers (ed) Public Health Administration in Glasgow a memorial volume of the writings of J.B. Russell. Glasgow 1905.

better accommodation at higher rents? Dr. Begg himself deplored the low priority that housing had in the expenditure patterns of the Scots.¹ Moreover, as with poverty, there were instances where bad housing did not drive people to drink. The inhabitants of the notorious black houses of the Western Highlands remained perversely both healthy and moral while the fishermen of Cairnbulg, Inveralochy and Boddam, living in houses that were old and damp, were teetotallers almost to a man.^{2,3} The introduction of each successive variable complicated matters further. Education was believed to be a factor making for sobriety, but were not the two best educated nations in Europe the two most drunken?⁴ Drunkenness had diminished among the 'more respectable proportion of the working classes' reported the Select Committee on Intemperance.⁵ But who were the respectable other than those who did not get drunk? If they were the skilled and highly paid, who could explain to Mr. McNidder, shipyard manager, why his rivetters tended towards drink and absenteeism while his equally skilled and well paid

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1. Social Reformer April 1867
 2. Royal Commission on the Housing of the Working Classes. Parl. Papers 1884/85 Vol. XXXI. Evidence of Lord Napier. Q. 21,199, 21,200 subsequently R.C. Housing.
 3. Royal Commission on the Housing of the Industrial Population of Scotland Rural and Urban. Parl. Papers 1917/18 Vol XIV pp 183-184 subsequently R.C. Housing.
 4. William Hoyle. The Influence of the Drinking Customs upon Social and Physical well being of the People. London 1877. p 8
 5. Op.cit. S.C. on Intemperance Final Report P.P. 1878/79 Vol X para 27.

carpenters did not?¹ To those confronting the drink question in the 19th century, without the intellectual tools of modern psychology and sociology, the relationship between drunkenness and social conditions involved interminable cause and effect problems and revealed a bewildering host of paradoxes and anomalies.

This brief survey does not do justice to Scottish interest in these questions. It does serve to show however that those most concerned about the drink problem did not neglect the influence of social conditions which might predispose men to drink nor display a blinkered individualism that attributed all drunkenness to personal inadequacy. The result was many sympathetic insights into the problem such as this view from a lifelong abstainer from Blairgowrie.

'I have long held the opinion that intemperance is much more a symptom of a disease than a disease itself; that it is caused very largely by other things; for example, there are the bad homes of the people.....People have come in from the country and they have been huddled in anywhere, the old associations which have strengthened their character have been broken.... Another cause.....which perhaps is the most leading cause to my knowledge is the irregular work'.²

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1. Op.cit. R.C. Grocers Licences P.P. 1878 Vol XXVI Qs. 7261-7269.
 2. Op.cit S.C. Intemperance P.P. 1878 Vol XIV Evidence of David H.Saunders Q.3243

There were, however, few attempts to provide a comprehensive and consistent theory which related drink consumption to social conditions and even less concern to put ideas to the test of social investigation. Lack of this made it difficult for teetotalers to escape from prevailing intellectual currents and social experiences. The influence of the dominant bourgeois ideology on one hand and working class experience of the struggle for survival on the other tended in their different ways to emphasise the importance of that personal quality the Scots called smeddum.¹ For instance both the Moral Suasionist and Prohibitionist phases of the Temperance Movement evolved theories of drink consumption which tended to represent the drunkard as a victim rather than a moral miscreant.² In practice teetotalers were more ambivalent and often had difficulty in accepting entirely the logic of arguments that circumstances rather than strength of will determined sobriety. With the benefit of hindsight, it is possible to see that some of the difficulties encountered in discussions of the drink problem in relation to social conditions arose from a failure to simplify the issues. The drinking behaviour of the working classes was complicated by the fact that this was a far from homogenous group and attempts to categorise the 'respectable' working class and the 'deserving poor' begged the important questions. It is easy of course to blame 19th century reformers for failing to think and act like 20th century academics and one should perhaps recognise that David Saunders explanation of drunkenness would be quite impressive if couched in the jargon of sociology.

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1. The equivalent English word 'character' is too genteel.
 2. See Chapter 5, Chapter 8.

Perhaps the most fruitful approach would have been studies of certain occupational groups but these were not systematically made by people primarily interested in the drink question. However, the drinking habits of two occupational groups, the miners and fishermen, were frequently commented upon and comparisons were often drawn between miners and fishermen in the 19th century. The tendency for them to be grouped in single occupational communities and the almost physical marks of their trade made them separate and identifiable. Indeed, both had a reputation for emphasising their apartness and only grudgingly accepting newcomers into the community. In an age which loved melodrama, the most obvious similarity was the particularly uncomfortable and perilous character of these occupations, whose dangers were emphasised and mythologised by periodic disasters. Even the prose of staid economists was not unaffected by this romantic influence.

'Hard is the lot of the miner who digs in the bowels of the earth, harder still is the lot of the fishermen who, in his fragile boat, toils day and night often on the raging sea'.¹

1. Leone Levi. The Economic Condition of Fishermen in The Fisheries Exhibition Literature Vol IV, London, 1884. p 152.

Keir Hardie's mother put it more succinctly; miners and fishermen were 'the two classes that ministers pray most for - if that does any good'.¹ The fatal accident rates for the respective industries underlined their need for divine protection.

If any occupations seemed justified in taking a refuge in drink it was these. The exhausting nature of work underground or the cold and discomfort of nights at sea could be regarded as legitimate reasons for the use of spirits. And how could men

faced with the ever present possibility of death be expected to take thought for the morrow? On physical and psychological grounds, miners and fishermen could be expected to be intemperate. In the 1840s this was rather taken for granted.

'It is not to be supposed that the virtue of temperance will characterise a population whereof a considerable part consists of colliers, carters, sailors and fishermen'

wrote Dr. James Sym, reporting on the sanitary condition of Ayr.²

1. Hamilton Fyfe Keir Hardie London 1935 p 17.

2. Op.cit. Local Sanitary Reports p 224

In many of the references to excessive drinking in that report, colliers and fishermen were particularly singled out as destitute, dirty, improvident and drunken.¹ By the end of the century, while seaports and mining counties topped the list of areas with high rates of drunkenness offences in England, a significant change seems to have taken place in Scotland.² The Royal Commission on the Licensing Laws reported that the miners of Fife were still given to drunkenness and had not improved in this respect. By contrast over the past 20 years the fishing population of North East Scotland and the Isle of Lewis had changed greatly for the better in this respect of their behaviour.³ Before considering what possible general inferences may be drawn from this divergent pattern it is necessary to establish its existence more satisfactorily.

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1. Op.cit Local Sanitary Reports Tranent, Lanark, Tain and Easter Ross, Musselburgh and Inveresk.
 2. Joseph Rowntree and Arthur Sherwell The Temperance Problem and Social Reform . London 1900 p 84.
 3. Op.cit. R.C. Licensing Laws (Scotland) P.P. 1899 Vol 35 pp 175-176.

THE MINERS

The reputation of Scottish miners for intemperance became firmly established in the 1840s a period in which the industry was expanding in new areas and the habits of the work force coming under scrutiny in Government investigations. Comments on the intemperance of the mining population featured prominently in the Local Sanitary Reports, the Reports of the Children's Employment Commissioners and the annual reports of Seymour Tremenheere on the state of the population in the mining districts. Scottish miners were not believed to be peculiar in this respect but the new coal fields of the West of Scotland appear to have had a particularly bad reputation for brutal drunkenness. Witnesses before the Royal Commission on the Scottish Licensing Laws believed that some improvement had taken place by 1860. The minister of Dalmellington informed the Commissioners that

'The mining population are not certainly of what I would call temperate habits; but they are more temperate than they were several years ago'.¹

The overseer at Dalmellington conceded that his men were 'a very sober class of men to be miners'.² If this was to damn with

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1. Op.cit R.C. Licensing Laws (Scotland) P.P. 1860 Vol 33. Evidence of Rev. David Stirling Witness 343 p 159
 2. Ibid. Evidence of John Hunter Witness 331 p 142

faint praise, it was even so too optimistic for police witnesses from mining areas.¹ Improvidence and intemperance were still failings associated with miners in the late 1860s and even the miners' champion, Alexander McDonald, was not prepared to deny them completely, agreeing that they hindered the formation of co-operative stores.²

Any tendency towards greater sobriety among miners was ended in the industrial boom of the early 1870s. Prices and wages rose in a spiral as miners failed to maximise their earnings and showed instead a preference for leisure, 'and how a proportion of them spend their leisure hours is sadly shown by the records of the local police courts'.³ In Coatbridge and Airdrie fines paid and committals for drunkenness rose as rapidly as wages and in Ayrshire the Chief Constable's report noted increased drunkenness in mining districts leading to greater disorder and violent crime.⁴

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1. Ibid. Evidence of Witness Nos. 319, 320, 322, 325.
 2. Report of the Select Committee on Mines. Parl.Papers 1866 Vol XIV.
Evidence of Alexander McDonald. Sec.Miners Association of Scotland. Q. 7170.
 3. A.J.Youngson Brown The Scots Coal Industry 1854-1886 .
Aberdeen University, D.Phil Thesis. 1952
Ch.3 quoting The Economist commercial review,
of 1872 subsequently A.J. Youngson Brown thesis.
 4. Social Reformer, April 1872

Concern at this state of affairs influenced the setting up of the Select Committee of the House of Lords on Intemperance which reported that there had, indeed, been a large increase in drunkenness in the large towns and mining districts of Scotland and the North of England after 1868.¹

This picture of the drunken miners needs to be qualified in the light of the sources of information on which it is based. Like much of what we know about working class social behaviour in the 19th century, it relies heavily upon the testimony of middle class witnesses who were describing an alien culture from the outside. One suspects in the case of the Inspector of the Mining Districts that his reports were primed by the miners' employers who were far from disinterested parties. However, champions of the working class did not seek to deny outright that drunkenness had increased in the 1870s. Bailie Lewis counter-asserted that the upper classes were no better, while Alexander McDonald carefully distinguished between the effects of rapid and gradual increase in wages on drinking habits.^{2,3}

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1. Op.cit. S.C. Intemperance P.P. 1878 Vol XIV Report p38.
 2. Miners Advocate and Record (Middlesborough) Vol 1, Jan. 1873 p 5
 3. Op.cit. R.C. Grocers Licenses P.P. 1878 Vol XXVI
Evidence of Alexander McDonald Q 4090

Miners themselves resented the unfavourable publicity they received and indignantly protested they were no worse than other men.¹

Others answered criticism, tongue in cheek —

'Worst of all they say we spent out money sae free when we had it and made Government sae rich, that now when we have less to spend on liquer we have upset the calculations of our new Chancellor to sic a distracting degree as may be the death o' the canny man..... Whisky is the staff of life to the Government and we are willing for Government's sake to use a' we can'. 2

It is in fact doubtful that the miners were exceptionally heavy consumers of alcohol rather their drinking was concentrated at weekends and pay days.³ Drunkenness associated with this drinking pattern however was the cause of their bad reputation.

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1. Miners Advocate and Record Vol II Jan. 1874 p 2
 2. Hawick Observer Oct.24 1874 letter from a miner.
 3. Miners unlike dock labourers did not suffer from high rates of alcoholic diseases. Collis and Greenwood. Op.cit. The Health of the Industrial Worker. Ch.5.

On the other hand Scottish miners do not seem to have taken whisky down the pit and this has to be set against the impression of recklessness and irresponsibility which was sometimes conveyed by unsympathetic observers.¹ It seems reasonable to assume, therefore, some exaggeration in the evidence relating to the intemperance of miners and perhaps they suffered from being a relatively identifiable group. At the same time there is no denying that alcohol had an important place in the leisure activities and social life of mining communities and that weekend drunkenness was socially acceptable conduct.²

This was still the case when Jevons wrote his classic study of the coal industry, but new recreations and political awareness were by then bringing about changes in the old manners and customs.³

By the 1920s this tendency proceeded much further as a writer sympathetic to the Scottish miners commented, 'the younger generation of miners is much soberer than the old'.⁴ Kellogg Durland's study

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1. K. Durland. Among the Fife Miners. London 1904 p 150
 2. Ibid 149
 3. H.S. Jevons. The British Coal Trade. London 1915. pp 625-629
 4. J.D.Macdougall The Scottish Coal Miner Nineteenth Century Vol 102 1927.

of Fife miners, based on the experience of living and working in a Fife mining village at the turn of the century gives a more detailed and sympathetic insight into the social life of Scottish miners than anything previously available. He repudiated the word drunken as applied to the miners.

'Drink they certainly do - the eight or ten licenses in the village of 5000 inhabitants proves that - but there are circumstances which order their drinking and confine excessive drinking to stated times, to wit, the pay night, the day or it may be the two days following and holidays, especially the New Year'.¹

That excessive drinking of that frequency was taken not to merit a reputation for drunkenness is an interesting comment on the standards of the time. It indicates a continuation of drinking patterns found earlier in the century without the overtones of brutalisation. Miners in Kelty still set out deliberately to get drunk on pay days and 'several hundred' supported the miners club whose sole function was that of a drinking place.² It is possible therefore to agree with the Royal Commission report that there was still much drunkenness among Fife miners but not perhaps that there had been no improvement over the last 20 years.

1.Op.cit. K . Durland Among the Fife Miners p 149

2. Ibid p 150 and p 144.

THE FISHERMEN.

Compared to the fishermen however any tendency towards greater sobriety among miners was small indeed.

'Exposed to cold and storm the fishermen are an abstemious race of men, not taking liquor on board though out at sea for days together. A great change has come over the fishermen of Lewis in this respect over the last 20 or 30 years while the same can be said of the North Sea Fishermen'. 1

'On the north and north east coasts, thirty or forty years ago, fishermen as a class were reckoned among the hardest drinkers of the population. As years rolled on the habits of fishermen gradually improved; and when the temperance movement spread its branches over the land no class enlisted under its banners more readily and no section of the community was more enthusiastic or adhered more firmly to teetotal principles than did this section of the seafaring class'. 2

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1. Op.cit R.C. on Licensing Laws. P.P. 1899 Vol XXXV Report Ch.1. p 176.
 2. J.Cranna Frazerburgh Past and Present Aberdeen 1914 p298
subsequently J.Cranna Frazerburgh.

In the case of the fishermen there is no need to look for marginal improvements in sobriety. Here is an apparent instance of an entire occupational group undergoing the kind of behavioural transformation experienced by individuals in temperance homilies. Cranna, writing in 1914, located this 'remarkable change' within the last quarter of a century with more gradual improvement over the last 30 or 40 years. The Royal Commission's report agreed with the latter estimate. An earlier House of Commons enquiry in the 1870s had heard of the changing character of Scottish fishermen while, at the Great International Fisheries Exhibition of 1883, it had come to the knowledge of the highest in the land.¹ As J.G. Bertram delicately put it,

'It was a cause of surprise when on a recent occasion His Royal Highness, the Prince of Wales entertained the fisher people who were visiting the International Exhibition that the majority of those who came from Scotland were teetotalers'.²

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1. Op.cit R.C.Grocers Licences P.P. 1878 Vol XXVI
Evidence of Robert Tindall, Q 7724.
 2. J.G. Bertram - The Unappreciated Fisher Folk p.6 in
Fisheries Exhibition Literature

It appears therefore that fishermen were becoming more temperate in the 1870s just when the miners were reasserting their reputation for drunkenness. There were, however, signs of improvement which had given encouragement to temperance reformers earlier than this. While the extent of whisky consumption in fishing communities was an object of wonder to temperance men in the 1840s, their efforts were meeting with success in some villages in the 1850s and 60s.^{1,2,3,4.} The religious awakening of 1858-59 assisted their efforts as did the activities of the North East Coast mission founded during the revival.⁵ Temperance activity appears to have been localised at first and was probably subject to retrogression as was normal with the movement. Nevertheless a tradition seems to have been established which was built upon^{by} the Moody and Sankey crusades and consolidated by the International Order of Good Templars, whose

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1. First Annual Report of the West of Scotland Temperance Union. Glasgow 1840.
 2. Scottish Temperance Review, July 1852.
 2. Abstainers Journal, Aug. 1855 and May 1856.
 4. Scottish Temperance League Weekly Journal 1860. April 14, Aug. 25 Nov. 24. Ibid Jan 14 1865.
 5. O. Bussey The Religious Awakening of 1858-60 in Great Britain and Ireland. Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis. Edinburgh (New College) 1947 pp 335-337.

pageantry and ritual seems to have been particularly attractive to fishing communities.¹ One can agree with the conclusion of the 1899 Royal Commission therefore while recognising that changes in the attitudes of fishermen to the use of alcohol first began around mid-century.

There is doubtless a moral in the fact that reports of the drunkenness of miners seems more inclined to exaggeration than those of the sobriety of fishermen. Even so, some qualification of the simple picture so far conveyed is essential. The evidence applies to the communities of the East coast, north of about Montrose and extending to the Northern Isles, but for the important area of the Firth of Forth it is largely silent. Some categories of fishermen, like the part-time men from outside fishing communities recruited during the herring season, have to be excluded and also the trawlermen who exhibited quite different characteristics.² Lastly it cannot be said with certainty what proportion of the inhabitants of fishing communities were teetotalers. Ferryden in Angus had for many years the largest Good Templar Lodge in Scotland, 261 adult members in 1894

1. Social Reformer Dec.1873

2. Trawling did not begin to be significant in the Scottish fishing industry until the 1890s.

M.G. Fogarty (ed) Further Studies in Industrial Organisation
Ch II.

in a village of about 1000 inhabitants.¹ Ferryden was certainly not unique in this respect, and teetotalism there was perhaps less universal than in many of the communities along the Moray Firth.² The evidence does not extend to detailed information about each individual community and variation is to be expected. It was possible however in such enclosed communities for teetotalism to become the norm with all the pressures for social conformity acting in its favour.

How are we to account for this great difference in behaviour between two groups which had once stood together in notoriety for drunkenness and which were superficially alike in many ways? The 19th century attributed the sobriety of fishermen to the influence of religion. There is no doubt about the strength of religious feeling in fishing communities, 'strong and primitive religious views' and a tradition of revival persisted into the 1920s.³ This raises the further question, why should fishermen have been receptive to the religious message? Was it the ever present proximity of death?

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1. Good Templary in Scotland - Its Work and Workers. Glasgow 1894. p 22
 2. James Leatham Fisherfolk of the North East Turriff n.d. (c.1930) p 22.
 3. John Paton. Left Turn! The autobiography of John Paton, London 1936 pp 20-28.

The miners were just as close. Sociological explanations are no more satisfactory than psychological ones. The close knit nature of fishing communities helps to explain the success of revivals but that might have applied to the miners also. Jevons thought that their social isolation inclined the miners to either recklessness or religion.¹ In South Wales there was a strong religious tradition which divided communities between the Chapel and the pub or into 'dry valleys' and 'wet valleys'.^{2,3} In the North of England Primitive Methodism was a significant force.⁴ By contrast the Fife miner, according to Durland was 'not traditionally a pillar of the Church' and the more accessible historical sources leave no indication of a religious tradition in the Scottish coal field.^{5,6} The religious explanation of the sobriety of fishermen therefore merely restates the problem.

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1. Op.cit H.S. Jevons The British Coal Trade pp 626-627.
 2. Ibid p 353
 3. Roger Datalier. From a Pitman's Notebook, London 1924 p 128
 4. Fynes. History of Northumberland and Durham Miners. Sunderland 1873 pp 282-283.
 5. Op.cit. K. Durland Among the Fife Miners p 138.
 6. There are a few tantalising glimpses which indicate that there was a small religious minority and even that a religious tradition may have existed in a few areas.
Rev. Islay Burns, the Pastor of Kilsyth, London 1860 and W.G.Blaikie. Recollections of a Busy Life, London 1901, refer to revivals in Scottish mining communities. The existence of small religious minorities are indicated by Thomas Stewart Among the Miners, being sketches in prose and verse. Larkhall 1893 and Abe Moffat My Life with the Miners London 1965. Moffat's father was a teetotalter and a member of the Plymouth Bretheren.

The key to a more satisfactory explanation lies in the nature of the respective industries, both of which were expanding rapidly in the 19th century. The mining industry in Scotland grew on the basis of a largely static and highly labour intensive technology. Growth in demand for coal was transferred automatically into the need for more miners. Continuous expansion of the labour force had a number of important social consequences. The most dramatic results were to be seen in the opening of new coal fields in Central and South West Scotland in the 1840s. Entirely new communities were brought into being or old settlements transformed by an influx of immigrant labour. Provision of the usual means of social control like churches and schools lagged behind the growth of population and the middle class was too small to provide community leadership or set standards of conduct. A frontier situation was created from which emerged communities whose social values sanctioned drunkenness.^{1,2} So long as the demand for labour was growing there was little incentive to look for employment outside mining. No other manual occupation could offer such high wages at such an early age. Statutory age limits on the employment of children in mines and provisions for their education usually only deferred entry until the legal age was reached

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1. Royal Commission on the employment of children in mines and factories. Report by Thomas Tancred on the employment of women and children in the West of Scotland mines and ironworks. Parl.Papers 1842 Vol XVI subsequently R.C. Childrens Employment.
 2. Op.cit Mining District Reports. P.P.1844 Vol XVI

'the temptation of earning wages at an early age and the demands for juvenile labour, exercise a countervailing influence so great as to considerably retard the hoped for results! 1

The well doing skilled artisan in the 19th century could at least cherish the hope that, by thrift and diligence he could become his own master. A miner could not become a mine owner and rarely in Scotland even a shareholder. Few mining companies in Scotland were registered companies and the denominations of individual shares was large.

'The consequences of course was to limit the number of shareholders and in the more extreme cases to confine them to the very wealthy section of the community (although there are cases of shareholders who recorded their profession as 'miner').' 2

Social mobility through education or self help was hard enough for working men to achieve but it was especially difficult for miners.

'For the great majority it is a case of "once a miner always a miner".' 3

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1. Op.cit Mining District Reports P.P. 1859 Sess. 2. Vol XII p 32.
see also H.S. Jevons The British Coal Trade
pp 621-623.
 2. Op.cit A.J. Youngson-Brown Thesis p 106.
 3. Op.cit H.S. Jevons The British Coal Trade p 626

The expanding industry trapped the labour force within it. Economic circumstances thirled the miners to the pit almost as effectively as slavery had once done.

Perhaps the most obvious long term result of the expansion of the work force was the problem of chronic housing shortage. Most Scottish miners lived in company houses and the employers provision of accommodation in Scotland was inadequate both in quantity and quality. Sanitary standards were low. Few miners houses in Scotland had more than two rooms and one room houses were still being built after 1900.^{1,2.} Paternalistic English employers were building 4 roomed houses in the 1870s but none were available in Scotland until council housing schemes of the 1920s.³ Scottish miners' wives never had that symbol of respectability, the front room 'that place where the pit clothes come not'.⁴ Durland's lodgings in Kelty which he believed to be a 'representative miners' home' housed 14 people in two rooms and an attic.⁵ To keep such houses clean especially when the inhabitants often worked on different shifts required an enormous effort of will.⁶ Conditions like these engendered low expectations. 'What will you do when your family increases', asked Keir Hardie and Henry George of a miners' wife living in one room? 'Oh then we shall take in a lodger to help pay the rent'.⁷

1. Op.cit R.C.Housing. P.P. 1917-18 Vol XIV Ch.XIV

2. Ibid pp 138-141.

3. Select Committee on the Causes of the Present Dearthness and Scarcity of Coal. Parl Papers 1873 Vol X.
Evidence of Andrew Langdale. Qs. 6655, 6656.

4. Jack Lawson. A Man's Life. London 1932 p 136.

5. Op.cit K. Durland Among the Fife Miners p 105.

6. Op.cit. Jack Lawson A Man's Life p 46-48.

7. Op.cit Hamilton Fyfe Keir Hardie p 29.

The poverty of miners' accommodation contrasted strongly with their reputation for being comparatively well paid workers. Although there were undoubtedly considerable differentials between the best paid face workers and other grades, the potential earnings of the former in good times was comparable with skilled tradesmen. The most significant feature of miners' wages however was their tendency to fluctuation. Many factors could influence the individual hewer's weekly wage and geological conditions, one of the major imponderables, were particularly bad in Scottish coal fields. In addition to this the industry was subject to severe cyclical fluctuations and since labour accounted for over 70% of total costs, changes in the market price of coal tended to be reflected quickly in the level of miners wages.¹ Between 1854 and 1886 the highest rates of daily wages in Scots coal fields was ten shillings, the lowest two shillings. Even omitting the exceptional years, daily wages varied between two shillings and six shillings.² At the Govan colliery average earnings rose from 20s.9d. per week in 1868 to 45s.10d. in 1873, falling to 14s.8d. per week in 1879.³ While this

1. Op.cit A.J.Youngson Brown Thesis pp 112/113.

2. Ibid.

3. A. Slaven. Earnings and Productivity in the Scottish Coal Mining Industry during the 19th century. The Dixon Enterprises in P.L. Payne (ed) Studies in Scottish Business History. London 1967 p 236.

of course was an exceptional period, Dr. Slaven's detailed study of earnings at the Govan colliery between 1856 and 1913 led him to conclude that 'the most characteristic feature of the colliers' earnings was their variability'.¹ Board of Trade figures of percentage variations in wages of miners in Scotland show the continuation of considerable fluctuations to the end of the century.² It would be more accurate to say therefore that miners' wages were high relative to other employment in times of boom and low in times of depression. As the miners themselves put it, mining was a feast or a famine.

The need for a reliable and disciplined industrial work force was an important instrument of social change in the 19th century. Sobriety was clearly one of the desirable attributes of the new industrial man and Scottish employers were already concerned with the drinking habits of their men early in the century. Various steps were taken by mining and ironworking firms in the 1840s, to prevent drinking at the places of work.³ In mining however the long wall system of coal getting, widely used in Scotland, effectively left work discipline at the point of production under the control of the miners themselves. While they might drink at the pit-head they do not seem to have commonly carried alcohol underground and their drinking was generally associated with leisure rather than the work situation.

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1. Ibid p 238 This was not true of all underground workers, however, particularly of oversmen and trappers.
 2. Colliery Guardian Feb 14. 1908
 3. Chapter 2. pp 52-54

It was absenteeism rather than insobriety at the coal face which was a problem for the industry. As the 1870s showed by limiting coal production in periods of rising demand, absenteeism could contribute to the inflation of coal prices but whether this was a matter of overwhelming concern at the level of the firm is not clear.¹

Scottish employers justified the truck system as a means to control drinking and absenteeism.² The Shotts Iron Co. in 1878

'considered it to be better for the men that they (the company) should have the premises licensed and that they really don't carry on these shops for profit except in this way that they get better conducted men and they have more control over their men by having the places under their own control at which groceries and liquor are sold'.³

The important consequence of this policy was to turn employers in the mining and metallurgical industries into licensees and logically to seek to monopolise the sale of drink in the vicinity of their works.

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1. Op.cit A.J.Youngson Brown Thesis pp 155/156.
 2. Select Committee of the House of Commons on Payment of Wages. Parl Papers 1854 Vol XVI Evidence of Mr. James Baird M.P.
 3. R.C.Grocers Licenses (Scotland) Parl.Papers 1878 Vol XXVI Q. 5784.

Pleas of altruistic service to the work force must be seen in the light of the admission of one works manager that selling whisky was 'more profitable than iron and coal raising'.¹ In one year Merry and Cunningham channelled 31% of the wages paid at the coal and ironstone pits through its eleven stores, making profits equal to 2.7% of the total wage bill.² The Shotts Iron Co., which did not 'really carry on the shops for profit' sold on average wines and spirits to the value of £2287 in the eight years up to 1877.³ Moreover spirits were the most bouyant article of sale in a period of rising wages.⁴

Index of Sale of Goods at Shotts Iron Co. store.

Table 2

	<u>Spirits</u>	<u>Meat</u>	<u>Meal and Flour</u>
1870	100	100	100
1871	-	-	-
1872	-	-	-
1873	174	160	116
1874	217	153	120
1875	172	158	114
1876	138	141	100
1877	133	134	100

1. Royal Commission on the Truck Acts. Parl.Papers 1871 Vol XXXVI Evidence of R. Henderson manager of Drumpellier Iron Works.
2. Op.cit R.C.Grocers Licences (Scotland) Parl.Papers 1878 Vol XXVI Evidence of J. Baird and Appendix 10;
3. Ibid Q 5821
4. Ibid Qs. 5826 - 5831

The licence monopoly therefore represented a useful annual addition to profits and the best means in a period of rising wages for the employer to reduce his real wages bill. The ambivalence of coal and iron employers' attitudes to the drinking habits of their workers was nicely summed up by Alexander McDonald who said of Merry and Cunningham 'the firm.....(has)..... 11 spirit licenses I think and they have 11 missionaries too.'¹ Many Scottish mine owners seem to have been more inclined to exploit the drinking habits of miners for financial reasons than to try to alter them in order to improve industrial discipline.²

Most of the hypotheses evolved in the 19th century and since to explain drunkenness in terms of social conditions apply particularly well to miners. The danger and insecurity of their work predisposed them towards immediate enjoyment. Many of the factors which directly affected their lives were beyond their control or comprehension and drove them to seek escape in alcoholic oblivion. Inadequate and

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1. Op.cit S.C. on Mines. Parl Papers 1866 Vol XIV Q. 7125.
 2. Slaven argues that a fall in the incidence of Monday morning absenteeism in the 1850s by comparison with earlier in the century is evidence of a more disciplined and sober work force at Govan Collieries. Earnings and Productivity in the Scottish Coal Mining Industry, pp 228-229.
He does not however consider the possible effects of Sunday closing of Public Houses from 1853

overcrowded housing did not make for domestic comfort causing the menfolk to seek their relaxation in the company of their fellows in the pub or club. Fluctuating incomes encouraged a low conventional standard of living whose inflexibility in good times released additional income for personal consumption by the wage-earner, a situation facilitated by the notably subservient position of women in mining communities. Every one of these hypotheses is credible and has evidence which apparently supports it. Almost all of them however might have applied as well to the fishermen as the miners.¹ The North Sea remained a cold and inhospitable place of work. Bad weather and the market for fish were uncontrollable factors which effected the fishermens livelihood. Inadequate sanitation and poor quality housing were just as much characteristic of fishing settlements as mining villages.² If variable earnings made mining a feast or a famine, fishing was proverbially a 'hunger or a burst'.

The crucial difference between the two occupational groups

1. The position of women in fishing communities is one important difference.
2. Op.cit. R.C.Housing. Parl.Papers 1917/18 Vol XIV Chs XIV and XVI

is related to the dissimilarity in the organisation of their respective industries. Long before the 19th century, mining had been a capital intensive industry with ownership and control vested in a few hands. Miners, though they pre-dated the industrial revolution, were the classic proletarians. By contrast the Scottish fishing industry in the 1840s was conducted with capital equipment so simple and cheap as to be within the ability of the fishermen themselves to control. The story of the fishermen in the 19th century is the story of their struggle to retain control of the means of production in an industry revolutionised by a widening market and changing technology. What relevance had this for the sobriety of fishermen? Before 1840 the public house had been an important centre of fish marketing, the place where indeed the crews sold small catches of white fish to 'cadgers' for local distribution.¹ Improved transportation and the growing relative importance of the herring fishing replaced this system of fish selling by seasonal contracts with fish curers. The use of alcohol in the commercial field did not automatically end here. 'Bargains' with fish curers were often sealed in drink and as part of the agreement curers might undertake to supply boats with whisky during the herring season.²

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1. Op.cit Andrew Douglas. History of the Village of Ferryden. p 49.
 2. Op.cit J.Cranna Frazerburgh p 298.

From the 1880s, seasonal contracts gave way to auctioning the catch, thus eliminating the element of personal dealing with which the use of drink was associated. More important, however, was the steeply rising capital outlay required to build and equip a boat for the herring fishing. Between 1840 and 1880 the cost of a boat and gear rose from £135 to over £500.¹ The formidable burden of capital investment was borne almost entirely by the fishermen themselves. By the 1870s the average fishermen was having to make savings of about one fifth of his annual income from herring fishing just to maintain existing equipment.² Because of the inequalities of earnings between boats 'the difficulties weighing on probably the majority of crews were much heavier than the average figures suggest'.³ The only outside source of capital was loans from fish curers which fishermen tried to liquidate quickly because such indebtedness limited their commercial freedom. As Malcolm Gray points out:

'The use of advances from curers scarcely postponed and could not diminish the need for large savings from fishermen to maintain their position'.⁴

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1. Malcolm Gray. Organisation and Growth in the East Coast Herring Fishing 1800-1885 in P.L.Payne (ed) Studies in Scottish Business History. pp 209-212.
 2. Ibid.
 3. Ibid p 211
 4. Ibid p 212

While the miners were fighting the class struggle, the fishermen were engaged in a rearguard action against advancing capitalism. Their response should be seen more in terms of avoiding proletarianisation than the acceptance of an individualistic ideology. Outside observers could easily mistake the fishermen's motives. The economist, Leone Levi, seeing the fishermen as any other group of small business men engaged in a risky enterprise advised them to accept the status of employees.

'Enticing as it may be to invest your little savings in boat property, I am not sure but putting the money in the Savings Banks is safer and better. Let them speculate who can afford it'.¹

Fishermen were not motivated by the conventional rewards of successful business enterprise, wealth, power and social status and the possibility of choosing between alternative investment opportunities did not occur to them. They invested in the capital equipment of their industry as a means to defend their independence and traditional values. As a result, while their standard of living remained that of the working class, property in the form of boats and gear was widely distributed among them.² Fishermen may not

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1. Op.cit Leone Levi. The Economic Condition of Fishermen P 176
 2. Fishermen also frequently owned their own houses.
R.C. on Housing Parl.Papers 1917/18 Ch XIV p 182

have been conventional capitalists but they were still faced with the problem of how to save a significant proportion of their income. The financial discipline required was not easily compatible with a style of life in which the proceeds from catches were consumed in a carefree way without thought for future needs. It was in these circumstances that fishermen were brought into contact with temperance propoganda which emphasised 'rational' expenditure, saving rather than consumption, long term advantages over immediate enjoyment. The familiar temperance technique of posing a choice between two courses of action was easily adapted to the fishermen's situation. On the one hand was the village enslaved to drink in which the merchant had got possession of the nets and boats. On the other was the possibility offered by teetotalism of prosperity and independence.¹ It was a choice which may have had little meaning for many working class people but it matched the circumstances of fishermen. 'We will get boats now independant of the curers' was the reaction in Ferryden to the visit of J.B.Gough.² While this explanation smacks somewhat of vulgar Marxism and cannot be regarded as complete it does suggest that the burden of capital accumulation undertaken by fishermen from mid-century made the temperance ethic of sobriety and self help particularly relevant to them. The more prosaic puritanism which

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1. Rev. Alex Wallace A Highland Village or the dark and the bright side of the picture .
S.T.L. Tract No. 34 C 1855
 2. Op.cit Andrew Douglas History of the Village of Ferryden
pp 58 - 60.

replaced the 'rough and tumble of former times' brought with it increased material prosperity.^{1,2} The culture of fishermen was changed by the efforts they had to make to preserve it but at least the essentials were saved and to the end of the century fishing communities were preserved from the external threat of capitalistic employers without succumbing to the danger of internal social differentiation.³ What general conclusions can be drawn from this comparison of two occupational groups? Firstly it lends support to the explanations of working class drunkenness offered by Pollard and Checkland.^{4,5.} Fluctuations in their income provided compelling reasons for the miners to maintain conventional standards of consumption supportable by low wages in bad times. These standards were reinforced by the social isolation of miners which limited their horizons of alternative possibilities. This helps to explain the miners' stamina in industrial disputes but when wages rose sharply there were few goods for which miners had a strong demand elasticity. Education was not highly valued by them. Housing was controlled by the employers and even when the exercise of choice was possible income fluctuations must have discouraged long term commitments to better and dearer housing. Even increased expenditure

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1. Op.cit J. Cranna Frazerburgh p 313
 2. Op.cit O.Bussey The Religious awakening of 1858/60 in Great Britain and Ireland p 337.
 3. Malcolm Gray. Fishing Villages 1750 - 1880 in Proceedings of the British Association for the Advancement of Science 1962 (Ab erdeenshire).
 4. S.Pollard. A History of Labour in Sheffield. Liverpool 1959 p 23
 5. S.Checkland. The Rise of Industrial Society in England. Oxford 1964 p 233.

on food was limited after a time by cultural constraints. The 19th century prescription for fluctuating income was to promote saving to even out the variations. One may agree with P.H. Hair's view that miners were psychologically predisposed against saving but even if this is not wholly accepted saving seems to have been a characteristic of working class groups who enjoyed relative stability and security.^{1,2} Analysis of the subscribers of the Glasgow Savings Bank supports other impressions, that miners neither saved for emergencies and old age nor had the strong incentives for investment saving experienced by fishermen.³ As the boom of the 1870s indicates, miners in a period of rapidly rising wages showed a preference for leisure and leisure pursuits and it was still the opinion of employers in 1908 that 'when the rate of wages is high, the percentage of absenteeism is greater'.⁴ Even so the consumption habits of Scottish miners may have been modified in the period of falling consumer goods prices and rising real wages in the manner suggested by A.E. Dingle.⁵ Alexander McDonald believed that gradual wage increases were more beneficial in their effects than sudden rises because the miners were better able to adjust their

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1. P.H.Hair. Social History of British Coal Miners. Unpub. Oxford University Ph.D. Thesis 1955 p 366
 2. P.L. Payne. The Savings Bank of Glasgow 1836-1914 in P.L. Payne (ed) Studies in Scottish Business History. p 159
 3. Ibid p 161
 4. Colliery Guardian, April 17, 1908 p 251
 5. Op.cit. A.E. Dingle. Drink and Working Class Living Standards in Britain 1870 - 1914.

spending patterns to them.¹ Expensive durable consumer goods like bicycles, pianos and harmoniums were being purchased by Fife miners around 1900.² However, it was not until the 1920s, after wartime taxation had shifted the price relationship between drink and alternative goods substantially in favour of the latter, that miners' consumption habits were clearly changing. The old distinctive way of life was 'retreating hastily before the conquering hoot of the motor omnibus, the herald of the picture houses, fried fish shops and sporting papers.'^{3,4.}

In the case of the Scottish fishermen, saving and capital investment played the part that alternative consumer goods to drink provided for other sections of the population.⁵ In this and other important respects they were probably unique, nevertheless their circumstances in some ways correspond to those of the skilled artisans, who, if they had less capital equipment to finance, had appearances to keep up. Skilled tradesmen were typically employees

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1. R.C.Grocers Licences Scotland Parl Papers 1878 Vol XXVI Q. 4090 Op.cit.
 2. Op.cit K. Durland Among the Fife Miners p 115.
 3. Op.cit J.D. Macdougall The Scottish Coalminer .
 4. The Buckmaster Report, Vol II The Social and Economic Aspects of the Drink Question, London 1931 Ch.II.
 5. Trawler men appear to have developed a life style like that of 19th century miners in response to a similar situation of income fluctuation. G.W. Horobin Community and Occupation in the Hull Fishing Industry British Journal of Sociology Vol 8 1957 and Jeremy Tunstall The Fishermen London 1962.

yet they were the only substantial working class group other than the fishermen for whom independant status was still a realisable ambition. For them also the ethics of self help were relevant in the field of work. Artisans living in a diverse urban community had, however, a wider and more complex range of motives for sobriety, which did not apply to socially isolated fishermen, for example the desire to emulate the middle classes and to differentiate themselves from the poor.

The miners were also unique in some respects, but even so their social situation was broadly similar to that of other workers in the heavy industrial sector of the Scottish economy. Nineteenth century critics might condemn them as reckless and improvident but in fact their behaviour seems to have been a rational enough reaction to the circumstances they found themselves in. If the miners are accepted as a model for workers in heavy industry then a large and important section of the working class in Scotland was evolving similar expenditure patterns, recreational habits and drinking mores and expectations as to housing and living standards. These were not the ^{poor}ppor, nor were they all unskilled, nor were they disreputable in the sense that temperance propoganda represented those who got drunk. They were the proletariat unable to escape like the fishermen or find employment in small-scale and often more benevolent capitalism like the skilled men in traditional crafts. The implications are that they were culturally distinct from the artisans in that they rejected the life style of respectability and the ethic.

of self help. As a group they were heavily concentrated in the industrial belt of Central Scotland and around Clydeside and this at least corresponds to the contemporary conviction that drunkenness was a symptom of industrial life with its epicentre on Glasgow. These, indeed, were the men who belonged to Glasgow whose predicament Will Fyfe understood so clearly

'I'm only a common auld working chap
as anyone here can see
But when I get a couple of pints on a
Saturday
Glasgow belongs to me'.

It was the only time anything in Glasgow belonged to him.

Section II

The Drink Question in Scotland:

Recognition and Response.

Summary

Section II examines the growth of concern about alcohol use in 19th century Scotland. It attempts to record and explain changes in social attitudes and to examine the role of various agencies in creating an awareness of a drink problem. Prominent among these was the temperance movement but in Scotland this was not the only source of expressions of concern about drunkenness. The emphasis here is not on the institutional and organisational features of the temperance movement but on its interaction with other manifestations of organised opposition to excessive drinking. In Scotland, awareness of a drink problem was followed fairly rapidly by legislative action to control it in the form of a more effective system of licensing whose origin, implementation and consolidation is described.

Although the temperance movement originated in Scotland the early anti-spirits phase failed to become established, and organised temperance activity had ceased by 1836. The explanation offered here is that temperance societies, originally conceived as a means by which the religious men of the middle classes would reform the vices of the lower orders by precept and example, failed to attract middle class support. This fact together with the almost total lack

of control over the sale of drink in the 1830s indicates a lack of concern about drunkenness in Scottish society at this time.

The situation changed rapidly after 1840 with the publication of books, pamphlets and Government reports which drew attention to the unique extent of the evil in Scotland and associated it with other problems of urban industrial society. Generalised feelings of concern about declining religious, moral and behavioural standards among the industrial population were made more pointed by middle class fears about increasing crime and rising poor rates, both issues which were easily related to the drinking habits of the lower classes. Out of these circumstances developed a loosely co-ordinated campaign supported by politically influential people for stronger controls over the sale of drink leading ultimately to a demand for stricter licensing legislation.

In parallel with these developments but separate from them was the total abstinence phase of the temperance movement. Total abstinence organisations grew rapidly in 1838 and 1839 drawing support mainly from the working classes. They represented aspirations for self elevation and political effectiveness. Middle class support was alienated by the total abstinence pledge and the association of the movement with

radicalism. Teetotallers were in general opposed to legislative action which was aimed only at the drinking habits of working men.

There existed in Scotland in the 1840s, therefore, two distinctive expressions of concern about the drink problem reflecting the different perceptions of the problem by opposing groups within a divided society. After 1845 the two separate streams gradually came closer together. This is explained by the failure of the temperance movement's policy of ostracising the social use of alcohol by rational persuasion of consumers to discontinue its use. The movement, having lost its mass support, was looking for a new direction at a time when the licensing law campaign promised to obtain limited but practical measures for controlling alcohol.

The passing of the Forbes Mackenzie Act in 1853 marked the foundation of the modern Scottish licensing system. It was passed without the support of the organised temperance movement and with little opposition from the drink trade. The end of teetotal objections to legislative action, and the attempt by the trade to emulate the success of their English counterparts and repeal the law, form the background to the political struggle over the licensing question which occupied the remainder of the 1850s. The alliance of anti-drink forces in which

the Temperance movement played an important part was successful in defeating the attempts of a divided drink trade to discredit the licensing laws and after a favourable Royal Commission report these were consolidated and strengthened in 1862. Scottish society had passed from being a rural society with social controls over drinking to an urban society with statutory controls.

CHAPTER 4

The Failure of the Anti-Spirits Movement in Scotland 1829 - 1836.

'Such were the "days of langsyne" Ye scenes adieu!
Where ancient truth and innocence were nursed:
And Maiden-honour fled the base purlieu
of vicious revel and unholy thirst'.

John Dunlop 'Scotland's Change'

As long as drunkenness was accepted as a normal and desirable consequence of the use of alcohol by all social classes, it was unlikely to be regarded as a problem for society. One might expect, however, that the differentiation in drinking habits and attitudes to intoxication, which was becoming evident in Scotland by the 1820s, would lead to a growth of concern among the newly sober upper classes about the continued intemperance of the lower orders. It must be admitted, however, that there is little evidence of this before the appearance of the temperance movement in 1829. There were a few expressions of disquiet at the growth of whisky drinking. Contributors to the Old Statistical Account complained about the drinking habits of the poor but they were almost as outraged by the growing popularity of tea or the fondness of female servants for fashionable clothes. Complaints of this kind

were expressions of a fear that the poor were forgetting their place and the consumption habits that went with it. Popular literature of the pre-temperance era did include a few references to the evils of drink. William Chambers' 'Kaleidoscope' of 1821 contained sketches illustrating the evil consequences of whisky drinking.¹ James Clelland's first statistical study of Glasgow drew attention to the nuisance caused by the large number of licensed houses in the city.² Other publications more clearly resembling later temperance propaganda appeared in Scotland about this time. The most notable of those was a pamphlet by one John Bremner which anticipated some of the explanations and some of the remedies of temperance reformers.³ Most interesting of all was the 'Anatomy of Drunkenness' presented to the Faculty of Physicians and Surgeons as an inaugural essay by Robert Macnish in 1825 and later published in many editions.⁴ It cannot be said that these indicate a groundswell of concern and none of the authors

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1. William Chambers. Memoir of William and Robert Chambers
Edinburgh 1883. p 160.
 2. James Clelland The Rise and Progress of the City of Glasgow .
Glasgow 1820 p 136
 3. John Bremner Misery Averted or the Rise and Progress and End
of Intemperance Seriously Considered .
Edinburgh (2nd ed) 1826
 4. Robert Macnish The Anatomy of Drunkenness Glasgow (5th ed) 1834

saw drunkenness as a rapidly growing evil to be linked to other issues. Even Bremner, who came closest to this, saw it as an individual problem with a traditional solution 'the most certain remedy for intemperant drinking as for every other evil practice is religion'.¹

In gauging social concern actions may speak louder than words and it is useful therefore to consider whether established controls on drink consumption were being more strictly applied, or even dormant legislation ressurected. We have already seen that one potential medium of control, excise taxation, was reduced in 1823 but that this was a recognition of administrative inadequacies. The other important legislative control was that exercised by local magistrates over the number and conditions of operation of public houses through the licensing system.² Temperance reformers alleged that there was a large increase in the number of public houses in Scotland in the first three decades of the 19th century.³ Duncan McLaren, with the historian's fondness for the dramatic turning point dated the increase precisely from 1794.

'During that year the fatal change was made in the licensing law from which may be dated the rapid growth of the whisky drinking propensities of Scotchmen'.⁴

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1. Op.cit John Bremner Misery Averted or the Rise and Progress and End of Intemperance seriously considered .
 2. Outlines of the Scottish licensing laws are given in G.B.Wilson. op.cit Ch. II and The Centenary Handbook of the Total Abstinence Movement in Scotland 1832-1932. Glasgow 1932.
 3. Op.cit S.C.Drunkenness Parl.Papers 1834 Vol VIII Evidence of William Collins.
 4. Op.cit Duncan McLaren The Rise and Progress of Whisky Drinking in Scotland . p 22

The change referred to was the creation of a low priced licence for the retail of 'plain aqua vitae only', 4397 of these whisky licences were taken out together with 1304 of the more expensive general licences. In 1825 a new unified system came into operation by which the licence duty was related to the rateable value of the premises. The fatal whisky licence was now replaced by the no less infamous two guinea licence for public houses under £10 per annum rental value. The result was an increase in the total number of licences granted from 11,134 in 1824 under the old system to over 17,200 for each of the years from 1829 to 1831.¹ Glasgow's 919 public houses, regarded by Cleland as excessive in 1820, had risen to 1393 by 1830.² While Glasgow was rarely outdone in the provision of public houses in the 19th century this density of public houses was by no means exceptional in the towns and cities of Scotland.³

Like the great increase in spirits consumption after 1823 the proliferation of public houses was something of a statistical illusion, resulting from the creation of licensing fees levied by

1. Ibid p 22

2. James Cleland Enumeration of the inhabitants of the city of Glasgow and county of Lanark from the Government Census of 1831 .
Glasgow (2nd ed) 1832 p 112

3. Table 4 p 135

the excise and the decision by an increasing number of drink sellers that legal status was worthwhile, provided the price was low enough. Even after 1824 when the marginal cost of legality was two guineas per annum, some still considered this too dear. There were 22 convictions for illicit selling in Glasgow in 1830.¹ From about 1820 onwards, however, it seems probable that the number of licences issued matched fairly closely the actual number of drink sellers. As well as the licence purchased from the excise the legitimate drink seller required a certificate granted by the local magistrates. The conditions under which these were granted were clarified and strengthened by the Home-Drummond Act of 1828. Under this law, which used English practice as its model, new powers of restriction and control were vested in the representatives of the governing classes of Scotland. There is little evidence, however, that these were used. Licences were granted to applicants provided they could supply evidence of good character and once obtained they were rarely denied on annual re-application, even to licensees who had committed offences.

1. Op.cit John Cleland Enumeration of the inhabitants of the city of Glasgow and County of Lanark . p 112

The absence of any feeling of responsibility among licensing magistrates for the wider consequences of their decisions was brought out by a Parliamentary enquiry in 1846.¹

'It is good natured feeling on the part of the magistrates towards the person applying?
- I think the magistrates generally have respect to the individual rather than to the welfare of the community in granting licences'.²

Some licensing courts even condoned practices which were strictly speaking illegal. The Justices of Roxburghshire, who were also trustees of the toll roads, were in the habit over many years of licensing toll houses prior to letting them because this enhanced their rental value.³

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1. Report of the Select Committee on Public Houses (Scotland).
Parl. Papers 1846 Vol XV
subsequently S.C. Public Houses.
 2. Ibid Evidence of Graham Speirs, Sheriff of Edinburgh. Q. 96.
 3. Minto Papers 1845 Box 124/4 10 and 11 N.L.S.
This practice infringed the principle of all Scottish licensing laws that the certificate was vested in the individual not the property.

However lax the State might be in the control of the drink trade, one might have expected greater zeal from the Church. In Scotland the established Church had traditionally wide ranging powers and responsibilities in the provision of education and the operation of the poor law. Church courts had jurisdiction over minor misdemeanours, including drunkenness, although not with legally enforceable penalties. Its pastoral role and status as the guardian of national morality gave the Church opportunity and incentive to act as a register of increasing concern about drunkenness. One Church regulation which directly impinged upon the sale of drink, was the prohibition of commercial activities on Sundays. Like other aspects of the Church's authority which depended upon a general acceptance of its claims, this had been somewhat eroded especially in urban areas, but it was by no means universally disregarded and with the growing ascendancy of evangelicalism Sabbath observance was undergoing something of a revival in the 1820s.¹ While the Scots out of respect for religion were expected to forego the public house on the Sabbath, their less virtuous Southern neighbours had to be compelled by law to at least vacate their beer houses during the actual hours of worship. One of the ironies of the 1828 Scottish Licencing Act

1. R.D. Brackenridge. Sunday Observance in Scotland 1689-1900
Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Glasgow University
1962 Chs. V and VI.

was that this provision became part of Scottish law. Enterprising drink sellers interpreted this to mean that they were free to open at other hours of the Sabbath and in 1832 this view was upheld by the Court of Session. The curious situation arose in Godly Scotland that the sale of bread or meat on Sunday was forbidden but the sale of whisky was perfectly lawful, an anomaly which was highlighted by licensed grocers opening for the sale of spirits only. Such an affront to the religious traditions and moral pretensions of Scotland might have been expected to arouse a storm of protest from the Church. It does not seem to have been singled out for special mention however. The Select Committee of the House of Commons on the Lords Day, set up by Sir Andrew Agnew to provide a platform for sabbatarian sentiment, did not recommend a return to Sunday closing for Scotland, only that public houses remain closed until after the hour of morning worship.¹ 'The mildness of this recommendation', commented the historian of the Church's temperance efforts, 'only serves to show the strong grip which the spirit trade had on public opinion'.² It mainly serves to show that churchmen were more interested in other matters such as ecclesiastical conflict and church extension.

1. Report of the Select Committee on the Lord's Day.
Parl. Papers 1832 Vol VII p 7

2. Op.cit Rev. M.B. MacGregor Towards Scotland's Social Good p 25.

By 1830 the retailing of spirits in Scotland was in a state of almost perfect competition. Entry into the trade was virtually unrestricted by the administrators of the licensing system. Initial capital investment was small and it must have been possible to open a legitimate spirit shop with an outlay of less than £20.¹ It was a recognised means by which widows and cripples could support themselves. J.D. Burn, somewhat down on his luck, had three different licensed houses in the course of a few years in the 1830s.² Once established in the trade there were few constraints on individual enterprise. Apart from the hours of statutory closing on the Sabbath, it was possible to open at almost any hour of the day or night.³ These circumstances help to explain the large number of licenced houses at this time, and prompt the conclusion that few commodities were more readily available to the Scottish consumer than whisky. In Glasgow in 1832 there were more licensed premises than all other sellers of foodstuffs put together and the publicans were still the most numerous single group of retailers by mid-century.⁴

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1. The main requirements being, Premises: £10 annual rental.
Licence: £2.2s. Stock: Whisky at 7s. per gallon.
 2. Op.cit J.D.Burn Autobiography of a Beggar Boy pp 125, 146, 145.
 3. The 1828 Licensing Act forbade opening during the hours of service on Sundays and enjoined licensees not to keep open at 'unreasonable hours'.
G.B.Wilson op.cit p. 118.
The problem of defining 'unreasonable' and the absence of police powers of entry made enforcement difficult even when public opinion was alive to the problem.
 4. Tables 3 and 4.

Table 3. Retail shops selling foodstuffs in Glasgow (10 parishes) 1831 compared with number of licensed houses.

	Bakers.	Confectioners.	Butchers	Fish and Poultry dealers	Greengrocers and Fruiterers.	Grocers and Victuallers	Licensed Grocers	Total Retailers.	Total Licenses including Licensed grocers.
114	38	105	220	59	467	229	1232	1360	
								-134-	

Source: James Clelland.

Enumeration of the inhabitants of the City of Glasgow and County of Lanark from the Government Census of 1831 Glasgow (2nd Ed) 1832

Table 4.
Selected retailers compared to number of licensed houses
in major Scottish towns at 1851 census.

Source - Scottish Temperance Register - 1852

	BAKERS		BUTCHERS		BOOKSELLERS		LICENSED HOUSES	
	Total	per capita	Total	per capita	Total	per capita	Total	per capita
Aberdeen	50	1/1439	110	1/654	35	1/2055	583	1/123
Ayr (old town)	8	1/1137	8	1/1137	9	1/1011	93	1/98
Dumbarton	6	1/902	6	1/902	5	1/1082	39	1/139
Dumfries	13	1/854	10	1/1110	6	1/1851	139	1/80
Edinburgh	166	1/988	110	1/1436	92	1/1717	963	1/164
Glasgow	247	1/1351	210	1/1589	95	1/3512	2048	1/163
Greenock	32	1/1147	26	1/1412	13	1/2824	295	1/125
Hawick	20	1/450	9	1/1000	3	1/3000	45	1/200
Inverness	22	1/578	38	1/334	8	1/1589	124	1/102
Kirkaldy	21	1/695	10	1/1460	8	1/1825	113	1/129
Paisley	36	1/1322	64	1/749	9	1/5328	216	1/222
Perth	25	1/953	25	1/953	14	1/1701	174	1/137
Stirling	17	1/727	11	1/1123	7	1/1765	91	1/133
Wick.	6	1/1220	8	1/840	2	1/3361	51	1/132

Prior to the formation of commercial water companies in 1806 and 1808 the entire city of Glasgow had been supplied with water from 29 public wells.¹ As the experience of Edinburgh shows, the poorer areas of Scottish cities were inadequately supplied with water until this became a municipal responsibility.² Professor Saunders may have exaggerated slightly when he wrote that for the tenement dwellers in the old towns of Scotland whisky was 'almost as cheap as water and easier to carry'.³ Given the relative supply situation of the two commodities it was certainly easier to get.

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1. Op.cit J. Cleland Enumeration of the inhabitants of the City of Glasgow and County of Lanark . p 197
 2. David Lewis Edinburgh Water Supply A sketch of its history past and present. Edinburgh 1908 pp 23-35.
 3. L.J.Saunders Scottish Democracy 1815-1840 Edinburgh 1950 p 233.

When Scottish temperance reformers explained the movement's emergence they seized on statistical data which showed large increases in whisky consumption and facilities for its sale in the course of the 1820s. The direct and immediate relationship which they postulated between the worsening of the problem and its perception by society has been regarded sceptically by historians. 'With the drink problem as with factory hours, humanitarian agitation began at a time when the evil had already begun to diminish'.¹ This may well have been true for England; Scotland however had no Gin Age to look back to and while the rates of increase of whisky consumption and of licensed houses was less dramatic than they seemed, both these crude inductors of the drink problem did reach historical peaks in Scotland in the 1830s.² Together with the likelihood that an anti-spirits campaign presented a more radical challenge to the existing alcohol culture in a whisky drinking country, these were the more obvious ways in which the Scottish context of temperance reform differed from that of England. The argument advanced in this thesis, however, is that qualitative changes in Scottish drinking habits as the result of industrialisation were the most important influences on attitudes

1. Op.cit Brian Harrison Thesis. Introduction p VI

2. Figure 2.

William Collins by contrast was a self made man who established the publishing firm which bears his name in his early thirties.¹ Again in contrast to the freelancing philanthropy of Dunlop, Collins's activities were channelled through the Church. He was instrumental in getting Dr. Chalmers to come to the Tron Church in 1815 and two years later followed him to St. Johns. There he was active as a deacon in Chalmers' famous experiment in parochial supervision. Collins's energy, business abilities and, even more important, his ownership of a printing press made him 'the mainspring of the old temperance agitation in Scotland'. He did not become a teetotaler but diverted his energies into Church extension when the Anti-Spirit movement failed.

The founder and the leader of the Anti-Spirits movement were therefore men of different backgrounds and temperament who had nevertheless several important things in common. Both were interested and involved in the provision of education. Mechanics institutes were one of Dunlop's early loves and in characteristic style he formulated a scheme for university colleges throughout Scotland.² Collins began his career as a teacher and his success in the profession brought him great financial rewards.

1. D.E.Keir. The House of Collins London 1952.

2. Op.cit J.Dunlop Autobiography pp 50/51.

Both men were deeply religious. Dunlop underwent a conversion to a life of vital Godliness as a young man which implanted in him the habits, attitudes and vocabulary of Evangelicalism. Collins was influenced by Wilberforce's 'Practical View of Christianity' and acquainted with leading evangelicals in London and Scotland. His position as Chalmer's disciple and also his publisher put him in close touch with the leader of the evangelical party in the Established Church. These two men, the one moving up in society the other inspired by religious convictions to look down, combined puritanism with respect for education and intellectual enquiry, characteristics of the ideal type of 19th century Scotsman.

In the manner common at the time, the pioneers of Scottish temperance believed that the Scots were particularly blessed among peoples and that in religion, education and moral standards they stood above other nations. The desire to preserve and strengthen national traditions as well as the evangelical concern to save souls were vital factors motivating their philanthropic work. Their activities brought them into contact with the rapidly growing industrial work force of Greenock and Glasgow. There they met Scotsmen whose intellectual and moral superiority was far from obvious and whose links with the religion of their fathers was

increasingly tenuous. The experience was a disturbing one. Dunlop after his involvement with Sunday schools and mechanics institutions came to question the vaunted superiority of Scottish educational provision.¹ The St. John's experiment in which Collins was involved showed ultimately the enormous difficulties of recreating the system of personal relationships, social hierarchy and institutions of a small Scottish town among the shifting population of an industrial city. Thus the assumption of Scottish superiority was brought into question and reasons sought for the failure of cherished projects to produce the hope for results. Dunlop's visit to France in 1828 gave him a new perspective on these problems.

'It certainly struck my own mind with a sceptical astonishment how it was possible there could be so little difference in outward morals between two countries, one of which so excelled the other in all religious priveleges:- How a nation of papists and infidels could vie in the duties of life with one which possessed not only a pure church and upright confession of faith but with whom the Bible was in form at least received as the test and spring of all ethical purity'.²

1. Ibid. p 59

2. Ibid p 59

Since there was no question of the religious and moral parity of Catholics and atheists with Presbyterians, Dunlop was forced to look for 'contaminating forces at work with us to counteract the benefits of exquisite perception of right and wrong'.¹ To the casual tourist comparing the streets of Paris with the wynds of Glasgow and Greenock a most obvious difference was the greater sobriety of the French population. Whisky, Dunlop concluded, must be that contaminating force, the Achilles heel of Protestantism. This was a mundane explanation for great issues such as the decline of nations but it had the attractiveness of simplicity and above all it corresponded with practical experience.

Just as modern economists assess the economic performance of nations by comparing their rates of economic growth, 19th century evangelicals compared the moral worth of nations. The simple most important idea behind the Anti-Spirits movement was the conviction that Scotland was in danger of falling in the international league table of morality.

1. Ibid p 59

'Righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people. And are we not sinking in the moral scale much below our former standing'. 1

'The once high character of our Scottish mechanics and peasantry, for learning sobriety, industry and a noble independancy is almost lost'. 2

This was the conclusion of men of a conservative frame of mind confronted with rapid social change, the most obvious sign of which was the development by an urban industrial working class of new habits and values different from those of their rural forebears. Evangelicalism represented the conservative values of a revived puritanism which made great headway in the Scottish Church in the early 19th century. Not for evangelicals the gentlemanly secular pursuits of 18th century moderates, their very serious mindedness propelled them into contact with social change. The temperance movement emerged from this encounter between two social phenomena, neither of which had existed thirty years before.

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1. John Adam The substance of a Speech delivered at the annual meeting of the Glasgow and West of Scotland Temperance Society . 20th Dec. 1830
Glasgow n.d. (C. 1831) p 7
 2. Anon. A letter by a Minister of the Gospel to the Rev. XXXXXX on the subject of Temperance Societies.
Glasgow n.d. (C 1830) p 2

Evangelical influences were also important in shaping the organisational form of the Anti-Spirits movement. It was believed that the upper and middle classes had a duty to show concern for the poor and to set them an example of morality and right conduct. In this way political leadership and social hierarchy could be morally justified. Restraint in the use of intoxicating liquors was a part of this which was of course especially emphasised by temperance reformers.

'It is in vain to hope for habits of national temperance while the respectable classes, by the seeming impunity and propriety of their method of using intoxicating liquors, act as decoys to those who possess less intelligence or powers of restraint'. 1

While it was generally accepted that the respectable classes had greatly improved in this respect and that drunkenness was now largely a characteristic of the working classes, this only increased the duty of their superiors to provide 'persuasion and example'. 2

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1. A Medical Practitioner (pseud) Notes respecting drunkenness and the various means which have been employed in different countries for restraining the progress of that evil. Glasgow 1830 p 30.
 2. Bishop Blomfield. Speech at the second general meeting of the British and Foreign Temperance Society London 1832 p 5

The idea of providing this in the context of a voluntary association, stemmed naturally from the existence of organisations such as the British and Foreign Bible Society and the Anti-Slavery Association. Temperance societies differed from these models in inviting the membership not just of those who saw the need to improve the lower classes but of the lower classes themselves. Social intercourse between the high and the low was considered to be highly desirable and had been one of the aims of the St. John's experiment. The mingling of the classes in temperance societies was thus perfectly respectable in principle. They provided an organisational structure within which the pious and socially elevated could bring their influence to bear.

The most controversial and ultimately the most significant innovation of early temperance reform was the pledge. There were historical precedents for pledge taking but these had been individual undertakings. The pledge was a concession to the deficient moral fibre of the poor and an attempt to armour them against the force of custom. For their social superiors the pledge was only expedient and involved 'no sacrifice' but was accepted as a necessary concomitant of example setting.¹ The adoption of the pledge also stemmed from assumptions about the lower orders and the duty of their betters in relation to them.

1. Ibid.

The first phase of temperance reform began as a movement with a philosophy and objectives which were essentially conservative. It was necessary to its success that it should gain support from the Church and the ruling classes of Scotland. In England the movement had considerable success in this direction.¹ William Collins congratulated the B.F.T.S. on the quality of its support.

'It is gratifying to observe the dignitaries of the English Church and our eminent Dissenting Ministers and the first Physicians of our country and the Nobles of our land coming forward to patronise and support this excellent cause'.²

Scotland, alas, had nothing to compare with the nine bishops, eleven admirals, 'besides many noblemen and illustrious individuals' who adorned the British and Foreign Temperance Society.² Of the 5000 members in Edinburgh there were few who could even be described as 'respectable persons'.³ Instead of being greeted with acclamation, temperance societies in Scotland were subjected to harsh criticism. Opposition was carried to the extent of meetings

1. Op.cit Brian Harrison Thesis Ch. 1

2. William Collins. Speech of William Collins at the Adjournment of the First Public Meeting of the B.F.T.S. on 5th July 1831. Glasgow (C 1831) p 30

3. Dr. R.K. Greville. Facts illustrative of the Drunkennes of Scotland with observations on the responsibility of the clergy, magistrates and other influential bodies of the community. Edinburgh 1834 p 16

being disrupted and windows broken.¹ Most damaging and disheartening of all for the leaders of the movement was the indifference of the Church. Dr. Greville, appealing once again to 'influential men' to support the temperance cause spoke of the 'chilling address which it still meets with particularly from the religious portion of the middle and upper classes in society'.² Opposition from this quarter inspired Collins' most famous pamphlet in which he sought to counter the 'oft repeated objection' that 'we are substituting temperance societies for the Gospel'.³ His arguments fell on deaf ears, none deafer than those of his hero, Dr. Chalmers.⁴ Early in 1836 the British and Foreign Temperance Society was still looking for signs of upper class support for temperance in Scotland but by August it had to concede that the movement there was dead.^{5,6} William Collins had in fact ceased publication of the Temperance Society Record in December 1835 complaining to the last of the 'indifference of Christians'.⁷

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1. Historical sketch of the Aberdeen Temperance Society pp 37-38 in Handbook of the Great Temperance Fete. Aberdeen 1892.
 2. Op.cit R.K. Greville. Facts illustrative of the drunkenness of Scotland
 3. William Collins. On the Harmony between the Gospel and Temperance Societies . Glasgow 1835
 4. Chalmers was sent a copy D.E. Keir The House of Collins Op.cit p 101.
 5. Temperance Penny Magazine Vol 1 No. 5, April 1836 Supplement p 76.
 6. Ibid No. 9, August 1836 p 133.
 7. Temperance Society Record December 1835.

It is not remarkable that there should have been opposition to an anti-Spirit campaign in a country where vested interest in the manufacture and sale of whisky stretched from the landed gentry to the drinking dens of city slums. It is [^]surprising that the propaganda literature of this rash reforming movement should have been so defensive in tone. This defensive posture may have been one of the factors which inhibited the advocates of the movement from contributing more original and effective agreements[?] against the use of alcohol. There were exceptions of course, notably Dunlop's pioneering researches into the sociology of alcohol use.¹ Like a good deal of research the 'artificial and compulsory usages' elaborated and codefied the commonplace. While this seems admirable to historians, it may have been less impressive to contemporaries. It is certainly true that his interest was not shared even among temperance reformers. The need to present the subject from a 'socio-economical point of view' was appreciated in Scotland.² Attempts were made to quantify the cost to society of the drink traffic and to demonstrate the links between drunkenness and other-questions of social concern. In general however, theological and religious arguments predominate in Scottish Anti-Spirits propaganda, no doubt reflecting the tastes of temperance writers, but partly imposed on them by the need to reply to criticisms from the religious community.

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1. Op.cit John Dunlop The Artificial Drinking Useages of North Britain .
 2. Op.cit R.K.Greville Facts Illustrative of the Drunkenness of Scotland p 10.

Such a situation was bound to be wounding to a movement whose stated purpose was to arrest the moral and religious decline of Scotland. It was argued on behalf of temperance that experience in the field of missionary effort showed drink to be found in association with moral turpitude. Intoxicated men were in no condition to benefit from assistance and guidance, least of all to receive the word of God. Sobriety was a first step to salvation. Temperance societies, it was claimed, removed obstacles to the effectiveness of good works and acted as auxiliaries to the Gospel. Evangelical doctrine however, taught that the roots of evil were spiritual not material and that wrong doing was the consequence of the fallen state of man. By placing so much emphasis on whisky as a cause of moral decline and intemperance societies as an agency of reformation, temperance reformers were committing simultaneously a kind of Manichean heresy and setting up a rival to established religious institutions. They were caught in a Catch 22 situation. If they claimed that temperance societies were religious organisation they were said 'to promote the work of Christ in a state of separation from the Church'¹ . If they emphasised the material good that sobriety could bring to men they were accused of secularism.

1. William Hay Reasons for declining to unite with a Temperance Society lately formed at Stewartfield Aberdeen 1832 p 4.

In a controversy of this kind, as with 17th century political and social disputes expressed in religious terms, it is necessary to look a little beyond the arguments actually used. While there is not much direct evidence of attacks on temperance from the liquor traffic its representatives were well established in the Church. English observers seeking to explain the decline of temperance societies in Scotland noted that

'in Scotland it has been found that from the great number of persons licensed for the sale of spirits that a large proportion of nearly every congregation were either directly or indirectly associated with the traffic'.¹

The early 1830s in Scotland was not the best time to start a voluntary association which encouraged the participation of working men. Relations between the Established Church and Dissent were entering a new phase of ill feeling giving the voluntary principle a bad name with churchmen and heightening their sensitivity to organisations outside the Church's control. Any association involving the working classes was bound to be suspect to conservatives at a time of political upheaval, for who could say what it might be used for.

1. Temperance Penny Magazine. Vol I No. 9, August 1836 p 133

'It perhaps may not have occurred to our readers that Temperance Societies are also unlawful in a civil point of view.....They partake more of the spirit of "Revolutionary France" during her worst times than of Great Britain in 1831. They are seditious associations in embryo, many of the leaders being combined with the worst spirit of "Radicalism" ' 1

What guarantee was there that working men would remain under the tutelage of the wise and the good? The case of the Tradeston Temperance Society where members 'belonging to the productive classes' broke with the 'gentlemen' to form the 'Tradeston Temperance Co-operative Society' showed there was none.² Its objectives, to remove its members from the present 'competitive and irrational state of society', were very different from anything envisaged by Dunlop and Collins. The trouble with sobriety was that, like literacy, there was no means of ensuring that it would further only religious objectives. Because objections to temperance societies were usually in the form of religious arguments, therefore it does not mean that they were motivated by religious considerations

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1. The Rise and Progress of the Keith and Strathisla Temperance Society, etc. Elgin 1831 p 88
 2. Herald to the Trades Advocate and Co-operative Journal. No. 2, Oct. 2 1830 p 26

alone. Perhaps the 'religious portion of the upper and middle classes' was cold towards temperance societies because they recognised that they were too much of a double-edged sword to be safely wielded in the battle against sin. There is no means of attesting to this directly but, if so, the events in England late in the 1830s and in Scotland during the Chartist episode bore them out.

Many of the characteristics of the anti-Spirits phase of the temperance movement in Scotland do not differ significantly from those in England. Its rapid and complete failure in the country of origin is its most significant feature. The collapse came about through indifference and opposition from the class expected to provide leadership, not from the internal strife which tore apart the English Anti-Spirits movement and replaced it with teetotalism. Teetotalism had to be introduced into Scotland by Englishmen only a few years after William Collins had carried the original idea South.¹ As a result Scotland did not experience the pledge controversy which was such a traumatic episode in the history of the English temperance movement and which did much to alienate the middle classes from the temperance cause there. The different experience of the initial experiment in temperance reform, therefore, had some long term influence in the later development of the movement in Scotland.

1. Edward Morris The History of the Temperance and Teetotal Societies in Glasgow from their origin to the present time .
Glasgow 1855 pp 52-55.

The refusal of the 'religious portion of the middle and upper classes' to lead the lower orders of Scotland away from intemperance in 1830 is partly explained by their aversion to the form that temperance agitation took. However it lends further weight to the argument advanced earlier in this chapter that in the early 1830s the influential classes of Scotland were not greatly concerned about the drink question. One can agree with the Rev. M.B. McGregor that the liquor traffic was widely spread and influential, even in the Church, but the main reason for the indifference of Christians was that they were still primarily interested in ecclesiastical matters and had not yet come to doubt that religion alone was the most efficacious remedy for social problems.

'Let it not be forgotten, also, that Church extension, by bringing the lessons of the Gospel to bear, in the most effective manner.....is the best friend of the temporal comfort of the people.....' 1

The idea was to save some people that they might be improved. Temperance reform was a practical remedy that sought to improve people that they might be saved. While the objective was the same the order of priority was important. It indicates that the Temperance movement, started by evangelicals and influenced by evangelical ideas

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1. The Home and Foreign Missionary Record for the Church of Scotland Jan. 1840, quoted D.C. Smith The Failure and Recovery of Social Criticism in the Scottish Church 1830-1950. Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Edinburgh University 1964 p 117.

was departing from orthodoxy. At the very moment of the evangelical victory in the Church of Scotland, the appearance of the temperance movement signalled the beginning of a shift in emphasis away from the souls of men to their social conditions.

CHAPTER 5.

The Drink Question in Scotland: Recognition and
Response 1836 - 1853.

The warnings and entreaties of the first Scottish Temperance reformers had seemingly fallen on stoney ground and for some years after the folding of Collins' Temperance Society Record there were no publications on the drink question in Scotland. Around 1840 however national intemperance began to be remarked upon again, this time by men who were not committed temperance reformers. The thoughtful reader of Symons' Arts and Artisans could not fail to be struck by the paradox of Scotland, the reputation of whose working men for intelligence and moral character was high, yet whose towns on a Saturday night recalled scenes out of Hogarth.¹ Much of the new comment on drunkenness was contained in studies of social conditions inspired by concern about the physical state of man rather than his religious salvation. The drink problem whose 'politico-economical' aspects had earlier been comparatively neglected, reappeared in observations of working class life made by men who could not easily be dismissed as eccentric and misguided enthusiasts.

1. Op.cit J.C. Symons Arts and Artisans Ch LX

Among the most influential of these was Sir Archibald Alison, Sheriff of Lanarkshire. Alison's duties made him well acquainted with the results of Glasgow's drinking habits. He had few inhibitions about forcibly expressing his views and his social and intellectual status gave them authority. As an important witness before the Select Committee on Combinations of Workmen, Alison had already delivered at some length his views on Scottish intemperance.¹ In his Principles of Population he first developed something resembling a coherent theory of working class drink consumption.² This theory, which is startling in its modernity, deserves to be outlined. At the centre of the theory was the industrial town with its wealth of temptations which the working classes were unable to resist. Instead of attributing this to lack of moral restraint, Alison explained their behaviour in terms of environmental influences and social motivation. The 'anonymity of the town' meant that it lacked the constraints in behaviour which were present in a small and stable community. The circumstances of industrial employment, which made men dependent entirely on wages and subjected their living standards to fluctuations beyond their control or understanding, did not encourage foresight. People who were brutalised by their

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1. First and Second Reports from the Select Committee on Combinations of Workmen.
Parl. Papers 1837/38 Vol VIII
Evidence of Sir A. Alison.
 2. Sir Archibald Alison. The Principles of Population and their connection with human happiness .
2 Vols. Edinburgh 1840.

living conditions and who had neither internal motivations nor external sanctions to moderate their behaviour, lived for the day, or at least the weekend when they gave themselves up to sensual pleasures, the cheapest and most accessible of which was whisky. Alison denied that education, religious exhortation or charitable efforts could do much to change this. Education in which Symons put so much faith could only reach 'the elite of the working class'.¹ Experience of the city showed that 'in the contest with whisky, education has been utterly overthrown', that is, it had a comparatively low place in working class expenditure priorities.² The solution to the problem lay in Government action to curb whisky consumption. Alison was one of the few advocates in 19th century Scotland of higher excise taxation for this purpose. In the longer term the working population, encouraged to develop new desires, the satisfaction of which would be 'inconsistent with immediate sensual gratification', would learn to defer immediate pleasures in order to 'improve their dress, enlarge their houses and augment their furniture'.³

1. Ibid p 95

2. Ibid p 96

3. Ibid p 126

The component parts of Alison's argument are not original but it is rare in the 19th century to find them synthesised in this way. Few writers on the drink question were prepared to attribute so much to environmental influences and so little to individual character or to admit candidly that in the same circumstances he would act in a similar way.¹ Alison's views were too much in advance of his time, or rather owed too much to 18th century rationalism, to be widely accepted. They were however important in two ways. Firstly they indicate the beginnings of awareness among the upper classes of Scotland that the drinking habits of the working classes merited serious attention and appropriate counter-action. Secondly, although Alison's views were too materialistic and essentially pessimistic to be widely accepted in their entirety, some of his more sensational statements quickly became common currency. When the Sheriff of Glasgow and the historian of Europe declared that 30,000 people got drunk in Glasgow on Saturday nights and that the working classes of the city spent £1 million annually on whisky, such statements had greater impact than if they had come from the pen of an obscure teetotaller.² Alison gave the seriousness of the drink problem a new credibility, therefore, and on his pronouncements was built the legend of drunken Glasgow, the whisky capital of the most intemperate nation in Europe.

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1. First and Second Reports from the Select Committee on Combinations of Workmen. Parl. Papers 1837/38 Vol VIII Evidence of Sir A. Alison.
 2. Op.cit Sir A. Alison Principles of Population . Vol I p 80 Vol II p 535 Appendix A.

The extent of intemperance, the conditions which encouraged it and its relations to other social problems was given considerable attention in Government enquiries in the early 1840s. The local reports of the Sanitary Commissioners in Scotland for instance contained much valuable information about social conditions in general. Although ostensibly an enquiry into the causes of infectious disease, the broad 'environmentalist' concept of disease widely accepted in Scotland made for a liberal interpretation of the brief. Many doctors agreed with Dr. W.P. Alison that filth was not the immediate cause of disease, although it helped it to spread and that

'the destitution and irregular mode of life associated with the destitution of many of the lower ranks in the great towns of Scotland are the chief cause of the frequent diffusion of epidemic fever in them.....' 1

1. Op.cit Local Sanitary Reports p 25

If the incidence of disease was directly related to levels of destitution then the causes of destitution were a legitimate area of interest. While Dr. W.P. Alison did not believe that intemperance was an important factor in causing poverty, some of the local reports contradicted him.¹ Especially perplexing was the discovery that there was no simple correlation between levels of wages and degree of destitution. In Tranent 'squalid and disgusting misery' did not necessarily arise from 'want of money'.² The conclusion that drunkenness and violence, high earnings and dissipation were the normal condition of miners in every part of the country was corroborated by the Childrens Employment Commission. Thomas Tancred visiting the growing industrial town of Coatbridge was appalled by the state of the population and was informed that

'almost universally the higher the wages the greater the discomfort in which the workmen lived'.³

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1. Ibid see especially No. 5 Glasgow (C.R.Braid) No. 6 Tranent (Dr. S.Scott Alison) No. 7 Musselburgh and Inveresk (W.Stevenson).
 2. Ibid. p 80.
 3. Op.cit R.C.Childrens Employment Parl.Papers 1842 Vol XVI Report by Thomas Tancred on West of Scotland pp 312-314.

The credibility of such statements has already been considered in Chapter three and what matters here is that the relationship between drink and poverty was becoming an issue at the moment that the Scottish Poor Law system was about to undergo examination. Almost every witness before the Poor Law Commission was asked his opinion on the extent of intemperance and its role in causing destitution. Despite the views of many experienced observers that, as Dr. Guthrie put it, drink and poverty interacted on each other, the Commission's report admitted few qualifications. 'Much of the misery and destitution which prevails in Scotland', it concluded 'is to be attributed to the excessive use of ardent spirits.....Intemperance is far more frequently the cause of poverty than the effect'.¹ As a result of Government enquiries in Scotland, the drink question had changed in a short period of time from being the sole province of cranks and enthusiasts to official acceptance into the mainstream of social debate.

Official enquiries seem to have begun something of a fashion for social investigation in Scotland, manifesting itself in the form of pamphlets describing in awful detail the conditions of life in

1. Report of the Royal Commission on the Poor Law (Scotland).
Parl. Papers 1844 Vol. XX p IXiii
subsequently R.C. Poor Law (Scotland).

selected city slums.¹ The writings of the Rev. George Lewis of Dundee were especially forceful on the connection between drink and poverty.² Popular investigations of this kind, the forerunner of campaigning journalism, helped to disseminate awareness of drink problem. There were, moreover, a number of reasons why the middle classes in Scotland should have been receptive to such an idea in the 1840s. The most important of these was the new Poor Law which came into operation after the Royal Commissions report. Scotland's system of poor relief was brought closer into line with that of England. An important aim of the old system had been to get the lower classes to support their own poor through the family and neighbourly assistance. By this means levying poor rates on property owners could be avoided or at least minimised. The ratio of paupers/1000 inhabitants was lower in Scotland and expenditure on poor relief per head of population was far lower.³ As with the need for medical attention before the National Health Service, there existed in Scotland before the New Poor Law an enormous repressed demand for poor relief. Inevitably therefore the reformed system required larger poor rates than had previously existed and the increase was especially marked in the early years. In England resentment of a high poor rate had been one of the pressures for the New Poor Law of 1832. In Scotland the wrath of ratepayers followed reform.

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1. J.E. Handley The Irish in Scotland Chs. VI and VII have many references to these.
 2. Rev. George Lewis. The State of St. David's Parish, Dundee . Dundee 1841.
 3. C.S.Loch Poor Relief in Scotland 1791 - 1891 Journal of the Royal Statistical Society

In these new circumstances the relationship between drink and poverty ceased to be a mere academic speculation. The life of the poor and how they spent their money took on a more immediate significance. The mines inspector, Seymour Tremenheere, noticed the shift in attitudes. Drunkenness, by

'the manner in which it is affecting the pecuniary interest of the sober and industrious, is now, since the New Poor Law of Scotland has come into operation, beginning to excite great attention.' 1

It did not matter that much of the available information suggested that it was the better paid workers who drank to excess and that Dr. Alison was probably right in his belief that there was little drinking among the destitute. Selective perception of the accumulated evidence fed a suspicion that upright honest citizens were being forced to subsidise the drunken revelry of a profligate class. The most colourful

1. Mining District's Reports.
Parl. Papers 1849 Vol XXI p 14

verify since adequate police statistics were not regularly published in the 1840s. Objections to the usefulness of police statistics as far as the amount of drunkenness is concerned apply even more forcibly to Scotland than to England at this time. There was no general offence of being drunk in public before the Licensing Law Amendment Act of 1862. People found drunk and incapable were transported into custody in police barrows which toured the streets for this purpose, but they were rarely charged. Despite this, police statistics do show that offences associated with drunkenness accounted for an important part of police work. 'It may be safely affirmed,' wrote the chief of Glasgow's police in 1840, 'that three-fourths of the crime in the city originate in habits of drunkenness'.¹ Indictments directly attributable to drink accounted for 50% of all offences brought to trial.² The most distinctive feature of the drunken comportment of Scotsman is not properly indicated by criminal statistics until later in the century. These show that the incidence of proceedings for drunkenness was broadly similar in Scotland and England.³

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1. Op.cit Capt. H. Miller Papers relative to the state of crime in Glasgow . p 8
 2. Ibid p 8
 3. Table 5

Table 5.

Proceedings for drunkenness per 10,000 inhabitants
in Scotland and England. 1861 - 1911 in census years.

	<u>England</u>	<u>Scotland</u>
1861	41	-
1871	63	-
1881	67	77
1891	64	87
1901	65	101
1911	54	87

Source: G.B.Wilson op.cit. Tables 35 and 38.

Statistical returns for the year 1893 published by the Departmental Committee on Habitual Offenders (Scotland) show that

there was not much difference in 'ordinary' drunkenness. 'Drunk and incapable' and 'drunk and disorderly' apprehensions were 34,000 in Scotland, 174,000 in England, a ratio of one to five compared to a population ratio of one to seven. Where there was a significant difference between the two countries was in drunkenness offences associated with violence. Assaults and breaches of the peace, the 'crimes immediately connected with drunkenness', were 68,000 in Scotland and 79,000 in England.¹ The assumption in the 19th century was that the fiery nature of Scotch drink led to appropriate conduct.² While it is beyond the scope of this study to offer an alternative explanation, it appears that one of the important features of the national use of alcohol was the tendency of the Scots to be violent when drunk. It can be reasonably inferred, although it cannot be proved, that this national characteristic was already apparent in the 1840s.

1. Report of the Departmental Committee on Habitual Offenders
Parl. Papers 1895 Vol XXXVII Appendix 1.

2. Chapter 1

Growing awareness of the connection between drink and crime is indicated by the statements of law enforcement officers. The Sheriffs of Aberdeen and Dundee and all 37 Governors of Scottish prisons were in broad agreement with Sheriff Alison and Captin Miller.^{1,2,3.} The views of official spokesmen, and even less criminal statistics, seldom communicate the meaning of crime for the middle classes in Scotland in the 1840s. This is better conveyed by the actions of the respectable citizens of Airdrie who felt sufficiently unsafe to urge that a military detachment be billeted there. Airdrie's small police force was unable to assure them protection from the miners and ironworkers who descended on the 338 public houses in Airdrie and district on paydays.^{4,5.} Not all middle class groups were so isolated but as a class they were relatively weak in Scotland compared to England.⁶ In Glasgow they were reminded by Dr. Cowan that

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1. Scottish Temperance Review. June 1848.
 2. Dundee Advertiser. 14th April 1848.
 3. 12th Report on Prisons (Scotland).
Parl. Papers. 1851 Vol XXVIII.
 4. J. MacArthur New Monkland Parish - It's History, Industries
and People . Glasgow 1890.
 5. Mining District Reports. Parl.Papers 1849 Vol XXII p 14
 6. H.J. Hanham Scottish Nationalism London 1969 p 22.

'since 1831 the relative proportion of the middle and wealthier classes to the labouring classes must have been yearly diminishing'.¹ It was still not possible for many of the middle classes to entirely escape from the towns, away from the noise and riot on the streets on Saturday night and the confrontation between respectable churchgoer and insolent pubgoer on Sunday morning. Neither distance nor an adequate police force yet interposed themselves as protective barriers. Anxiety about random violence or insult cannot be entirely dismissed as without foundation. However, there is little doubt that it was greatly heightened in the 1840s by a more generalised fear of the working class, accompanying deepening class divisions and militant working class political activity. Middle class concern about crime was a complex matter, whose roots lay in feelings of insecurity which are difficult to pinpoint. The association of drink and crime made by the experts suggested a simple explanation and a means of control.

1. R. Cowan Vital Statistics of Glasgow Glasgow 1840. p 5

The pioneers of Temperance reform in Scotland had been strongly motivated by a consciousness about her religious and moral decline. In the 1840s emphasis shifted away from religious and moral deterioration towards the influence of physical conditions on social behaviour. A flood of new information about the state of Scotland's population, suggested that towns were the centres of dissipation and depravity and that the inhabitants of rural areas were (comparatively) models of sobriety and good conduct. A process seemed to be taking place in the city wynds and on the industrial frontiers of Lanarkshire which was creating a new kind of Scotsman, devoid of the thrift and self sufficiency, concern for education and religion, which it was believed had once been characteristic of the race. Social change and moral decline were still indiscriminately linked but now the concept of decline had a sociological perspective.

The new assessment of the importance of the drink question was quickly reflected in practical action. During the early 1840s the large number of public houses in Scotland had increasingly become a subject of comment and criticism. Suggestions were made that their number be restricted and the minimum rental value of licensed premises be raised.¹ The Report of the Royal Commission

1. Op.cit Local Sanitary Reports.
No. 5 C.R. Baird (Glasgow) p 76

on the Poor Law added its voice pointing out the evils that arose from the laxity of current administration and suggesting that

'the present system of licences could be placed upon a sounder footing, both with regard to the limitation of the number and to the better regulation of public houses'. . . 1

Two years later a Select Committee came to similar conclusions this time backed by the evidence of witnesses mainly drawn from among Scottish magistrates and sheriffs.² This report marked the beginning of a campaign at local government level for more effective control over the sale of alcohol, and at Parliamentary level for a new licensing act for Scotland.

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1. Op.cit R.C. Poor Law (Scotland) Parl. Papers 1844 Vol XX Report p 1 xiii
 2. Op.cit S.C.Public Houses (Scotland) Parl.Papers 1846 Vol XV

The 'Scotsman' pronouncing on the licensing system in 1850 attributed the lack of consistency of enforcement to the 'caprices and passions of justices in different counties'.¹ The same lack of uniformity applied to efforts to reform the system. Some desultory attempts to tighten up the granting of licenses were made before 1846. Aberdeenshire magistrates, chaired by Alexander Thom son of Banchory, produced a carefully organised report on the heels of the Select Committee on Public Houses.² It was 1848, however, before the matter was seriously raised in Forfarshire by which time there were a number of reports from various counties to consider. Many counties seem to have ignored the matter entirely. There was no uniformity of action therefore, and certainly no concerted activity, but magistrates in the different counties were aware of developments elsewhere and this helps to explain the broad similarities in assumptions and policy recommendations.

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1. Scotsman. March 2 1850
 2. Report of the Committee of the County of Aberdeen on Ale and Spirit Licenses. in Misc. papers of Rev. R. Forbes, Aberdeen P.L.

Generally it was agreed that there were too many public houses, especially of low rental value. The Aberdeenshire magistrates, with statistical precision, pointed out that there was one licence to every 212 inhabitants, 53 males or 47 inhabited houses. These were categorised into 35 stage coach houses, 200 commercial inns, 154 retail spirit shops and 224 tippling houses. This density of licensed premises was not particularly high by Scottish standards at this time, though it was unique in the detail of statistical breakdown.¹ It was concluded that the number of licences was too great, however, and recommended that reductions should fall on the last two categories of public house. General guidelines were laid down and licensing magistrates were advised to consider carefully

'the character of the parties to be licenced, the amount of population in the district to be served, the distance of one public house from another and the annual value of the premises'.²

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1. Ibid. / Witnesses before
Note: / The Select Committee on Public Houses gave details of the number of licensed houses to population on selected burghs and counties in 1846. This indicates licences/head and/family which is simply an average of 5 persons. S.C. Public Houses. Parl. Papers 1846 Vol XV. e.g. Evidence of Graham Speirs, Sheriff of Edinburgh. Q.5.
 2. Ibid.

Aberdeenshire exemplifies the kind of reforms that were envisaged wherever the licensing question was considered, except for the cities of Glasgow and Edinburgh where in addition attempts were made in the late 1840s to enforce hours of closing at night and eventually Sunday closing also.^{1,2.} The objectives were to improve the quality of public houses and to exercise more careful supervision over their operation, at the same time greatly reducing their number. In Aberdeenshire public house provision was to be reduced by approximately two thirds, in the county of Edinburgh by over half. Immediately after the repeal of the Corn Laws therefore major interference with the freedom of the drink trade was being contemplated in Scotland, presumably offensive to both conservatives, because of the indirect threat to the agricultural interest, and to liberals because of the rejection of the principles of free trade.

One might expect the pressure for licensing reform to have come from men with influence in local government and the ability where necessary to make their demands heard in Parliament. This was not the class from which the total abstinence movement in England or Scotland drew its main support, nor was this kind of legislative action compatible with the prevailing temperance

1. J.B. Mackie Life of Duncan McLaren London 1888. Ch. XIV

2. Montrose Review, Nov. 15, 1850.

doctrine of moral suasion. Licensing reform does appear to have been supported by a variety of different interest groups however. In Edinburgh, for instance, Duncan McLaren used the Sunday closing issue to unite sectarian and political groups opposed to each other on other matters in support of licensing reform.¹ The possibility that teetotalers in Scotland supported licensing reform, thus departing significantly from the English pattern of strict adherence to moral suasion, must be investigated. Since this requires a study of the behaviour of relatively obscure individuals, it is advantageous to focus on a specific area and the choice here is the town of Dundee. Dundee had a high density of licences in 1846, 538 licences or 1/120 persons and a reputation for drunkenness, established by the pamphlets of Rev. George Lewis, in the early 1840s. Lord Kinnaird, the Parliamentary champion of licensing reform had property and philanthropic interests there and was a figure of considerable influence. Dundee was also the first major town in Scotland to elect a teetotaler, George Rough, to the office of provost. In the years of Rough's provostship 1854-56, the number of public houses in the city was reduced from 626 in 1853 to 392 in 1856.² The conjunction of these circumstances make Dundee potentially the most fruitful case study to investigate

1. Op.cit J.B. Mackie Life of Duncan McLaren Ch. XIV

2. Rev. William Reid D.D. The Temperance Autobiography of the Rev. William Reid, D.D. Glasgow 1895 p 249-252

possible interaction between licensing reform and the total abstinence movement.

There is no evidence of any activity on the licensing question in Dundee before 1847. In that year the quarterly meeting of the Forfarshire magistrates discussed the licensing of public houses, received a memorial from the Presbytery of Dundee on licensing and remitted the report of the Justices of Renfrewshire on Licensing to a Committee on licences for consideration.¹ This committee produced a report the following year which recommended large reductions in licences and no licences at all to be given for toll houses except in remote areas.² Prior knowledge that this report would be considered led to a public meeting being called in Dundee to put pressure on the county meeting. Analysis of the membership of the committee appointed by the meeting to put its resolutions into effect gives an indication of the composition of support for licensing reform in Dundee.³ The eighteen members included several prominent citizens active in a variety of good causes, five of them magistrates, four town councillors. The number of teetotallers is also noticable. There were 13 identifiable teetotallers and two sympathisers among the 39 men who called the public meeting.

1. Dundee Advertiser. May 7, 1847.

2. Report by a committee of the Freeholders, J.Ps and Commissioners of Supply of the County of Forfar on the licensing of public houses, presented to the County Meeting held at Forfar, May 1, 1848.
Dundee 1848.

3, Dundee Advertiser. 7th April 1848 and 14th April 1848.

Seven of these became members of the committee.¹ It appears therefore that there was considerable support for licensing reform among Dundee teetotallers in 1848. On the other hand prominent teetotallers in the town, including George Rough and Thomas Lamb took no part in the campaign. The matter is further complicated by the fact that Rev. Alexander Hannay, one of those who called the meeting, spoke eloquently against licensing reform in 1851 while George Rough had become an enthusiastic convert to the idea by 1854.²

It is clear that licensing reform had support from non-teetotallers in Dundee. The resolutions of the meeting were sent to the convener of the Forfarshire magistrates whose own report contained similar recommendations.³ Licensing reform was eventually discussed at the October session and most of the demands of the licensing reformers were accepted. Two years later the 'Scotsman', commenting on the licensing system, effectively pinpointed the weakness of such reforming efforts

'In some counties a crusade is set agoing against all public houses which continues fiery hot for one year; and in the succeeding one, the zeal of the Justices having evaporated, things return to their ordinary course and the publicans are relieved from fear and trembling'.⁴

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1. Dundee Temperance Society Annual Report 1847/48 does not distinguish between subscriptions and donations. Men whose names appear on its list are not assumed to be teetotalers without additional confirmation.
 2. Scottish Temperance Review. Sept. 1851.
 3. Col. John Kinloch, later a member of the Scottish Association for the Suppression of Drunkenness.
 4. Scotsman. March 2 1850.

This is precisely what happened in Forfarshire. The efforts of the citizens of Dundee and their apparent success made no difference to the operation of the licensing system. Crusades of this kind were not entirely futile however. Firstly they brought into the open the conflicting interests in the administration of the system. In Forfarshire, the deepest divisions were over toll house licences and the right of applicants refused a licence by city magistrates to appeal to the county sessions. County magistrates, who were often toll road trustees, had a vested interest in the rents of licenced toll houses and disliked moves to restrict their number. Magistrates from towns like Dundee responsible for the maintainance of law and order, conscious of the rates which drunkenness was said to increase, wished to have complete control of the sale of alcohol within the city boundary. The licensing issue therefore precipitated a town versus county dispute in which each side felt that the other was intruding on its jurisdiction and vital interests. This was no doubt exacerbated by different political and denominational loyalties. Dundee's town council was already dominated by dissenters whereas the Established Church maintained its support among the landowners who made up the county magistrates.¹ Secondly the licensing reform agitation revealed the impossibility of obtaining the degree of control demanded under the existing legal and administrative system. Haphazard administration, the Scotsman

1. No definite proof can be furnished however. The religious affiliations of most of the Dundee citizens active in licensing reform could not be discovered.

believed, arose from the lack of responsibility of many justices for the results of their actions. In Forfarshire a section of the county magistrates simply refused to be bound by any resolution that the majority made on the licensing issue.¹ Attempts were made in Edinburgh and Glasgow to define the 'unreasonable hours' of the 1828 Act and to persuade publicans to close on Sunday by threatening to withhold their licences unless they complied. Glasgow publicans took the matter to the Court of Session which ruled that conditions attached to the issue of a licence were invalid.² By the end of 1850 therefore it was clear that licensing reform could make little headway under the existing law and efforts were directed towards changing it.

1. Dundee Advertiser. Oct. 8. 1848

2. Montrose Review. Nov. 15 1850

The licensing reform campaign has not generally been regarded by historians of the temperance movement as within the mainstream of temperance effort. In the 1840s the total abstinence phase of the movement was characterised by its opposition to legislative action of any kind against the drink traffic. In Scotland also licensing reform and total abstinence must be regarded as two distinctive streams, the one manifesting the growing concern of the middle and upper classes of society at this problem, the other drawing the bulk of its support from working men. The Dundee case study shows that they were not entirely separate, however, and it is necessary to investigate further the degree of interaction between them.

Why in the first place was it necessary for them to be separate at all? What was to prevent the middle classes, as they became conscious of the drink problem, from joining a movement for its suppression which was already in existence?

There were indeed middle class observers who commended the total abstinence movement and believed that it should be encouraged.^{1,2.} Total abstinence societies were formally open to all. The movement constantly proclaimed its non-sectarian, non-political, classless nature and consistently criticised the middle classes for withholding their support. In practice there were two major obstacles to middle class participation in total abstinence, over and above the normal difficulties which inhibit association between people of different social class. The first of these was the 'long pledge' adopted by Scottish societies following the English model. Signing the pledge was an important symbolic step and the 'long pledge' was a commitment to refuse to give as well as to partake of alcohol in any form. Given the extent of the evils said by the movement to spring from society's use of alcohol, this position had the advantage of consistency. It was, however, a solution to the problem of pressures to drink which was tailored to the circumstances of alcohol use among working men and especially appropriate to the physical addiction of the 'habitual drunkard'.³ The differences in the drinking mores of the middle class and working class have already been outlined.

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1. Op.cit Local Sanitary Reports p 113-114 and p 192.
 2. Op.cit Capt. Miller Papers relative to the state of Crime in Glasgow .
 3. The 19th Century term for alcoholic.

Working men, drinking predominantly in the public house in the company of their peers, were in a poor position to control their drink consumption as individuals. For the typical middle class drinker drinking wine at his table, using alcohol neither involved physical degradation nor financial hardship. Taking the 'long pledge' was to risk social ostracism for men of either social group.¹ For the working man there were important financial advantages and the total abstinence society brought him into contact with others of his class in the same situation. For the middle class teetotaller the chief reward was the example he gave to others and the moral authority conferred on his pleas to working men to give up drink. 'Teetotalism' observed John Dunlop 'was a petty martyrdom'. Only men with a deep concern for the state of the poor or who were already, from temperament or religious affiliation, cut off from polite society could endure it. Middle class social conventions meant that it was relatively more difficult to give up offering drink to guests than to refuse to take it oneself. Personal abstinence, called by teetotallers the 'short pledge', was more acceptable to the middle classes.²

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1. The practice in Scotland in the 1840s was for middle class teetotallers attending public functions to leave before drinking began. This practice was challenged in the 1850s by Thomas Knox of Edinburgh and after a controversy within the movement Knox's behaviour was accepted as consistent with total abstinence principles.
 2. Subsequently 'personal abstinence' and 'short pledge' are used as interchangeable terms as distinct from 'teetotal' or 'long pledge'.

Scottish teetotallers like their English counterparts, refused to recognise the special difficulties which the long pledge presented to potential middle class supporters. They would not have 'one pledge for the rich and another for the poor' even when, as in the North of Scotland, there were prospects of widening support among influential men by doing so.¹ For the same reason the temperance societies formed in the United Presbyterian and Free Churches after 1845 were regarded by teetotallers as 'doubtful friends'.² While the pledge was never a bitter divisive issue in Scotland and quarrels with short pledged abstainers were avoided on the grounds that the Scots 'should not imitate the conduct found in England' the long pledge had the same tendency to restrict membership of the temperance movement to the lower classes.³

1. In 1840 Five ministers of the Established Church in Aberdeenshire supported total abstinence (Scottish Temperance Journal Oct. 1840) compared with perhaps two or three others in the entire country. R.G. Mason, the principle teetotal agent in the north east, recognised the opportunities there if the short pledge was permitted but was criticised for suggesting concessions. see. William Logan, Sketch of the Life and Labours of Robert Gray Mason, Temperance Advocate . London 1864
Scottish Temperance Journal Dec. 1840 and Scottish Temperance Herald June 1841.
2. Scottish Temperance Journal June 1845
3. Scottish Temperance Herald June 1841.

The other major deterrent to middle class support in Scotland was the close association of total abstinence with working class radicalism. This had been suspected during the anti-Spirits phase but from 1837 onwards it was amply confirmed. Total abstinence was introduced into Scotland by an Owenite, John Finch, and the first teetotal societies which he helped to found were known as 'radical temperance societies'.¹ Support for the new principle grew along with Chartism and it was during 1838 to 1840 that total abstinence became a mass movement in Scotland. Teetotalers insisted that their societies were non-political in their aims and that political or sectarian discussion was excluded from their meetings. The fact that this claim was reiterated by men like the Rev. Patrick Brewster did not add to its conviction.² It was all very well for the annual reports of the Hawick Total Abstinence Society and the Edinburgh Total Abstinence Society to declare that controversial issues were barred from debate at their meetings.^{3,4.} People turned the pages and saw the names of well known Chartists who had helped to found these associations and wondered how the Chartist leopard changed his spots on entering a teetotal meeting. They were right to wonder.

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1. Op.cit Edward Morris The History of the Temperance and Teetotal Societies in Glasgow from their Origin to the Present Time pp 52 - 56.
 2. Scottish Temperance Journal. Vol No. 23 April 1840. Brewster was one of the few ministers in Scotland to support Chartism and total abstinence in the early 1840s. See Alexander Wilson The Chartist Movement in Scotland .
 3. Third Annual Report of the Edinburgh T.A.S. , Edinburgh 1840
 4. Roll book of the Hawick Total Abstinence Society, draft of amendments. Hawick P.I. It is not certain that these amendments were carried out.

The non-political teetotalers of Hawick evidently regarded the 'True Scotsman' as a good total abstinence newspaper.¹ In 1848 Robert Cranston of the Edinburgh Total Abstinence Society.

'was arrested on a charge of preaching sedition under the guise of temperance, after a harangue he made in the Queens Park'.²

The fact is that total abstinence for the teetotal Chartists was so closely bound up with what Robert Lowery called 'the social political and moral elevation of the working classes' that they themselves were unable to make a clear distinction. It was naive for teetotalers to plead neutrality for the movement when men acknowledged as among its leading advocates were publicly campaigning for political reforms which could be regarded as subversive and dangerous. The personnel of the movement spoke more persuasively than its protestations. In the 1840s almost any movement which encouraged working people to meet

1. Ibid 8 Nov. 1842.

2. E.M. Mein. Through Four Reigns Edinburgh (privately printed) n.d. C 1948. p 4

together to discuss social reform was likely to be regarded as a cloak for darker purposes

'under the general name of temperance societies, there are, or may be, spouting and debating societies, speculating societies, tea and coffee drinking and dancing societies'. 1

Total abstinence societies encompassed all of these activities. Not surprisingly, the Edinburgh T.A.S. discovered difficulty in attracting even the subscriptions of the higher classes

'many of whom have unfortunately formed mistaken ideas of the character of our members and the fundamental principles of the Society'. 2

The long pledge and the association with radicalism were the most obvious deterrants to middle class participation in the total abstinence movement. Licensing reformers and teetotalers were agreed only about the existence of a serious drink problem.

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1. R.C. Poor Law (Scotland) Parl. Papers 1844 Vol XXVI Evidence of Rt. Rev. Bishop Gillis Q. 2040
 2. Op.cit Third Annual Report of Edinburgh Total Abstinence Society p 9.

Their perception of the problem was quite different and was related to the position on the social spectrum from which they viewed it. The underlying assumption of the licensing reform movement was that intemperance was a working class vice which impinged upon the interests and offended against the standards of the middle classes. Stricter control over the operation of public houses was a practical measure to deal with this problem, the conventional approach of a class with access to the legislature and control over the operation of the law. The total abstinence movement by contrast, while not confined exclusively to the working classes, drew most of its members from working men and women.¹ Their different experience of the use and abuse of alcohol influenced the movement's explanation of the problem and the kind of response it advocated. Teetotallers recognised first of all that drunkenness for many was a disease of addiction which destroyed the self control of individuals where the use of drink was concerned. Secondly that alcoholic addiction and drunkenness was inevitable in a society in which men were expected to drink. Thirdly, that the conditions in which the urban poor lived made it understandable why they drank to excess.²

1. Chapter 11.

2. Scottish Temperance Review June 1846 pp 333-336.

The tendency of teetotal thinking therefore was to see the drunkard not as a culpable individual but as the victim of social conventions and social conditions. Responsibility for prevalence of drunkenness in society lay with the upper and middle classes who, by the power of their example, sanctioned the use of alcohol throughout society and, as the governing class, made provisions for its sale through the licensing system. Teetotalers who were generally excluded from the political process had little faith in the operation of the law..... The total abstinence movement was 'a persuasive not a coercive movement' whose characteristic vehicle of reform was the total abstinence society which had many of the features of working class organisations of self help and collective defence.¹ Thus in a class divided society, the different social groups evolved their own characteristic solutions to a problem which was coming to be recognised throughout society.

Inevitably in a diffuse movement of this kind, generalisations about its policies and attitudes have to be qualified. Moreover, a brief summary gives an impression of

1. Scottish Temperance Journal. March 1846.

ideological consistency which probably did not exist in the minds of most teetotallers. Even in the great days of moral suasionist success there were ambivalent attitudes towards legislative controls of drinking. For instance an attempt to abolish the power of the magistrates to confer certificates in favour of excise licences was attacked in the teetotal press.¹ Only a minority of teetotallers followed their moral suasionist principles to their logical conclusion and favoured free trade in drink. A few leading figures in the movement contemplated legislative action even in the early 1840s.² The teetotal press from which the above picture is compiled illustrates the prevailing tendencies in the early 1840s but there was no party line establishing a clear ideological position and no means to enforce orthodoxy. When circumstances changed after 1845, and the movement began to adjust to them, there were increasing problems of reconciling the ideals of moral suasion with the exploitation of new opportunities.

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1. Fifeshire Teetotal Courant Feb. 15 1840.
The Courant was however more favourable to the licensing system than most teetotal publications.
 2. David Lewis. Recollections of James Mitchell, Temperance Reformer Edinburgh 1868 p 22.

The new circumstances which most effected the total absintence movement were the great decline in support for total abstinence societies from working people and the increasing concern about drunkenness among the middle classes. Moral suasion, amply justified by results in the heroic days of 1839 and 1840, failed to sustain the enthusiasm and determination of the converted against pressures and temptations to drink. By 1845 only one of the fourmajor regional temperance unions, which formed the institutional structure of the movement in the early 1840s, was still in existance, kept alive by the subsidies of a small group of rich supporters. Nor was there any prospect of a revival in support. In 1847 William Logan was sent out to reinvigorate the local societies which were still reported to be in a state of apathy and decline.¹ Just as the licensing law campaign was getting underway, the temperance movement was at a low ebb and was in need of a new sense of direction. Teetotallersreacted to the situation by forming a new organisation, the Scottish Temperance League. Unlike the regional unions which had been confederations of local societies, the League was a centralised body supported by a membership of individuals.

1. Scottish Temperance Review July and October 1847.

While the majority of League members in 1850 were working men the decline of mass support meant that the middle class element in the movement was relatively more numerous. The League differed from its predecessors in being more outward looking, declaring its objectives to be less the persuasion of individuals to sign the pledge than to influence public opinion against the drink traffic.¹ This was quite consistent with moral suasion principles although it did imply a subtle change in emphasis, making the League more upward looking in social terms than its predecessors. There was however no sudden abandonment of moral suasion. The long pledge remained sacrosanct, moderate drinking Christians continued to be castigated for giving respectability to the drink traffic, and there were frequent reminders of the importance of humble working men and reformed drunkards to the cause. By 1850, when Scotland was being described by non-teetotalers as 'the most drunken country in Europe' or at best exceeded in alcoholic excess only by the Swedes and the Laps, when even the 'Scotsman' admitted that drunkenness had become the grand disgrace of Edinburgh and Glasgow, the League had reason to congratulate

1. Scottish Temperance Review Vol 1 No. 1 Oct. 1845.

itself on the success of its approach.^{1,2,3.} Some teetotalers came to feel, however, that it was obtuse and impractical to refuse support for the only policy which promised tangible success in controlling the evil which the League had worked to have recognised. They ignored the statements of the League and supported licensing reform as in Dundee and from 1850 onwards raised the question of legislative action in the annual meetings of the League.

The formation in 1850 of the Scottish Association for the Suppression of Drunkenness and the presentation of licensing bills in Parliament in each year after 1851, sharpened the debate taking place within the total abstinence movement. The formation of the Association was a recognition by licensing reformers that nothing further could be done to control public houses under the existing law.⁴ From the start the S.A.S.D. was a political pressure group, differing from previous temperance

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1. Alexander Thompson of Banchory Social Evils their cause and cure quoted in Report on the Discipline and Management of the Convict Prisons and disposal of convicts 1851. (Appendix) Parl. Papers 1852/53 Vol LI
 2. James Begg DD Pauperism and the Poor Laws or our sinking population and rapidly increased public burdens practically considered . 2nd Ed. Edinburgh 1849 p 17.
 3. The Scotsman May 19 1850
 4. Constitution of the Scottish Association for the Suppression of Drunkenness. Edinburgh n.d. (1850)

organisations in eschewing any pledge or network of local societies. There were no barriers to the membership of the socially elevated therefore. Among the directors were Alexander Thomson of Banchory and Col. Kinloch of Logie, authors of the reports on the licensing system in Aberdeenshire and Forfarshire, Duncan McLaren Lord Provost of Edinburgh, the leader of the campaign to control public houses in that city, Lord Kinnaird, the man behind the Select Committee on public houses of 1846 and William Forbes Mackenzie, M.P. for Peebleshire, who had chaired it.¹

The membership of the S.A.S.D. contained

'none of the working men who usually toil in the humble service of total abstinence. It appears under the auspices of an imposing array of Noblemen. Members of Parliament military officers, professors, physicians and divines. Its merits have been expounded by the leader of the Free Church and the historian of Europe'.²

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1. Ibid. List of office bearers.
 2. Montrose Review. May 31 1850

Dr. Candlish and Sir A. Alison were indeed among the principal speakers at the inaugural meeting and for a later gathering on the Elevation of the Working Classes the Association was able to call on such noted elevators as Hugh Miller and William Chambers.^{1,2.} The ambivalence of teetotallers towards licensing reform was increased by the imposing array of talent ranged against the drink traffic. It represented simultaneously a victory for the policy of the League and a failure to universalise the principle of total abstinence. Opportunities arose for co-operation between teetotallers and suppressionists on matters such as persuading employers to alter the pay day or providing temperance refreshments at hiring fairs. As the prospects of Kinnaird's licensing bill becoming law improved, pressure built up among teetotallers for a change in the policy of the League to throw its support behind the licensing bill. The death of Robert Kettle in 1853, removing one of the major champions of moral suasion, followed by the appointment of J.S. Marr, a keen supporter of licensing legislation, marked the imminent change in the policy of the Scottish temperance movement towards legislative action.

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1. Report of the speeches delivered at the meeting for formation of an Association for Suppressing drunkenness in Scotland. Edinburgh 1850.
 2. Elevation of the Working Classes, being the speeches of the Duke of Argyll, Hugh Miller esq. William Chambers esq. Ralph Richardson esq and others at the late meeting of the working classes held at Edinburgh on 16th March 1852. Edinburgh 1852.

Both the movements for anti- alcohol reform which existed in Scotland in the 1840s owed something to the failed anti-spirits movement of the 1830s. The licensing law reformers and the S.A.S.D. inherited much of its spirit and intention though not its religious motivation. Total abstinence developed the potentially democratic features of anti-spirits, the idea of equality of sacrifice and the practice of regular association of members. Despite this common ancestry and agreement on the seriousness and extent of the drink problem the two movements differed in many important respects and the differences illustrate well the divergent attitudes and approaches of the middle class and working class on a question of common concern. The two separate movements were subject to the same external influences, for example the flood of new information about social conditions in Scotland, and they interacted on each other in important ways. Licensing reformers, acting within the machinery of the established political system, placed little emphasis on the dissemination of ideas. Even the S.A.S.D. confined its activities to a few large public meetings and a small number of anti-drink tracts. Teetotallers, by contrast, might be laughed at but they kept the drink question in the public eye. This was recognised as a source of stimulus to middle class consciousness of the drink question at the inaugural meeting of

the S.A.S.D. If the total abstinence movement publicised the problem, the licensing reform campaign evolved a practical policy. After 1845, with the failure of moral suasion and the absence of an alternative strategy from within the temperance movement, teetotallers were increasingly attracted to licensing reform. This posed for the movement difficult problems of reconciling the philosophy of moral suasion with the policy of legislative control. After 1850 the two separate streams of anti-drink effort came much closer together. It was this dialectic between the middle class and working class anti-drink movements, rather than the example of the Maine Law or the formation of the United Kingdom Alliance, which most influenced the form and direction of Scottish Temperance effort in the next decade.

CHAPTER 6

The Defence of the Forbes Mackenzie Act 1853 - 1862.

'Big Forbes Mackenzie rins through the toon
up streets and doon streets, hurrin' roun'
and roun' tinlin at the whisky-shops, gaein
a bit knock. Are the bairins a' gane home,
for its noo 'lev'n o'clock'.

The Forbes Mackenzie Act has been attributed by historians to the Sabbatarian traditions of Scotland and more popularly to the puritanical tendencies of her native Presbyterianism. The Licensing Act of 1853, observed Cowan, 'was the offspring not of the exotic Maine Law but of a home-bred Sabbatarianism, now dignified by a truer sense of the public need'.¹ Sunday closing of public houses had certainly been one of the aims of the licensing reform movement which was taken up by the S.A.S.D. Churchmen who were reluctant to become embroiled in the drink question could support this step towards restoring the traditional Scottish Sabbath with few reservations. Liberal free traders could resolve the challenge posed by licensing laws to their laissez-faire principles by seeing, in the interests of religion and morality, exceptions to the laws of economics. Teetotallers who were lukewarm on licensing reform as a weapon against the drink traffic were attracted to the Act as a Sabbatarian measure. Even prohibitionists, sternest opponents of

1. Op.cit R.M.W.Cowan The Newspaper in Scotland p 335.

licensing laws, saw in Sunday closing a one seventh instalment of entire prohibition. In Scotland, therefore, Sunday closing was important as an issue which unified antagonistic groups in support of licensing reform. Duncan McLaren skilfully used the attack on Sunday - drunkenness in Edinburgh to win support for himself and disarm opponents.¹ It was in Edinburgh that Sunday drinking was used to demonstrate the extent of Scotland's fall from her former pious state. A telling propaganda exercise, proving this statistically, was organised by the Edinburgh Total Abstinence Society when the licensing bill was coming up for its second reading. Their public house census showed that on Sunday, 6th March 1853, 41,796 people entered public houses in Edinburgh.² On Sunday, 17th April, just before the House of Commons went into Committee on the Bill, the figures were verified by police officers acting under the instructions of Lord Provost McLaren. These horrifying statistics reverberated all the way to Westminster and, as the Scotsman put it 'were sufficiently striking to give a great impetus to the passing of the Act'.^{3,4.}

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1. Op.cit J.B. Mackie Life of Duncan McLaren p 305.
 2. David Lewis The Drink Traffic in the 19th Century, Its Growth and Influence . London 1885 p 82
 3. The Scotsman, quoted P.T. Winskill The Temperance Movement and its Workers 4 Vols. London 1892. Vol III p 29.
 4. They appear to have changed the views of Cowan the M.P. for Edinburgh who had opposed the Bill in the previous year. Hansard. Wed. April 20th 1853 p 126.

It is as well to recognise that there was a diversity of motivations and objectives behind the support for Sunday closing which helped to explain the incongruous alliance which supported licensing reform. Certainly there were those who believed that, if the pubs were closed to the working classes, they would attend the Church instead. Temperance reformers, who hoped that Sunday sobriety would improve religious observance, were not so naive and saw it as only a pre-requisite to that end. It is misleading to regard all supporters of Sunday closing as motivated by a puritan desire to repress the people's pleasures. Teetotallers like secularist radicals wished for more rational and decorous leisure activities and supported campaigns for a Saturday half-holiday. Sunday drinking was not in any case only an offence to religion. As the testimonies of employers to the benefits of the Forbes Mackenzie Act showed, it was useful in the purely materialistic role of ensuring a more regular attendance at work on Mondays.^{1,2.} Licensing reformers in the 1840s were motivated by secular concerns and if the solution to certain social problems was to reduce drink consumption, closing the pubs on their busiest day appeared an effective way to do it. We should not forget, of course, the significant limitations on hours of opening on week-days and the associated drive to reduce the numbers of

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1. Scottish Temperance League:
Testimonies and Statistics in reference to the working of the Public Houses Act. Glasgow 1855. pp67-72.
 2. R.C.Licensing System (Scotland) Parl.Papers 1860 Vol XXXII
Evidence of witness No. 149, John Davidson, Provost of Airdrie.

licences granted.¹ Sanctity of the Sabbath was by no means the only objective of the Forbes Mackenzie Act, therefore, and it was inspired by more complex motives than pious revulsion at the desecration of the Lord's Day.

There is no doubt, however, that Scotland's Sabbatarian traditions made the task of licensing reformers easier. Historical precedent, even though it was partly decayed in the cities, was opposed to commercial activity on Sundays and the approval of the law for the sale of drink on the Sabbath was an anomaly of only twenty five years standing.² In England by contrast, cultural traditions and commercial interests strongly supported Sunday markets and Sunday drinking.³ It was easier in Scotland to build complete Sunday closing on the foundation of ancient custom than it was to establish a lesser degree of Sunday closing in England against the grain of national tradition.⁴ In one country Sunday closing assisted the acceptance of licensing reform. In the other it ensured its defeat.

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1. Weekday hours were fixed at 8 a.m. - 11 p.m. The number of licenses in Glasgow fell from 2053 in 1853 to 1673 in 1857 in Dundee from 626 in 1853 to 386 in 1857. S.T.L. Register 1859 p 64.
 2. Chapter 4. pp 131-2
 3. Brian Harrison. The Sunday Trading Riots of 1855
Historical Journal Vol 8. 1965 pp 220-222
 4. Under the Wilson-Patten Act, public houses were permitted to open for 5½ hours on Sundays.

The role of organised Presbyterianism in obtaining the 1853 Licensing Act must also be qualified. From 1845 onwards the Churches had shown a greater awareness of the drink question. All three major Presbyterian denominations formed temperance committees and temperance societies which meant that the issue was regularly raised in the Church courts.¹ This should not be taken to signify support for the temperance movement which regarded these short pledged societies as 'doubtful friends' and was in turn looked upon with suspicion.² Support for the temperance movement was strongest, in proportion to their numbers, among heretics like Quakers and Morisonians. By the early 1850s there were still only a handful of teetotal ministers in the three main Presbyterian churches and even the short pledged church societies were largely moribund.³ But while they were still unprepared to renounce drink, the Churches' growing awareness of the problem made them prepared to denounce drinking, and the small number of teetotalers within them worked to provide opportunities to do so. An important victory for such activity was the Report of the Church of Scotland on Drunkenness. Using the parochial reports system of the Statistical Accounts a report based on returns from 478 parishes was prepared and published under

1. Op.cit M.B.McGregor Towards Scotland Social Good p 32.

2. Chapter 10 pp 332-3

3. Ibid. pp 332-41

the authority of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in 1849.¹ The following year the Assembly of the Free Church, not to be outdone in questions of social and moral concern by its rival, resolved to petition Parliament against the traffic in spirits.² One should be careful not to see in all this a dramatic change of heart on the part of churchmen in regard to the drink question. Nevertheless the official recognition by the Established Church of the seriousness of the problem and the petitions of the Free Church on behalf of the legislative solutions proposed were very valuable politically to licensing law reformers.

The Churches lent their authority and prestige therefore to initiatives taken largely by laymen for the reform of the licensing system. Of the individuals most commonly credited with chief responsibility for the 1853 Act, only one is known to have been a prominent Presbyterian. Duncan McLaren, Lord Provost of Edinburgh was a member of the United Presbyterians, an amalgamation of the schismatic sects of the 18th century. McLaren's claim to have been the architect of licensing reform rests rather too much on his own testimony.³ His efforts as Lord Provost on behalf of licensing restriction and Sunday closing in

1. Op.cit M.B.McGregor Towards Scotland's Social Good pp 34-37.

2. Ibid p 37

3. Op.cit J.B. Mackie Life of Duncan McLaren pp 306-308

Edinburgh were influential but have to be seen as part of a wider movement which he did not initiate. On the other hand his prestige and statistical skills played a critical role in the defence of the licensing act.¹ By contrast William Forbes Mackenzie, Conservative M.P. for Peebleshire, is a somewhat shadowy figure whose religious convictions and affiliations are unknown.² It was even suggested that the 'man whose name it bears..... was perfectly innocent of that much abused Act. For he only introduced it at the solicitation of Lord Kinnaird'.³ Forbes Mackenzie's reputation as an anti-drink reformer was somewhat tarnished by his being unseated at Liverpool in 1853 for too liberally dispensing alcoholic hospitality to the electorate.⁴ He should not be dismissed as a mere opportunist, however, for he moved for and chaired the 1846 Select Committee on Scottish Licensing and was in 1850 a director of the Scottish Association for the Suppression of Drunkenness.⁵ George William Fox Kinnaird, ninth Baron Kinnaird of Rossie Priory, Perthshire, had

1. pp 222-223

2. 'His only claim to notice is as the author of the Act for the regulation of public houses in Scotland' D.N.B. Vol XII p 609. His brother Charles Fredrick Mackenzie was ordained in the Church of England so the family had some episcopalian connections.

3. S.T.L. Weekly Journal. No. 16 April 18th 1857. Report of speech by the Lord Advocate.

4. Op.cit R.M.W. Cowan The Newspaper in Scotland p 356. Mackenzie had represented Peebleshire at intervals since 1841. It is not known why he should have changed his constituency.

5. Op.cit Constitution of S.A.S.D. 1850. List of Office Bearers.

probably the greatest individual responsibility for the 1853 Act. His wide interests in social reform earned him the title of the 'Shaftesbury of the North' and his involvement with licensing reform dated from 1846. Kinnaird drafted and presented in the House of Lords the 1851 Licensing Bill. An amended version of this became the 1853 Act which, as his obituary put it, 'rightly should have been designated the Kinnaird Act.'¹ It is at least salutary to remind ourselves when we feel tempted to attribute the Scottish licensing system overmuch to national religious traditions that its originator was a devout Episcopalian.

The most surprising feature of the Forbes Mackenzie Act was that it passed into law without great opposition or debate. There was ample time for opponents to mobilise, for a Scottish licensing bill was debated in Parliament in three successive years from 1851 and some of its provisions had been subjects of controversy or local experiment since 1846. Associations of spirit dealers, formed to protect the interests of the Trade, had

1. Dundee Advertiser, Jan 8th 1875 p 5

been in existence as far back as 1845 and had been active in resisting attempts to reduce public house hours of opening and impose Sunday closing.^{1,2.} Experience in concerted action by publicans was not lacking, therefore, but apart from moves to petition Parliament against the Bill in 1853 no united and resolute action was taken by them.³ The Bill was opposed in Parliament on general 'free trade' grounds and counterarguments to this were a prominent feature of speeches in its favour.⁴ The most formidable opposition in Parliament came from Joseph Hume who voiced radical suspicions of a measure which could concentrate the power to licence in a few hands and spoke in favour of free trade in beer and better recreational facilities.⁵ It was Hume who called for Parliamentary returns to show comparatively the incidence of arrests for drunkenness in London, Edinburgh and Glasgow over the last twenty years.⁶ By showing

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1. Scottish Temperance Journal. Sept. 1845.
 2. Scottish Temperance Review. Aug. 1847
 3. Abstainers Journal June 1853.
 4. Hansard 1853 Vol. 124 pp 125-127 Speeches of Cumming Bruce and the Lord Advocate.
 5. Hansard 1852 Vol. 119 p 117
 6. Op.cit R.M.W. Cowan The Newspaper in Scotland p 356

that 'Glasgow is three times more drunken than Edinburgh and five times more drunken than London' these returns only strengthened the licensing reformers case that the drink problem was of an entirely different dimension north of the border, justifying special measures of control.¹ Hume's returns sparked off the celebrated dispute between the Edinburgh 'Scotsman' and the 'Glasgow Herald' over the drunken reputations of their respective cities. This engrossing question diverted the attention of the chief newspaper opponents of licensing reform, and much of the rest of Scottish press, away from the contents of the bill and proceedings in the House of Commons. By the time their stock of insults was exhausted the Bill was in committee. Ironically, therefore, Hume's intervention against the licensing bill helped to smooth its passage into law.

Like the English Sunday closing measure, the Wilson Patten Act, passed the following year, the Forbes Mackenzie Act was opposed with determination only after it became law. The nature of the anti-licensing campaign in the two countries and their eventual outcome was, however, completely different. Licensing reform in England became subsumed in the general question of Sunday trading. So offensive were evangelical assaults on long

1. Ibid quoting the Scotsman, 26th Feb. 1853.

established customs to the people of London that they rioted against them.¹ Parliamentary opposition was quickly mobilised and the device of a Select Committee, rigged to come to a pre-determined conclusion, was used to recommend repeal. This was quickly rushed through Parliament freeing the English once more to drink on Sundays and effectively postponing stricter licensing laws in England for twenty years. As a reward for his services, Humphrey Berkeley, M.P., chairman of the Select Committee, was given £1000 by a grateful drink trade.² The campaign against stricter licensing in England thus took the form of a brief and successful coup. In Scotland the licensing question became more a war of attrition with frequent press and pamphlet skirmishes punctuated by heavy barrages of statistics as a background to skilful Parliamentary manoeuvring.

1. Op.cit B.Harrison The Sunday Trading Riots of 1855

2. Abstainers Journal, Nov. 1856.

Temperance spokesmen were always well aware of the political and economic power of the 'Trade'. Acting in its own interests it was 'a political combination, which down at any rate to the war was probably the most powerful in the country'.¹ Teetotallars believed the brewers' boast that for every pound their movement could raise against the traffic its defenders could find a hundred. These powerful muscles were only beginning to be flexed in the 1850s as the freedom of action and very legitimacy of the drink trade was questioned. Drink-sellers' gold helped to inspire the riots which overthrew the Wilson-Patten Act and the 1857 election served notice of what the trade acting in unison could do to its enemies.^{2,3.}

At first sight the position of the drink trade in Scotland was even more formidable. For one thing drink manufacture was relatively more important to the national economy than in England. For another its retailers were believed to be more

1. Op.cit G.B.Wilson p 182.

2. Op.cit B. Harrison Sunday Trading Riots of 1855
p 227 and p 237.

3. Op.cit John Vincent The Formation of the Liberal Party
1857-68 p 99

numerous, due in part to the large number of grocers who sold drink for consumption on the premises. The ratio of licences to inhabitants in Glasgow, thought Fox Maule, was a most frightful state of things.¹ The very poverty of the lowest class of Scottish publicans gives reason to doubt that they were universally enfranchised but even if only a substantial majority had the vote they would still have been far and away the largest single commercial interest represented in the electorate. Politicians certainly had to cultivate their support and at the exceptionally drunken Airdrie election of 1851 the heavy expenditure on drink by both candidates was intended to placate not the voteless consumers but the enfranchised publicans.² Such was their potential power that Lord Kinnaird doubted that the licensing bill would pass the Commons.³ By 1853 the trade in Scotland was aware of this power. On the eve of the third reading of the licensing Bill the Glasgow Licensed Victuallers warned that 'if they were to unite they could put in whatever member for the city they choose'.⁴

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1. Hansard 1852 Vol 119 p 716.
 2. Scottish Temperance Review March 1851.
 3. Hansard 1853 Vol. 128 pp 374/375.
 4. Abstainers Journal June 1853.

In practice the licensed trade in Scotland was unable to achieve the unity which would have given it this degree of political power. There were moreover certain features of the industry which prevented it ever becoming the formidable force that it was in England. This was in part due to the structure of the industry in Scotland. There was no Scottish equivalent of a tied house system under a 'brewers monopoly' which Wilson believed to be the basis of the trade's political power in England.¹ Tied houses were advantageous to ensure guaranteed retail outlets for a perishable product which could only be consumed close to the point of manufacture. Scottish distillers were not faced with this problem, instead they developed important export markets. Unlike the English brewers they were not greatly perturbed by licensing legislation which did not impinge directly on their vital interests. Nearly all Scottish publicans were independent operators whose financial relationship with their suppliers did not develop into a political bond. Producers and retailers of drink were not united by common interests in Scotland to the extent that they were in England and there was no attempt by the former to provide leadership or financial assistance in the face of temperance attacks.²

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1. Op.cit G.B.Wilson p 182.
While brewer ownership of licensed houses in Scotland has increased since the 19th century it amounted to in 1968 27% of hotels and public houses compared with 86% in England and Wales.
Report of the Monopolies Commission on the Supply of Beer HMSO 1968.
 2. Op.cit R.Weir The Distilling Industry in Scotland in the 19th and early 20th Centuries . Ch. 19

There were important divisions even among that part of the drink trade directly effected by the Forbes Mackenzie Act. By no means all publicans were opposed to its main provisions. The attacks on the trade since the 1840s were based on the premise that drink selling was socially harmful. What had been a respectable occupation was coming to be regarded as pernicious.

'The spirit dealer, applying for a licence is treated by our Justices, not as a respectable citizen demanding a rightful privilege, but as an enemy to the public need, almost as a criminal on his trial'.¹

Publicans were concerned at this deterioration in their image. Some of them recognised that stricter regulation of the trade would help it to regain respectable status. And if temperance allegations of multitudes of spirit dealing elders of the Kirk had any truth in them, what better way to vindicate their office than by supporting Sunday closing. To social and spiritual reasons for supporting licensing reform can be added good commercial

1. James Stirling. The Failure of the Forbes Mackenzie Act , Glasgow 1959 p 15.

motives for approving of reductions in the number of licences that accompanied its implementation. From its conception this policy had been aimed only at the poorest class of publican. Captain Smart, reporting on the progress made in the three years following the Forbes Mackenzie Act, noted

'those who have given up their business, or lost their licences were principally occupiers of the smaller rented houses, of which, I regret to say, there are yet too many'.¹

Prosperous publicans, protected by their substantial capital investment, were little threatened by licensing restriction and had much to gain from greater respectability. They could look philosophically on as the magistrates removed sources of temptation, knowing that they also removed competitors. It is not surprising, therefore, that publicans could be found petitioning in favour of the Act and testifying to the Royal Commission on its advantages to the trade.^{2,3.} In Glasgow the very centre of its operations, the Scottish Licensed Victuallers Defence Association had only 450 members out of a possible 1700 in the city, and it was the least wealthy and the least politically impressive who had most reason to join.⁴

1. James Smart. Superintendant of Glasgow Police, Report on the Working of the Public Houses Acts in the City of Glasgow for 1856 .

Glasgow 1857

2. S.T.L. Weekly Journal March 28th, 1857.

3. R.C.Licensing Laws (Scotland) Parl.Papers 1860 Vol XXXII

4. S.T.L. Weekly Journal March 28th 1857.

Discussions on the licensing question were not confined to the publicans however. The temperance movement was notably divided by the issue, although the split did not seriously impede the effectiveness of the Scottish Temperance League's support of the Forbes Mackenzie Act while the campaign centred upon it lasted.¹ Cowan's analysis of the Scottish newspaper press led him to conclude that the pro and anti licensing law groups cut across normal party lines. Forbes Mackenzie and one of his principal supporters in the House of Commons, Cumming-Bruce, were conservatives. Duncan McLaren was a radical while Lord Kinnaird, a 'devotee of Ricardo', had liberal sympathies and had been the only Scottish peer to support repeal of the Corn Laws. Apart from Free Church opinion which was solidly in favour of the Act 'unison was unknown in any other camp'.² Whether the editorials of the Church's press or even the resolutions of its General Assembly accurately reflect the attitudes of its membership on this question is hard to say. From the political viewpoint, however, it was sufficient that support for the new licensing law should be the Free Church's official position. M.Ps associated with the Free Church played leading roles in the

1. Chapter 7

2. Op.cit R.M.W.Cowan The Newspaper in Scotland p 355

presentation and consolidation of the Forbes Mackenzie Act.¹ The prestige and political influence of the Free Church was therefore indispensable to the victory of the pro-licensing forces.

By comparison the temperance movement did not bring, to the pro-licensing side, prestige or political influence. Most of its members in 1853 were working men without votes and there were no abstaining M.Ps or even men representing Scottish constituencies who were sympathetic to the temperance movement. The movement's spokesmen candidly admitted that abstainers were not responsible for the Licensing Act although they claimed that it would not have been possible without 'the thorough temperance and prohibition sentiments which total abstainers had succeeded in engendering',² not to speak of the impact of the 'celebrated Edinburgh statistics'. After 1853 the Scottish Temperance League's former diffidence towards anti-drink legislation was quickly transformed to extreme partisanship for the Forbes Mackenzie Act. In so doing Scottish teetotallers were swimming with the tide of temperance policy which was everywhere flowing away from

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1. Notably Murray Dunlop, brother of the founder of the temperance movement and a leading Free Church layman. Relations between the brothers seems to have been distant.
 2. S.T.L. Weekly Journal, April 4th 1857.

In 1853 moral suasion, /Harriet Beecher Stowe and her party had given personal accounts to Scottish Temperance audiences of the progress of the Maine Law.¹ The formation of the U.K.A. with an ambitious policy of legislative prohibition aroused interest in temperance circles in Scotland. What was distinctive about the Scottish movement's situation was the existence of ready-made anti-drink legislation supported by non-teetotallers which it could adopt as its own.

While the Scottish temperance movement came late to the battle, it brought with it qualities and attitudes which proved increasingly valuable in the defence of the licensing law. For the Free Church, this was only one question among many and one which was sensitive enough to require delicate handling. By contrast teetotallers were willing to give their time and energy unstinted to the anti-drink cause. The movement's network of local organisations, increasing in support and prosperity by this time, was immediately on call to demonstrate, canvas support or send petitions to Parliament. The Scottish Temperance League was able to co-ordinate such activity and to supply speakers, organise conferences, lobby Parliament and consult with allies. In addition the League had its own press, publishing at this time three periodicals as well as large

1. Abstainers Journal May 1853.

quantities of propaganda from full length novels to two page tracts. The entry into the field of a popular movement, led by committed activists, provided an organisational and ideological focus for the pro-licensing forces. With pardonable exaggeration of their importance teetotallers saw themselves as the elite of the anti-drink side

'All depends on the attitude of the Temperance army; for ours is the central phalanx that must tone and temper the vast surrounding body of generally unorganised but warm and zealous sympathisers'. 1

Englishmen might riot in opposition to licensing laws but the Scots response was impeccably constitutional. After 1853 both sides in the controversy set about justifying or denigrating the Forbes Mackenzie Act to win public opinion and Parliamentary votes over to their viewpoint. In these circumstances the attitude of the newspaper press, by the 1850s the most important medium of communication and shaper of public opinion, was important. While the pro-licensing alliance had the support of the Free Church and temperance press and a number of local newspapers on its side the anti-licensing camp

1. S.T.L. Weekly Journal. Jan 7th 1860

had even more powerful support. Newspapers with status and influence like the 'Glasgow Herald' and the 'Scotsman' were against the Act and their editors were in close touch with the spokesmen of the Licensed Victuallers in Parliament.¹ Apart from the Glasgow 'Commonwealth' and the 'Edinburgh Mail', both edited by teetotallers there were no firm supporters of the licensing law among the newspapers of the two major cities.² Despite the existence of the temperance propaganda machine, which always had some tendency to preach to the converted, the advantage in the struggle to influence attitudes and form opinion lay with the Licensed Victuallers. Cynics might see in the pro-drink stance of important sections of the press the operation of personal motives. . After all, teetotallers regarded newspapermen, along with commercial travellers, as occupationally ^{groups} particularly at risk from alcoholic temptation, a view not entirely unsupported by evidence.³ When the Forbes Mackenzie Act came into operation it was noted by Captain Smart of the Glasgow police that

'serious complaints have been made by gentlemen connected with the press who require to be out of bed every publishing night that they are denied necessary refreshment in respectable houses'. 4

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1. Alexander Russell to Melgund. Jan 25th 1858. Minto Papers 143/4 and 144/4 N.L.S. Ibid.
William Gillies to Melgund, July 20th 1859.
 2. Robert Rae former secretary of the S.T.L. and Dr. James Begg.
 3. Andrew Aird. Reminiscences of Editors Reporters and Printers Glasgow 1890
 4. Op.cit James Smart Report on the working of the Public Houses Acts in the City of Glasgow for 1856
pp 20/21

In fact newspapers appear to have been motivated by political considerations. The Scotsman for instance consistently opposed Duncan McLaren and all his works.

It must be admitted that exposures of the working of the Act, the methods used to enforce it and to circumvent it, made good copy. Glasgow in the 1850s had some of the features of Chicago under prohibition. This was the city of the 'Notorious Glasgow shebeener' of underground rattlers, shady dancing cribs and dubious 'temperance hotels' which sprang up to replace the pubs which had closed.¹ Prospective spirit dealers were said to

'wander at night through our streets
and lurk in our doors, carrying on
their persons whisky concealed in cans,
flasks or bladders, with measures for
its sale'. 2

There were flamboyant ladies too, like Bonnie Belle who was reputed to have paid £199 in fines for illegal selling between June 1853 and February 1856 out of the 'enormous profits' of

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1. Anon. Doings of a Notorious Glasgow Shebeener Glasgow n.d. C 1870
 2. Op.cit James Stirling The Failure of the Forbes Mackenzie Act

illicit trade.¹ As ever the rewards for those on the side of the law were more modest, and not everybody was satisfied with having done her civic duty. A police informant complained that

'a woman called Big Jeannie and herself had got 2/6 for informing but said the sum was not worth while'.²

The police who had no powers under the law to enter suspected shebeens were forced to use devious methods. Plain clothes men, alas not always incorruptible, were the only answer to such establishments as the Star Club, New Street, Calton, which advertised itself 'free from the Austrian surveillance of the police'. Reports of the results of some of these exploits wrung the hearts of readers. Mr. Cameron, a publican of advanced years was prevailed upon, against his better judgement, one Sunday by two men who appeared to him as weary carters, to sell them spirits. The tender hearted Mr. Cameron gave way, only to find himself prosecuted by the carters metamorphosed into policemen. Degradation and imprisonment broke his health and he was released only to die a few days later declaring on his

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1. Glasgow Herald Feb. 9th 1856
 2. Op.cit Minto papers 144/4 N.L.S.
Newspaper clippings relevant to spy cases 19.

deathbed that he never received a farthing from the policemen, 'leaving a small family without the means of subsistence'.¹ This shows at least, that temperance propagandists had no monopoly of melodrama.

Such anecdotes, whether they were true or not, were an effective means of attacking the Licensing Act. Stricter control over the sale of drink had been advocated from the beginning on grounds of improvement of public order and reduction of crime. Licensing reform, claimed Duncan McLaren saved the citizens of Edinburgh the expense of building a new prison.² The proposed Bill, said the Lord Advocate, countering the arguments of free traders was 'substantially a police regulation'.³ To portray the results of the new legislation as encouraging lawlessness and bringing law enforcement into disrepute was a particularly damning criticism. The evils of illicit distillation in Scotland were well within living memory as an example of drink laws which the state did not have the administrative machinery to enforce. A large scale illicit drink traffic in Scottish cities created different but still serious dangers. While the Glasgow Herald doubted the

1. Glasgow Herald March 10th 1858.

2. Op.cit. Duncan McLaren. The Rise and Progress of Whisky Drinking in Scotland pp 35/36.

3. Hansard 1853 Vol. 124 p 127.

Licensed Victuallers' figure of 1600 shebeens operating in the city it had 'no reason to doubt that the number is immense'.¹ The size of the problem taxed the police and the methods they were forced to use made them unpopular at a time when they had yet to win public confidence. They found themselves accused by one side of corruption and arbitrary action and criticised by the other for failing to enforce the law. No wonder Captain Smart wished that there was some other agency of enforcement.

The temperance response to this was to emphasise the volume of respectable support for the Forbes Mackenzie Act.

'Testimonies and statistics in reference to the working of the Public Houses Act from Magistrates, Superintendants of Police, Clergymen, City Missionaries, Employers of Labour Working Men, etc. etc.'

was launched at a conference in Edinburgh in October 1855 and marked the first major intervention of the S.T.L. in the controversy. Full use had been made in compiling the pamphlet of the movement's widely spread organisation in eliciting testimonies and compiling petitions. Statements of support from magistrates and police

1. Glasgow Herald March 24th 1858

officers were supplemented by tables showing the reduction in drunkenness offences on Sundays since 1853. Thus the temperance counter to lurid tales of illicit selling was sober statistics designed to show the effectiveness of the Licensing Act.

Henceforth both sides attempted to use various indices, carefully selected, to support their case and their Westminster spokesmen were called upon to request Parliamentary returns to add authority to the proceedings. The Licensed Victuallers' champion, Lord Melgund, moved for returns of the annual number of convictions for illicit drink selling and the amounts paid in fines by publicans. These were expected to support the publicans' case that the 1853 Act was unworkable and that the trade was unjustly oppressed. Sure enough the direction of illicit selling and of fines levied was upwards, but not dramatically so and the trend was somewhat spoiled by the fact that on aggregate the base year 1851 showed more convictions for illicit selling than 1856.¹ The publicans took comfort initially from returns requested by their opponents of whisky consumption in Scotland in each year since the Act came into force. These showed an apparent large increase in the years 1856 and 1857, enabling newspapers, led by the Scottish Press to claim that Forbes

1. Op.cit Duncan McLaren The Rise and Progress of Whisky Drinking in Scotland Appendix

Mackenzie had driven the Scots to drink even more.¹ It took Duncan McLaren's statistical skills to unravel the mystery which was explained by the inadequacy of separate excise returns for Scotland since the equalisation of duty in the United Kingdom.² With masterly clarity, McLaren demolished the opposing case and showed that Scottish consumption had in fact diminished substantially.³ Murray Dunlop's returns of drunkenness statistics for Scottish towns of over 5000 inhabitants gave credibility to temperance claims by showing a striking reduction of drunkenness and crime on Sundays.

The publication in many instances of local police returns, requested by Parliament, gave the maximum amount of publicity to this question also. The statistical controversy therefore resounded both in Scotland and at Westminster. The age may have been too easily impressed by figures and tables but both sides in this controversy were well aware of the need for judicious selection, careful interpretation and correct timing in the political use of statistical arguments. Parliamentary

1. Ibid pp 28 - 30.

2. S.T.L. Register 1859 pp 49-59 Summarises McLaren's efforts.

3. The Times Sept. 23 1858.

tactics were influenced by the appearance of the latest figures. Take no action, the Editor of the 'Scotsman' counselled Lord Melgund, until Dunlop's returns had been 'issued and sifted'.

'the facts which show the worthlessness of this evidence will require a little time to marshall and popularise'. 1

Circumstances alas were against the 'Scotsmen' and the publicans. It was difficult to dispute the reduction in Sunday drunkenness and, after McLaren's final letter to the 'Times', the fall in Scottish whisky consumption. McLaren's review of all the available statistical information, published by the Scottish Temperance League in 1858, effectively wound up the statistical controversy as a clear win for the temperance side. 2

The publicans' case therefore was forced to rely on more general arguments. The liberty of the subject and principles of free trade were invoked. Class legislation was seen to be implicit in a measure which effected only the drinking habits of working people. The morals and domestic comfort of the working classes were endangered by drinking being carried

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1. Alexander Russell to Melgund Jan. 25th 1858
Minto Papers N.L.S.
 2. Op.cit Duncan McLaren The Rise and Progress of Whisky
Drinking in Scotland .

on in the home. The consumer was inconvenienced. Dying mothers, women in childbirth and men who fell into the canal at Port Dundas were all, like newspaper reporters, unable to get a drop to revive them. Appeals were made to national pride, that the English would not put up with such a law. Most of these points were replied to and at length by temperance pamphleteers and debaters, except for the jibe at class legislation which the Scottish Temperance League had not long given up itself. ¹

The controversy in Scotland was the foreground of a campaign in Westminster by the Licensed Victuallers to have the Forbes Mackenzie Act repealed. It had never been a party issue, and M.Ps in 1853 had been prepared to change their position on it. The Licensed Victuallers hoped that they could be persuaded to do so again, while the temperance forces were determined to sustain their original decision. That is not to suggest that M.Ps were swayed by force of reason alone, although they did need to be primed with information and arguments to justify their position. Apart from committed men, and they were mainly on the side of the Act, there were those whose position would be decided on grounds of political self interest and who would vote for whichever side

1. For details of this debate see entries in bibliography under Forbes Mackenzie Act.

seemed to be most popular with their electorate. On this issue and in this decade, Parliament seemed to be operating according to the theory of representative government and this gave great opportunities to the rival pressure groups to create and communicate appropriate impressions of how the licensing law was operated and received in Scotland. It has already been indicated the temperance side was the more successful in this contest.

Events in England in 1855 gave the Licensed Victuallers a model strategy and from 1855 their aim was, as the teetotallers put it,

'to play Berkeley with the McKenzie as the English Victuallers had done with the Wilson Patten Act'.¹

The Scottish Licensed Victuallers Association found their Berkeley in the person of Lord Melgund, heir to the Earl of Minto and M.P. for Clackmannan and Kinross. Melgund's task was to move in the Commons for a Select Committee to enquire into the operation of the Forbes Mackenzie Act. This was to be a direct imitation of the Berkeley Committee of 1854, but it was

1. S.T.L. Weekly Journal Jan. 14th 1860

also the result of a desire to hold the enquiry outside Scotland and a recognition of the dependence of the Scottish publicans on the support of English M.Ps. William Gilles, chairman of the Scottish Licenced Victuallers, hoped that Melgund would 'endeavour to obtain as many English Members (Liberal) on the committee as possible' and suggested Berkeley and Williams, both members of the Select Committee of 1854, as men who 'will lend you good service'.¹ Suitably packed and armed with the Scottish Licensed Victuallers' lists of witnesses and classified lists of questions, the proposed committee was bound to come to the right conclusions.

The opponents of the Wilson-Patten Act had been successful because they had acted against it quickly at a politically opportune moment. Four years after the Forbes Mackenzie Act, Lord Melgund was still advising caution on the grounds that feeling among Scottish M.Ps was not at that moment favourable.² Not until June 1858 did he give notice that he would raise the question of a committee of enquiry. In the face of continuing lack of support, Melgund was forced to drop his motion for a select committee and instead moved on 9th July that the House give

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1. William Gilles (Chairman S.L.V.A.) to Melgund 3rd June 1858
Minto papers N.L.S.
 2. Melgund to Malcolm Logan 11th Jan. 1858 Ibid.

its attention to the state of the licensing system in Scotland.¹

The result confirmed the lack of enthusiasm among Scottish M.Ps for the publican's cause.²

'We were all disappointed that no Scottish member got up to back out your statement and condemn the system. Where was Mr. Dalglish (M.P. for Glasgow) who went to Parliament pledged to the trade to do what he could to put an end to their grievances'.³

The issue was finally settled the following session when Melgund's motion for a select committee was lost to Sir Andrew Agnew's ammendment for a Royal Commission.⁴

It would appear therefore that Scottish M.Ps in the main concluded that support for the licensing system was politically inexpedient, even in the face of the electoral strength of the trade. The missing Mr. Dalglish for one was rapidly changing sides and was soon a generous supporter of the Scottish Temperance League.⁵

1. William Spence to Melgund, 8th June 1858.

2. Hansard. Vol. 151 July 9th 1858 pp 1188/89

3. William Gilles to Melgund, 19th July 1858.
Minto Papers N.L.S.

4. George Candelet to Melgund. 4th March 1859

5. Dalglish donated £50 annually to the S.T.L. beginning in 1860.
This was by far the largest single donation from a non-teetotaller.

By setting up a Royal Commission sitting in Scotland they appeared to be acceding to reasonable requests for an enquiry but were in fact conceding another objective of temperance pressure. Increasing confidence among leading teetotallers and an awareness of the shortcomings of the Forbes Mackenzie Act led the Scottish Temperance League to favour a new licensing act. A Royal Commission with wide terms of reference to look at the whole question of the sale of drink was believed to be the best means of initiating new legislation provided that it heard evidence in Scotland far from the unwholesome influence of English M.Ps. Melgund and the Licensed Victuallers had no alternative but to accept the Commission with the best grace they could muster.^{1,2.} But having been outvoted in Parliament they were outmanouvered in Scotland by an organisation which had made careful preparations for this eventuality. The publicans complained bitterly in public and private of the unfairness of the Commission and finally concluded in disgust 'that in short the enquiry was burked'.^{3,4.} The recommendations of the Royal Commission gave the publicans real cause for gloom. Ironically the shortcomings of the Forbes Mackenzie Act, in regard to police powers for example, which the Licensed Victuallers'

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1. Melgund to Marshall (Alloa) 26th March 1859
Minto Papers N.L.S.
 2. W. Gilles to Melgund, 21st April 1859 ibid
 3. W. Gilles to Melgund, 15th August 1859 ibid
 4. S.T.L. Weekly Journal, Jan. 14th 1860

propaganda had helped to expose were given as reasons for new and stricter controlling legislation.¹ By contrast the Scottish Temperance League noted with satisfaction that the recommendations of the Commission contained a number of paragraphs which corresponded almost exactly to the list of suggested improvements which it had submitted.² One thing only soured the temperance triumph. This was the recommendation that there should be a new form of license for refreshment houses selling beer or light wines along with food.³ Mr. Gladstone, in promoting the Refreshment Houses Bill justified it as a means of supplying a wholesome alternative to spirits and reuniting the functions of eating and drinking.⁴ Here he was reflecting a number of assumptions about the proper use of alcohol which were still deeply implanted in the middle and upper classes and nowhere else did these alternative drinks seem more necessary than in Scotland. Teetotallers were almost alone in regarding wine and beer as equally dangerous as spirits. This issue therefore threatened to endanger the alliance of teetotallers and moderate wine drinkers of the religiously inclined middle classes which had successfully defended

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1. Op.cit R.C. Licensing Law (Scotland) Parl.Papers 1860 Vol. XXXIII Report p xxiv forward
 2. S.T.L. Weekly Journal June 30th 1860.
 3. Op.cit R.C. on Licensing Laws (Scotland) Parl.Papers 1860 Vol XXXIII Report.
 4. S.T.L.Weekly Journal. March 31st 1860.

the licensing law. Without the assistance of eminent non-teetotalers and the support of Scottish M.Ps, there was little hope of the Scottish Temperance League successfully opposing the extension of the Refreshment Houses bill to Scotland.

This time it was the temperance movement which had the assistance of an English precedent to guide them. They pointed to the unfortunate results of the English Beer Act of 1834, similarly justified as a measure to increase sobriety by substituting beer for spirits. Emphasis was placed on the dangers of allowing any kind of licence to be issued unsupervised by the magistrates, by a body with no responsibility for public order or morals.¹ An element of free trade in drink selling, it was alleged, undermined the principles of the Scottish licensing system and challenged the right of Scotland to separate and distinctive drink legislation. The sight of the Licensed Victuallers enthusiastically supporting the Refreshment Houses Bill helped to unite the anti-drink forces. Petitions organised by the Scottish Temperance League poured into Parliament for the second reading of the Bill and the opposition of Scottish M.Ps got it postponed. Time was won for the full range of temperance tactics to be deployed. Conferences

1. S.T.L. Weekly Journal, August 11th 1860.

were held, deputations sent to Mr. Gladstone and the Lord Advocate.¹ Scottish M.Ps were lobbied. The League even organised an expedition to France to carry out authentic field work in a society of wine drinkers. There the delegates discovered that wine drinking encouraged sexual licence rather than outright intoxication and physical violence. This may account for their conclusion 'that the prevailing ideas in regard to the benefits to be expected from a general introduction of French wines are grounded on altogether vicious premises'.² Political pressure was maintained until the attempt to extend the Refreshment Houses Bill to Scotland was dropped.³ In 1862 almost as a postscript the Public Houses Acts Amendment bill, drafted again by Lord Kinnaird but this time with the active assistance of the directors of the Scottish Temperance League, passed into law, completing the temperance victory.

The consolidation of the licensing system marked the passage from a pre-industrial society with social controls over drinking to an industrial society with a legal framework governing alcohol use. Like other social legislation, licensing laws should be seen as a consequence of fundamental social changes

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1. S.T.L. Weekly Journal, July 7th 1860
 2. S.T.L. Weekly Journal Nov. 10th 1860
 3. S.T.L. Register 1862 pp 64/65

which accompanied industrialisation. The class divisions of industrial society, reflected in the divergence of drinking mores, was an essential pre-requisite for licensing reform. As the Scottish Temperance League, the Licensed Victuallers Association and the Scottish prohibitionists all observed (although not all at the same time), licensing laws were aimed at the drinking habits of the working class. The licensing system therefore resembles other social legislation which sought to impose controls on the behaviour of working people. At the same time it fettered an important commercial activity, constituting a significant departure from capitalist ideals of freedom of enterprise and healthy competition. Pleas by the publicans on the grounds of individual liberty, the rights of property and the principles of free trade were countered with the argument that the interests of society took precedent over the rights of any trade or group of individuals. The functions of government it was argued were positive as well as negative and when the repercussions of a trade were socially harmful it was the duty of government to take action against it.¹ Teetotallers did not regard the drink question as unique in this respect.

1. S.T.L.Weekly Journal, April 7th 1860

Sanitary reform and education were seen as similar legitimate areas for government intervention and the principle was expected to be more widely applied in social affairs.

'The knell of commercial protection has for many years been rung; the day of social protection is as yet only struggling through the dawn'.¹

Self help continued to be the main theme of temperance teaching but was not regarded as incompatible with social legislation which ultimately diminished the responsibility of the individual.

The licensing system, established in the 1850s remained the only important means of control over alcohol use in Scotland for the rest of the century. Taxation policies to reduce drink consumption were advocated only by a few individuals like Sir A. Alison. After the equalisation of the duty with England in the 1850s there were no further significant increases in duty on drink until 1910. Permissive Prohibition, or

1. Ibid Feb. 14th 1857

Local option did not become law in Scotland until 1913 and was not implemented until the 1920s.¹ While the opponents of the licensing law had looked to England for example and support, its champions, inspired by one of the recurrent nationalist upsurges, emphasised the distinctive culture of Scotland and the right to determine her own social legislation.² English M.Ps in the 1850s and Government ministers in 1862 were reluctant to force changes in the Scottish drink laws against the weight of Scottish Parliamentary opinion. By an informal constitutional convention the Scots were allowed to establish the principle of separate legislation in the field of drink control 'shaped to the peculiarities of the Scottish system'.³

Licensing, as a means of controlling the sale of drink, was capable of considerable further extension and it is possible to see a certain pattern of development. A new awareness of the social problems associated with alcohol use in the 1840s gave rise to controlling legislation. This posed problems of enforcement which were defined by a Parliamentary enquiry leading to amending legislation. Thereafter, with the precedents firmly established, improvements in administration or the tightening of controls was possible or the law extended to embrace new

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1. H.St.Clair Reid. The Temperance (Scotland) Act 1913
Edinburgh 1920 Introduction pp 1 - 9
 2. S.T.L. Weekly Journal, July 7th 1860.
 3. Ibid

categories for social protection such as passengers on Clyde steamers or children under the age of sixteen. The general direction of licensing policy towards ever greater restrictions remained unchanged until the 1950s. Big Forbes Mackenzie set up a momentum in this area of Scottish social policy which lasted 100 years.

All this had little to do with the growth of an administrative state. The licensing system never spawned a centralised bureaucratic structure staffed by experts with a vested interest in its continued development. It remained the responsibility of local magistrates with everyday supervision in the hands of local police forces. Local authorities decided questions of long term policy such as the desirable density of public houses and later whether to exclude them from council housing schemes. Apart from the exceptional circumstances of the First World War, central government seems to have avoided direct involvement in the administration of the system.¹ Free from the manipulation of mandarins and ministers, controlled by licensing courts whose members were increasingly elected representatives, the administration of the system remained unusually open to popular pressure.² Temperance reformers pressed

1. Further changes to the licensing laws in 1876 and 1877 were again the result of private bills backed by temperance pressure. It was accepted that Government approval was essential for such bills to succeed however and those like Sir Robert Anstruther's Spiritous Liquors (Scotland) Bill 1875 which had no government support had little chance.

S.T.L. Register 1875 p 43.

2. And petty corruption, darkly hinted at in temperance propaganda.

for changes in the law which increased their ability to apply such pressure. At the insistence of the Scottish Temperance League, a clause was included in the 1862 Act that all licensing applications be made public knowledge 30 days before being considered. Temperance societies were well drilled in the procedures for making objections to applications for licenses and it was common practice in the 19th century for them to send a deputation to address the court.¹ The right of appeal by rejected applicants to the county justices in quarter sessions was another target of the movement which had its strength in the towns and regarded drunkenness as an urban problem. In the 1870s, therefore, Scottish Temperance reformers sank their differences in supporting Dr. Cameron's Publicans Certificates (Scotland) Bill which abolished the right of appeal to quarter sessions for new premises seeking certificates and provided for the election of licensing committees.² This was backed as

'an important step in the right direction.....
but the result will depend upon the sort of men
whom the electors send to the licensing board
and place upon the magisterial bench'.³

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1. The decision of Glasgow Licensing Committee in 1873 not to receive deputations was greeted with strong disapproval from the S.T.L. S.T.L. Register 1876 p 64.
 2. Chapter 9
 3. S.T.L. Register 1878 p 62

Thus the rigour with which the licensing laws were enforced and the extent to which the numbers of licences was restricted depended on the effectiveness of local pressures and the outcome of local political conflicts. Consequently there was no uniformity of enforcement from one licensing area to the next and the counterpart of the 'Big Forbes Mackenzie' rhyme was the song 'Forbes Mackenzie is died in oor toon'. The continuous development of the licensing system therefore needs to be seen as a political rather than an administrative process.

The nature of the licensing system ensured that the battles of the 1850s were but the beginning of a long war of attrition between the temperance movement and the drink trade. Before the 1850s there had been little outright conflict between them. In moral suasion/^{theory,} drink sellers were not especially culpable and publicans regarded teetotallers as figures of fun. Dr. Begg's 'Edinburgh News' warned them in 1856 that henceforth they would have to take the Scottish Temperance League more seriously and this proved to be prophetic. By the end of the decade, teetotal 'fanatics' were represented by the Licensed Victuallers (inaccurately) as the source of their misfortunes.

In fact the defeat of the publicans was the result of the merging of two streams of anti-drink feeling which originated in the 1840s to form an alliance of 'moderate drinkers' and teetotallers. Scotland was not like America, as Harriet Beecher Stowe discovered, where the Churches and the middle classes wholeheartedly supported total abstinence. Nevertheless, indications in the 1850s are of a hardening of attitudes to the use of alcohol among a significant though ill-defined section of the Scottish middle class suggesting that Scotland was not like England either. Henceforth the temperance movement's activities need to be seen in the context of this wider body of sympathetic support. This is what temperance reformers meant when they referred to the more advanced position of public opinion in Scotland on the drink question. Around mid-century, therefore, a far more general conflict was becoming apparent in Scottish society between those who disapproved of drink and desired strict control over its use and those who took a more permissive attitude and wished for a legal framework closer to the English model. This divergence of attitudes to drink has persisted in Scotland down to the present day and continues to differentiate the Scots from their nearest neighbours.¹

1. Michael Bradley and David Fenwick.
Public Attitudes to Liquor Licensing Laws in Great Britain.
HMSO 1974 Ch.V.

In recent years it has become common place in Scotland to attribute some of the undesirable features of alcohol use to the severity of the national licensing system. If only Scots were less restricted in their use of the pub they would develop civilised drinking habits like those of their European neighbours.¹ More authoritatively the polarisation of attitudes to alcohol use has been put forward as a major reason for Scotlands continuing alcoholic notoriety.² The historical evidence at any rate indicates quite clearly that both the severe licensing system and the strength of repressive attitudes were a response to the belief that Scotland's drink problem was exceptionally serious. Historical evidence also suggests that stricter licensing laws had only a limited effect on the drinking habits of the Scots.³ At the time it was feared that working men would transfer their drinking to the home, thereby exposing women and children to the temptations of whisky. The temperance response to these alarms was caustic.

'In the dram shop there is the smile of the landlord or landlady in the working man's home there is the frown of his wife and the necessities of his children.' 4

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1. The Scotsman. 26th, 27th and 28th Feb. 1969. Articles by Jeremy Bruce-Watt are a good example of this viewpoint.
 2. Report of the Departmental Committee on Scottish Licensing Law HMSO 1973. Cmnd 5354. Ch 1 paras. 1.26 1.27 1.44.
 3. Compare with affects of increased excise duty. Chapter 1.
 4. Abstainers Journal Nov. 1855.

Scotsmen may have been thus shamed into sobriety but more probably the spontaneous, self-generating drinking of working men militated against a great increase in home centred drinking. It seems likely however that the 'cairry oot', like that other famous Scottish institution the 'bone fide traveller', had its origins at this time.¹ After the Forbes Mackenzie Act the douce citizens of Inverness were reported to be taking whisky home in lemonade bottles.² Among the miners lack of restraint was exemplified by the use of buckets.³ It does not appear however that the role of the public house as the centre of working class drinking was seriously challenged by restrictions on its use and weekend drinking was merely somewhat curtailed by Sunday closing.⁴ Successful temperance opposition to the Refreshment Houses bill tended to prevent any possible reunification of eating and drinking and thereby helped to reinforce existing tendencies. On the

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1. NOTE: A 'cairry oot' (carry out) is a quantity of drink purchased in a pub at closing time for the purpose of continuing drinking in the streets or at home. It is a concomitant of a pattern of alcohol use in which drinking parties occur spontaneously in the public house setting and in which drink is not normally kept in the home.
'The bone fide traveller' was created by the Licensing Act of 1862 which made provision for the lawful drinking on the Sabbath in a hotel providing that the purchaser had travelled more than 3 miles for a genuine purpose, e.g. attending church. The problem of examining the bone fides of travellers proved a difficult task for the courts.
Re Hailstone v Cullen High Court, March 1880 quoted D.Dewar
The Liquor Laws for Scotland. Edinburgh 1900 pp 140/141.
 2. Minto papers 143/4 19 N.L.S.
 3. Ibid.
 4. Chapter 2. pp 58-60

other hand the 'morning dram', 'the worst of the day according to Professor Miller', was cut out and the situation ended whereby public houses opened early with glasses of whisky ready filled on the counter, to catch the going to work traffic.¹ There is little doubt that temperance statistics were right in recording a marked decrease in Sunday drunkenness. Respectable citizens could go more safely to church without fear of insult while the pious constables of the Glasgow police force had nothing to do but sit in the station and read their Bibles.² The physical features of public houses was also influenced by legislation. The policy of reducing the numbers of low rented spirit shops encouraged by the Royal Commission made necessary more accurate definitions of the standard of accommodation that would be acceptable to magistrates.³ An indication of how the more forward looking local authorities were thinking is given here by the recommendations of the Glasgow magistrates.⁴ These

1. Op.cit R.C.Licensing Laws (Scotland) Parl.Papers 1860 Vol. XXXII
2. Ibid Evidence of Captain Smart.
3. Scottish Review 1860 p 377
4. Public Houses Acts - Resolutions of the magistrates of Glasgow 1858.

should be regarded as almost utopian ideals but they are an indication of the pressures stemming from the licensing controversy.¹ It is one of the ironies of the 1850s that the first confrontation between the trade and the temperance movement should have encouraged better public houses in Scotland.

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1. NOTE: In the author's recollection, public houses in the Govan and Gorbals areas in the 1950s, did not possess all the amenities listed as desirable in the 1850s.

PUBLIC HOUSES ACTS.

RESOLUTIONS

OF THE

MAGISTRATES OF GLASGOW,

IN REGARD TO THE

Licensing of Public Houses.

WHEREAS, it is desirable that parties receiving certificates under the Public Houses Acts, should be of good character, and of a higher and more respectable class, and better qualified by a knowledge of the business than many of those who at present hold certificates; and also, that all licensed houses should be more commodious and better ventilated than many of the present premises, and should have conveniences and accommodations for the use and benefit of their customers.

The Magistrates of Glasgow have unanimously resolved to recommend, and they hereby recommend—

First. That no one be held to be properly qualified in terms of the Act, who, in addition to being of good character, has not some practical knowledge of the trade, or had some training qualifying him to take charge of and carry on such a business respectably.

Second. That no new premises be deemed suitable and proper to be licensed for the sale of exciseable liquors to be consumed on the premises, unless they have two apartments other than the shop, for the exclusive use of the business, each apartment of not less than one hundred and forty-four square feet of flooring, of suitable height, and provided with water closets and urinals, sufficiently ventilated and in good order and condition, and having wash hand basins with water, &c., all in proportion to the number of parties which the house is capable of accommodating; and no house or shop which is intended to be exclusively occupied for the sale of exciseable liquors to be consumed on the premises, and where no food or other refreshments are to be supplied to the public, shall be deemed suitable and proper to be licensed, if it have any back door or secret opening leading to or from any close, staircase, lane, or back thoroughfare.

Third. That the two preceding resolutions shall apply to all transfers of certificates.

Fourth. That on every application for a Certificate applicable to new premises, or for the transfer of any existing Certificate, there should be laid before the Court a Statement or Plan, shewing the number of Licensed Houses existing in the district; and such Certificate shall be granted or transferred only where it appears to be required.

Fifth. That certificates be granted only to parties intending *bona fide* themselves to act upon them; and in applications for transfers of licenses, if it shall appear that the original license was got merely or mainly for the purpose of being transferred, such applications be refused.

Sixth. That the police be instructed to see that these resolutions are complied with, and to report to each licensing Court, in the case of those who are applying for a renewal of their Certificates, all breaches thereof, all convictions of contravening the conditions of their Certificates, whether applicant's business has been conducted with regularity, or otherwise, and if they have been convicted of crimes or offences during the past year.

All persons at present holding certificates and desirous of renewing them, are strongly recommended to provide their premises with the conveniences and accommodations required for new premises.

SECTION III.

The Progress of Temperance Reform

1853-1900

SUMMARY

The major internal division in the 19th century temperance movement was between the advocates of moral suasion and legislative action as means of abolishing the drink evil. This section considers that division in the Scottish context, from the schism of the 1850s to the reconciliation of the opposing parties by the 1890s. An attempt is made to describe the distinctive features of the dispute in Scotland, to understand the motivations of the aggressive party, the prohibitionists, through the writings of two of their leading spokesmen and to give reasons why bitter differences had been largely forgotten by the end of the century.

Because of the Scottish Temperance League's support in the 1850s for licensing legislation the dispute in the Scottish temperance movement was not over whether legislative action should be advocated but what form it should take. The League's policy was flexible and was adapted in an attempt to accommodate the demand for permissive prohibition (local option). Even this proved insufficient to prevent schism which was formalised in 1858 by the foundation of a new national temperance organisation the Scottish Permissive Bill Association.

It is argued that underlying the division was the question of the social orientation of the movement, whether it should work within the existing political system for limited measures of control or should align itself with the working classes and seek a radical solution to the drink problem by means of the votes of a wider electorate. In addition to criticism from prohibitionists the Scottish Temperance League experienced an internal crisis in the early 1860s which is attributed to discontent among some leading members at its growing institutionalism. The League, which had enjoyed rapid expansion and political success in the 1850s entered a period of consolidation in the 1860s and the initiative in Scottish temperance affairs passed to its rival the Permissive Bill Association.

The thesis that the prohibitionists represented a continuation of the radical tradition of temperance reform is pursued in Chapter 8 through a survey of the writings of two of the leading prohibitionist spokesmen, David Lewis and John Kirk. Their view that drink was used as a means to exploit working people is illustrated from their writings and an attempt is made to picture the kind of society which they sought to create by temperance reform.

Prohibitionist political activity in Scotland did not get seriously under way until after the Second Reform Act, but from the late 1860s the temperance question became a regular issue at Parliamentary and local government elections. The political tactics of the prohibitionists are described and their effectiveness evaluated. Reliance on voluntary workers and the impossibility of ensuring single minded support for prohibition were the main limiting factors on political effectiveness. Nevertheless from the 1870s the temperance movement was well represented on Scottish town councils and was successful in persuading most Scottish M.Ps to support Sir Wilfred Lawson's Permissive Bill. At the local level success had the effect of eroding prohibitionist objections to licensing restriction and at national level disillusionment with slow progress towards prohibition, blamed on the English, led to attempts to promote a Scottish local option bill. These developments brought the movement together and by the 1890s it was united in support of a policy of maximum restriction through the licensing system and local option for Scotland.

CHAPTER 7

Prohibition Divides the Movement

1853 - 1863.

The victories of the 1850s and 60s were a source of much pride to the Scottish temperance reformers who campaigned for them. For the first time since 1830 they could look south with a sense of superiority over their English counterparts and even look the Americans squarely in the face. Success had been achieved by courses of action which were uncharacteristic of temperance reformers elsewhere. The S.T.L. demonstrated its pragmatism by adopting an anti-drink measure formulated by non-abstainers. To effectively defend it 'a common sense policy of alliance with moderate drinkers' was recognised to be essential.¹ This called for frequent liaison and co-operation with these allies and agreements on common strategy and objectives. Compromise solutions and the limitations imposed by political realities were accepted and justified as the best that could be obtained in the circumstances. Any assessment of the temperance movement which judges it to have been sectarian and politically inept must make an exception of the Scottish Temperance League.

1. Abstainers Journal Feb. 1856

Repeated justification of League policy were carried in its periodicals not only to convince Scottish abstainers of the wisdom of departure from moral suasion and teetotal splendid isolation but increasingly to reply to criticism from the recently formed United Kingdom Alliance. The Alliance was answered, although more courteously, with the same nationalistic argument that had been used against the English supporters of the licensed victuallers. Scottish temperance reformers, it was asserted, were best equipped to judge the temperance policy most suited to national needs, therefore 'the Temperance Movement in Scotland should be National and Independant'.^{1,2.} The League's practical approach to legislative control of the traffic was contrasted with the ambitious but vague schemes south of the border. In particular the choice which the Alliance in its early years seemed prepared to contemplate between free trade in drink and total prohibition was dismissed as inappropriate to Scottish circumstances. Public opinion, an old Chartist reminded the Alliance, was the most important constraint on temperance legislation. The English licensing law had been lost because of popular opposition to it. A Maine Law

' would just burst like a bubble in the hands of the people because they could not use it'.³

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1. S.T.L. Weekly Journal . Sept. 1 1860 provides a good example of this argument.
 2. S.T.L. circular To the Temperance Reformers of Scotland March 1858 in Misc. papers of Rev. Robert Forbes, Aberdeen P.L.
 3. S.T.L. Weekly Journal Feb. 21 1857 Speech by Robert Cranston.

As long as criticism of League policy came mainly from England there was little to worry about but prohibitionist rumblings were soon originating in Scotland. Attempts were made to forestall criticism and preserve the unity of the Scottish movement by adopting in 1857 the Alliance's new policy of permissive prohibition. In 1858 the Scottish Temperance League informed the friends of temperance in Scotland that its new comprehensive policy embraced moral suasion, licensing restriction and prohibition.¹ The three aims of this policy were portrayed as interdependant. Moral suasion, which had always been interpreted by the League in the outward looking sense of making propaganda, was regarded as essential to educate public opinion outside the ranks of the movement to the necessity for temperance legislation. Only when the social use of alcohol had been sufficiently discouraged, could any kind of anti-drink legislation, including permissive prohibition, hope to succeed in practice. The dangers of legislating against the deeply entrenched customs of a large minority were pointed out. Licensing legislation was admitted to have shortcomings, but was justified as the best available practical measure, which created important legislative precedents and gave, through Sunday closing, an installment of prohibition. The implications were that

1. S.T.L. Register 1859 p 3 Resolutions adopted at the annual meeting of the S.T.L. May 11 1858 .

permissive prohibition was a long term aim and certainly the League took the view in 1858 that the time was not ripe for prohibition and that for tactical reasons the fight to preserve the Forbes - Mackenzie Act took precedence.¹ Critics like J.L. Lang were still doubtful of the sincerity of the Leagues' commitment to permissive prohibition in 1860.² Once the 1860 Royal Commission had safeguarded licensing reform, however, the League originated a new policy which in effect applied the principle of direct local control to licensing restriction. This was the 'popular veto' included in a clause of the Licensing Laws Amendment Bill of 1862. The 'popular veto', which received the approval of the Free Church, was withdrawn by the promoters of the bill after debate in the House of Commons.³ It cannot be said therefore that the League was opposed to the principle of control over the liquor traffic by the votes of the electorate. All its

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1. Open letter from the Scottish Temperance League to the United Kingdom Alliance, 10th March 1858 in Misc. papers of Rev. Robert Forbes, Aberdeen P.L.
 2. S.T.L. Weekly Journal May 12 1860.
 3. Scottish Review 1862 Prospective Temperance Legislation - the Popular Veto or the Permissive Bill .

Note: The popular veto involved a similar system of local polls as permissive prohibition. Under the latter, voters were faced with a simple choice between the status quo and complete prohibition of sale. Under the former the object of the poll was to determine the number of licenses for the area. Permissive prohibition was also known as local option local veto and direct veto. These terms are used indiscriminately in the text.

arguments were in terms of political expediency, and the popular veto, it believed, was the most advanced temperance measure to have any hope of success in 1862. In retrospect the League's assessment of the strength of the temperance forces was realistic and some of its shrewd comments on the practical and political difficulties of implementing temperance legislation were quite prophetic.¹ Thus the Scottish Temperance League met the controversy within the movement with all the skills of advocacy and flexibility of response that won success in the country and Parliament for the licensing law campaign.

These were insufficient to prevent a split in the Scottish temperance movement which was formalised in 1858 with the formation of the Scottish Permissive Bill Association. There had been advocates of a Maine Law in Scotland since 1850 and a Scottish auxiliary of the United Kingdom Alliance had been formed in 1853. The Alliance was vulnerable to criticism, however, on the ground that its original aim of immediate and entire prohibition was hopelessly impractical, that it was an English body which did

1. Ibid

not understand the peculiarities of the Scottish situation and that it included non-teetotalers among its members. The Scottish Permissive Bill Association overcame all these objections. As its name suggests, it adopted the modified Alliance programme of 1857 for prohibition of the retail sale of alcohol by means of local plebiscites, it excluded non-teetotalers and it was a Scottish organisation independent of the United Kingdom Alliance. As with the formation of the Alliance in England, the creation of this new temperance organisation bitterly divided Scottish teetotalers. Antagonism at national level spread downwards into the grass roots as local societies divided over which rival organisation to affiliate to.¹ This was understandable in England where the differences between moral suasionists and prohibitionists were fairly clearcut, but in Scotland this was less so. Looking back over the space of forty years A.S. Cook remarked on the smallness of the gulf which had separated the antagonists in 1858.²

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1. A.B. Thomson An Olde Edinburgh Society - three quarters of
 a century of Social Work 1836-1911 Edinburgh 1912
 (history of the Edinburgh Total Abstinence Society)
 pp 33/34.
 2. A.S. Cook The Evolution of the Temperance Movement .
 Aberdeen 1901.

After all, both sides were determined on legislative action and were agreed on the fundamental question of the right and duty of the state to intervene in social matters. The major point at issue was licensing reform, the important plank in the League's platform which the Permissive Bill Association condemned as pernicious.¹

Why should this have been regarded as an issue so vital that it justified bringing civil war to the temperance movement? If it were simply a dispute over tactics or different assessments of political feasibility it is difficult to explain why the Scottish Temperance League's comprehensive platform failed to placate the Prohibitionists. After all, working within the League, an organisation which had several times modified its policy within a decade, they could hope to give greater priority to that arm of its policy. Personal animosities no doubt entered into the matter. James Mitchell, secretary of the Scottish Permissive Bill Association, had been one of the founders of the Scottish Temperance League but had not had an honoured place in it for many years. Religious sectarianism may have been a factor.

1. Address to the Electors and Ratepayers of Scotland by the Scottish Permissive Bill Association. Glasgow 1861
pp 6 - 9

The leadership of the League was said to be dominated by United Presbyterians while the most outspoken Prohibitionists were from the Evangelical Union.¹ The Glasgow-Edinburgh rivalry which dogged popular causes in Scotland had divided the temperance movement in 1839. Symbolically the Scottish Temperance League was established at Falkirk although it too quickly gravitated to Glasgow. However the secretary of the League, J.S. Marr, reputedly the architect of its political involvement, had made his reputation with the Edinburgh Total Abstinence Society while some of the most prestigious new recruits were Edinburgh based.² By the 1858 the League was much less a 'Glasgow' organisation than it had been in 1853 when Robert Kettle was president.³ None of these factors explain why the split at local society level was so general and bitter and displayed none of the regional loyalty that had been evident in 1839.

One might explain the refusal of Scottish prohibitionists to compromise even in the face of dividing and weakening the movement in terms of the stubborn inflexibility of non-conformists and the political naivety of lowly men inexperienced in the

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1. Rev. John Kirk and David Lewis. James Torrens, the leading Glasgow prohibitionist, belonged to the Free Church.
 2. Robert Stewart, an Edinburgh lawyer and James Miller, professor of surgery at Edinburgh University and Convenor of the Free Church Temperance Committee.
 3. Kettle was a well known Glasgow partisan.

political system.¹ The disputes over legislative policy conceal a more fundamental divergence over the sector of society with which the temperance movement should identify. In the halcyon days of the early 1840s and even in the doldrums later in the decade the rank and file of the movement were predominantly working men. But the League's strategy in the 1850s required it to operate within a political system which excluded many of its traditional supporters. To defend the licensing system and enforce it in the licensing courts required the support of men whose voice and votes counted with the M.Ps and magistrates. 'Moderate Drinking Christians' who had been regularly censored for aiding and abetting the drink traffic become a few years later the 'moral and religiously disposed sections of the community' whose support had to be won over. The League, of course, hoped to convince them of the advantages of teetotalism and there was some increase in the number of middle class teetotallers in the 1850s. The number of ministers who became members of the League confirms its growing respectability.² It would be unwise to exaggerate the extent of change in the social composition of the temperance movement in

1. For examples of this kind of argument see Brian Harrison
Drink and the Victorians
Op.cit Ch. 16.

2. Chapter 10. Table 10

the 1850s.¹ Teetotallers still believed that the social group most inclined to abstinence was the upper section of the working class.² However, if middle class converts were insufficient numerically to greatly alter the social composition of the movement, their influence could still be out of all proportion to their numbers in a body organised like the League. Above all they symbolised the direction in which the Scottish Temperance League now looked to increase its influence.

The Scottish Temperance League was behaving in almost exactly the way that Roger Livesey urged in the English movement.³ There were, however, risks in performing a U-turn on licensing legislation which involved the tacit repudiation of the League's former position, particularly when the decision was reached without effective consultation with local temperance societies. At the 1860 annual meeting of the League, J.L. Lang spelt out the danger of neglecting the views on the licensing question of

1. Chapter 11

2. S.T.L. Weekly Journal Dec. 8 1860

3. Op.cit Brian Harrison Drink and the Victorians pp 214/218

the movement's traditional supporters. It was 'the working men and working women' who were 'the backbone and stay of the temperance movement' who disapproved of the League's course of action.¹

The Prohibitionist attack led by Professor John Kirk made the most of incipient class tension in the League. Its leaders, he alleged, had abandoned a position of principle to throw in their lot with men who had no interest in the overthrow of the drink traffic but whose aims were limited to removing its worst abuses and thereby to make the public house respectable.

'It is impossible for anyone to know the class to which the magistracy belong or to know the state of that portion of men to whom they owe their elevation to the bench and yet rationally to conclude that as a whole they are prepared effectively to restrict the liquor traffic.' 2

1. S.T.L. Weekly Journal May 12 1860

2. Ibid Dec. 15 1860

The division in the Scottish Temperance movement over legislative policy was only the outward manifestation of a more fundamental disagreement about its social orientation and indeed about the whole purpose of the Temperance movement. Teetotalists in the early 1840s had not regarded drunkenness merely as a social problem which could be contained by appropriate legal and administrative measures. The temperance reformation as they called it was expected to hasten a more general transformation of society, hence the tendency to integrate temperance and political reform. Tinkering measures like licensing reform were irrelevant as well as unjust. The Rev. Alexander Hannay, reiterating the classic teetotal arguments against legislative action in 1851, condemned licensing reform because it attacked only the public house and therefore the drunkenness of the working class and not that of the 'middle and higher orders'. Such unfair coercion was an affront to human dignity and was unfavourably compared with the approach of the total abstinence movement.

'Its agents approach the drunkard as a man; they ply his mind with kindly persuasions; they make him feel the warmth of a brothers hand..... when by and by when a drunkard is made sober, he is sober from taste and conviction and not from constraint. His is the sobriety of a man and not the correctness of a machine'. 1

Licensing laws were instruments of social control not social reform and had to be justified by a more paternalistic philosophy.

'It is all very well to speak of relying solely for success on enlightening the judgement - in the case of a large proportion of the community, argument has but a slender influence.....we feel that more than moral means is required. We not only warn children of danger we keep them out of the way of it'. 1

It was the latter viewpoint, always implicit in the licensing reform campaign and the Scottish Association for the Suppression of Drunkenness, that was tacitly accepted in the Scottish Temperance League in the 1850s. While identifying the League with 'the class to which the magistracy belong' and seeking to attract the middle classes into its ranks, the League was limiting its aims to finding practical solutions to immediate problems.

1. Scottish Temperance Review August 1853

The supporters of the Permissive Bill also rejected the approach to temperance reform advocated by Rev. Hannay but they agreed with his assessment of licensing laws, conceived and administered by the ruling classes and directed at the drinking habits of working men. The Permissive Bill embodied a system of direct control of the sale of alcohol by means of local plebiscites; ending the exclusive jurisdiction of the magistrates. Working men, the principal victims of the drink traffic, who could not be rescued from its clutches individually by persuasion, would be able to save themselves collectively by the exercise of their votes. There could be no question under this legislative measure of their being regarded like children in need of protection. Professor Kirk appreciated, of course, that Permissive Prohibition required an extension of the suffrage before its aims could be realised.

'Some five millions of grown men in this country have "no vote" but these are the men who are prepared to remove the vile liquor trade. They have not yet the power to do so, we are agitating to acquire this power for them. It is their indisputable right'. 1

The Scottish Permissive Bill Association therefore rejected licensing paternalism and a compromising approach which might win the support of the middle classes. It preferred to identify with the interests and ideals of working class teetotallers and align itself with the forces of political radicalism.

There is a necessary postscript to this narrative of the divisions within the movement. In 1863 at the climax of its victory the S.T.L. experienced an internal upheaval, a minor affair in its consequences compared with the split in the movement of a few years earlier, but still of some significance in marking a stage of its development.

Throughout the 1850s the S.T.L. prospered as no previous temperance organisation had done in Scotland. Its individual membership and the number of affiliated societies increased. Its income rose. The publishing activities so essential to its propaganda role took on quite a new dimension. These developments are summarised in the accompanying table. ¹

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1. Table 6 The Growth of the Scottish Temperance League 1849 - 63.

TABLE 6. THE GROWTH OF THE SCOTTISH TEMPERANCE LEAGUE 1849 - 63.

Source: S.T.L. Register.

	Total Membership.	Affiliated Societies.	Total Income	Total Assets.	Expenditure Salaries and Expenses. Agents/Editors/Admin staff.	Publication Acc.	No. of full time agents.
1849	1166	38	£1238	-	-	-	-
1850	1888	33	£1199	-	-	-	-
1851	2446	145	£1505	£376	£391	£889	-
1852	2939	212	£1723	£398	£454	£1051	-
1853	3458	251	£1570	£349	£631	£711	5
1854	4047	269	£1850	£498	£416	£993	-
1855	4811	309	£3087	£1061	£711	£1709	-
1856	5261	333	£5610	£1729	£965	£2486	8
1857	6373	364	£4355	£1857	£928	£1952	9
1858	6756	364	£6269	£2556	£1154	£3745	12
1859	7267	377	£7946	£2948	£932	£4228	11
1860	7646	390	£8014	£3386	£1011	£3601	11
1861	7688	395	-	-	-	-	-
1862	7990	413	£7445	£3545	£989	£4251	9
1863	7944	418	£7535	£4140	£1147	£3916	9

Of particular interest is the growth of expenditure on salaries of agents, editors and administrative staff, rising from £391 in 1851 to £1724 in 1863. This marked the growing professionalism of temperance advocacy. A team of full time agents were retained by the League supplemented by temporary recruits and big names like F.R. Lees, Clara Lucas Balfour and John B. Gough. On the publications side the single monthly paper produced by voluntary labour which the League began in 1845 had become one weekly, one monthly and one quarterly by 1857. Besides these there was an ever increasing range of propaganda material from two page tracts to full length novels. A full-time editorial staff was required including men with experience of journalism.¹

Accompanying expansion was a greater tendency towards specialisation, of allocating particular agents and publications to specific audiences. These developments meant, in financial terms, an increase in regular commitments which had to be matched therefore in regular income. The appointment of a full-time collector indicated that fund raising also had become professionalised.²

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1. David Macrae, on the editorial board of the S.T.L. Weekly Journal, wrote for the Glasgow Herald .
 2. William Melvin was appointed at a salary of salary of £150 plus a percentage of new subscriptions.

The movement had come a long way from the time when success was gauged by the moral impression of

'an earnest address to a few simple persons at a teetotal meeting or the circulation of a four page tract'. 1

Now it was measured in millions of pages of publications and critics alleged 'the efficiency or non-efficiency of the Agents is tested by the number of half crowns they obtain'.² The personal satisfaction of dedicated volunteers had given way to the quantitative criteria of success of professional managers.

The S.T.L. was reaching a familiar phase in the developments of successful organisations. Although the bureaucracy remained small, the increase in the range and complexity of operations tended to leave more powers of decision making with the permanent staff, especially the secretary. In a movement which always proclaimed the importance of active

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1. Scottish Temperance Journal April 1845
 2. William Logan Address respecting the Scottish Temperance League and reply to the directors pamphlet . Glasgow 1863 p 16

participation by members over mere money donations such developments were bound to cause resentment, exacerbated by the rise of men more suited to the newer style of the League who tended to displace old and tried veterans of the moral suasion era.¹ A reaction to institutionalisation was sparked off in 1863 in which the salaried officials were bitterly criticised by a number of respected older men.² In their eyes the League was in danger of becoming absorbed in the means of reform and losing sight of the original objectives of the temperance movement.

'The care of a huge business left little room and little disposition to consider the purely moral aspects of the League's work. It seemed to be of less importance that the Temperance cause should prosper throughout Scotland than that an extensive Publishing concern should flourish at 108 Hope Street.'³

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1. e.g. Robert Stewart a director the S.T.L. by 1858 who joined the movement from the S.A.S.D. in 1854.
 2. William Logan, A.H. McLean and William Smeal. Logan and McLean were among the 9 men who initiated the foundation of the S.T.L. in 1844.
 3. Logan Op.cit pp 14/15.

No doubt this reaction was as inevitable as the development it deplored, but it led to the resignation of the secretary J.S. Marr. He had been the leading advocate of the League's political involvements throughout the 1850s. His going, at a time when most of his legislative objectives had been achieved, marked the end of a period of rapid development and new ventures and the beginning of a period of consolidation. The new rival of the League, the Scottish Permissive Bill Association still in the process of building up its strength and organisation, began to take over the initiative in Scottish temperance affairs.

CHAPTER 8

Ideas and Beliefs of the Scottish Prohibitionists.

The split in the Scottish temperance ranks in the late 1850s resembles that which occurred in the English movement in the 1830s. There the ostensible issue in the dispute had been over the policy of the movement, whether the long pledge or the short should be expected of temperance men. This seemingly obscure doctrinal issue had immense social significance for the future of the movement. The triumph of the long pledge ensured that its social orientation was towards the working class. Similarly the prohibition question in Scotland was as much about the direction the movement should look for adherents and allies as it was about practical means of controlling drink consumption. It cannot be said however that the Scottish teetotallers divided neatly on lines of social class. The Scottish Temperance League may have relinquished to some extent the initiative in Scottish temperance affairs after 1863 but it did not quickly become a middle class rump like the British and Foreign Temperance Society. Within local bodies like the Hawick Total Abstinence Society the protagonists on both sides were working men. ¹

1. Minute Book No. 2 of the Hawick Total Abstinence Society
Hawick P.L. entries May 18 1857 to Oct. 3 1859.

Compared with the directors of the League the leading spokesmen of the Permissive Bill Association were of lower social status, but the League had nobody to compare with Sir John Stuart Forbes who supported the prohibitionist cause in Aberdeenshire. ¹

The loyalties of known ex-Chartists does not clarify where radical sympathies lay. During the 1850s the League employed Malcolm McFarlane and Robert Lowery as full time agents and retained the support of Robert Cranston, John Adair and Thomas Lamb, John Frazer, Gabriel Wallace and J.H. Waterston, all became prominent Permissive Bill Association members. As Professor Kirk stated, extension of the franchise was necessary to the success of permissive prohibition and while the first manifesto of the Permissive Bill Association made no reference to this the Reform Bill was welcomed as promising to add to prohibitionist electoral strength.^{2,3.} The argument that prohibitionists continued the 'radical temperance' traditions of the early 1840s needs further illustration, however, particularly as prohibition by the state seems to be the antithesis of abstinence by rational persuasion. What then was the nature of

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1. Report of Proceedings of a Public Meeting held in the Music Hall, Aberdeen on 23rd Jan. 1863 to discuss the question of the Suppression of the Liquor Traffif by the Voice of the People. Aberdeen 1863.

Of the five leading S.P.B.A. men in the first years of the organisation, James Mitchell was a former excise man turned professional temperance advocate. John Paton described himself as a working man. James Torrens was a housepainter, David Lewis a shoemaker, Rev. John Kirk was an ex-blacksmith turned dissenting minister.

2. Address to the Electors and Ratepayers of Scotland by the Scottish Permissive Bill Association. Glasgow n.d C 1860
3. Social Reformer. May 1 1866

prohibitionist radicalism and how can the break with moral suasion be reconciled with this thesis of continuity?

These are difficult questions to answer, given the sources normally available on temperance political activities in Scotland. The temperance press always observed the fiction that the movement was non-political and non-sectarian and was remarkably coy about the political activities of its members unless they had a direct bearing on the temperance question. Support for the movement came mainly from dissenters (including the Free Church) and nearly all temperance men whose political allegiance is known were liberals.¹ This may be less significant in Scotland where a majority of the religious community were outside the Established Church and the Liberal party dominated the political scene. Neither of these categories were particularly socially cohesive or implied a uniformity of views. By its very nature as a movement setting itself against accepted social custom the temperance movement tended to attract men of strong character and decided views if not downright eccentricity.²

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1. John Hope W.S. was a notable exception being Church of Scotland and Conservative. . Hay Macdowall Grant of Arndilly, President of Aberdeen Permissive Bill Association, stood as a conservative candidate for Banffshire in 1852. (Social Reformer May 7, 1870)
John Adair was President of Edinburgh Catholic Total Abstinence Society (Social Reformer June 1875).
 2. Notable eccentrics were John Hope and James and Edwin Scrymgeour of Dundee.

Many of them, as the temperance press boasted in an oblique way, were far from being 'men of one idea' and were engaged in a wide variety of social reforms. While there were limits to the movement's universality therefore, it nevertheless encompassed a considerable diversity of views on social political and religious questions. For example, one well known teetotaler, J. L. Lang, led opposition to the Glasgow City Improvement Act while another, William Collins II, was instrumental in implementing it. Bailie David Lewis's scheme for an improved water supply for working class areas of Edinburgh was bitterly opposed by Thomas Knox, despite his reputation for enlightened views on working class housing problems. The Social Reformer, official organ of the Scottish Permissive Bill Association, contained an article expressing views unfavourable to trade unions at a time when one of the Associations leading members, Bailie Lewis, was strongly advocating their legal recognition. Ideally one would wish to resolve or explain all such apparent contradictions but that would require examination of the whole range of activities of temperance reformers making use of a multitude of sources other than the publications of the movement. Such an approach is beyond the scope of this study.

The Scottish temperance movement produced no great theorists or political philosophers to compare with F.R. Lees or T.H. Green. Few of its most influential leaders wrote more than the occasional tract and since the authorship of articles in temperance periodicals is not known, the attribution of particular viewpoints is seldom possible. Two of the early leaders of the Scottish Permissive Bill Association are exceptions to this rule. Rev. Professor John Kirk wrote two books and the first of these, *Social Politics*, is a good statement of his political views.¹ David Lewis was by far the most prolific author on the temperance question in Scotland, and through his editorship of the 'Reformer', the organ of Edinburgh Trades Council, his views on general political and social questions in the 1860s and 70s are readily identifiable. These sources therefore provide us with some indication of the wider standpoint of prohibition in Scotland.

Bailie Lewis and Professor Kirk (to give them the titles of which they were proud) were living examples of a 19th century stereotype. They were both men of humble origins who made their way in the world by classic routes of upward progress, one via the

1. He was also the subject of a good biography by his daughter, Helen Kirk. *Memoirs of John Kirk* D.D. Edinburgh 1888.

ministry of a new dissenting sect, the other as pioneer of an important commercial innovation. Both men remained proud of their origins and their association with manual work. The Rev. Professor Kirk, ex-blacksmith, always liked to show his prowess at the anvil. Bailie Lewis, frequently abused by the 'Scotsman' as an upstart bookmaker or a consecrated cobbler,

'instead of feeling degraded, rather felt honoured by being pointed out as a working man engaged in an honourable profession'. 1

The conflict between Establishment and Dissent complicated the social and political battle lines of the 19th century. Men who achieved worldly success but who were members of dissenting congregations often continued to identify themselves with groups lower in the social scale which predominated in the sect. Lewis and Kirk were, in the Scottish context, no ordinary dissenters. Most of the Scottish dissenting sects were schismatic groups within the national presbyterian tradition usually believing themselves to be the true repositories of the nation's calvinistic heritage. Lewis and Kirk belonged to the Evangelical Union,

1. The Reformer No. 7 1868.

Edinburgh.

a heretical sect founded on an interpretation of theology which attacked a central pillar of the calvinistic creed. It was no coincidence that the doctrine that salvation through Christ was possible for all sinners, repudiating the calvinist idea of the salvation of the elect, should have made its appearance at a time of social and political upheaval.¹

'Untaxed bread for all, liberty for all,
a suffrage for all - these had been
popular political cries. Not less is a
saviour for all'. 2

Morisonianism, as the new creed was named after its founder James Morison was the theological counterpart of Chartism and the sect that he began had particular attractions for religiously inclined working men who were alienated by the 'inequalities in the national creed'.

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1. C.E. Kirsch The Theology of James Morison
 unpublished Ph.D. Thesis. Edinburgh (New College)
 1939 Ch. 4.
 2. F. Ferguson History of the Evangelical Union
 Glasgow 1876 p 105

The social and political convictions of Lewis and Kirk were not separable from their religious beliefs. Lewis 'believed in a practical and aggressive type (of Christianity) which asserts itself in transforming the environments of the helpless and the outcast' .¹

Professor Kirk's religious beliefs were 'of the bracing type which allowed the Gospel to shine on politics'.²

In both instances religious conviction appears to have predated radical involvements. Kirk refused to support Chartism and became a (somewhat critical) supporter of the Anti-Corn Law League.³

The first issue of the 'Reformer' described Lewis as a well known advocate of 'Liberal measures and the rights of the working classes for the last twenty years'.⁴

His first known experience as an activist was as a member of the Edinburgh Total Abstinence Society .⁵

Since members of the Evangelical Union were encouraged to support total abstinence it is possible that religious

1. Op.cit D.Lewis The Drink Traffic in the 19th Century p 89

2. Op.cit Helen Kirk Memoir of John Kirk D.D. p 403.

3. Ibid p 187

4. The Reformer (Edinburgh) Aug. 15 1868

5. The Scotsman April 14 1909 obituary.

commitment began a process by which Lewis and Kirk were radicalised through their temperance activities. It is certainly the case that Morisonianism brought Lewis and Kirk into contact with Sir Wilfred Lawson, the elder, father of the Parliamentary spokesman of the Alliance and promoter of the Permissive Bill. Lawson was interested in Morison's theological ideas and for a time subsidised the Evangelical Union periodical, the 'Christian News', which Kirk edited and used to disseminate the prohibitionist viewpoint in Scotland.¹ When Lewis and Kirk had their goods sold at the market cross in Edinburgh for refusing to pay the annuity tax whose proceeds went to maintain the Established Church in the city, Lawson wrote a poem to commemorate the occasion.² It was as an opponent of this tax that Lewis was first elected to Edinburgh town council in 1863 and he was largely instrumental in obtaining its repeal. Lewis and Kirk represent a familiar enough phenomenon in the 19th century, the alliance of militant dissent with political radicalism. Their religious affiliation helps to explain a continuing association with the interests of working men and the

1. Op.cit Helen Kirk Memoirs of John Kirk D.D. p 200

2. Ibid pp 404/405

channelling of their reforming energies through the temperance cause. Even after the Second Reform Act men like these, 'men who had been working men' were still needed to articulate the grievances and aspirations of the working class whose members faced formidable constitutional, customary and merely practical obstacles to representing their own interests. At a time when Edinburgh was still under patrician rule they were Tribunes of the People.

The conventional bourgeois picture of society in 19th century Scotland did not deny the existence of social classes, but it did suggest that there were no inevitable conflicts of interest between them and that there were few barriers to upward social progress that could not be surmounted by diligent effort. If the working class suffered it was largely because of their own inadequacies and bad habits, intemperance and wasteful expenditure prominent among them, for which the remedies were in the hands of every responsible individual. Advice, not to speak of the personal example of the middle classes, was all around, and the means of improvement, literary, educational and institutional, were accessible as never before. Individual responsibility was the 'fundamental principle in social economy' and the working man, as much as anybody else was master of his fate.¹

Compared with this the most striking feature of the viewpoint being considered here, is the extent to which working men were represented as members of an oppressed class, struggling against their exploiters and not at all on equal terms with their

1. William Chambers Lectures on the Improvement of the
 Working Classes Edinburgh nd. C 1855
provides a good summary of the middle class viewpoint from one
of its chief exponents in Scotland.

social superiors in the battle of life. Lewis and Kirk regarded alcohol as the chief agent of class oppression. 'The Liquor and Tobacco traffic' wrote Kirk were the 'grand means' by which the wages of the poor were transferred to the pockets of the rich, this accounting for the concentration of wealth in a few hands.¹ By a grand irony, the land stolen from the peasants grew the grain which, turned into drink, tempted the urban working class to destruction.² These were no mere unfortunate by-products of the sale and consumption of alcohol. Drink was used deliberately by the ruling classes to relieve working men of their savings and independence.³ The evidence used in support of these assertions included the estimates of Professor Leone Levi and Dudley Baxter of the proportion of the national drink bill attributable to working class expenditure and the statistics produced by G.R. Porter, William Hoyle and others which showed that a large proportion of government revenue was derived from drink taxes. These were used to demonstrate the vested interest of government and explain the failure of Parliament

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1. John Kirk DD Social Politics London 1870 p 81
 2. Ibid p 80
 3. David Lewis The Temperance situation at the close of the 19th century Edinburgh 1901 pp 12-13

to take effective action against the drink traffic.¹ Personal experience and observation supplied further evidence of the extent of this conspiracy. As a licensing magistrate, Lewis knew the operation of the licensing system intimately. He pointed out how public houses were deliberately concentrated in working class areas and carefully excluded from middle class districts.² Granting a licence to a property, he estimated, increased its value by 30 to 50 per cent.³ In such ways the middle classes who filled the magistrates' benches manipulated the licensing system to the advantage of their own class and against the interests of the working class.

It followed that, if drink was an instrument of class oppression, the working man who got drunk was not an irresponsible wastrel but a helpless victim of exploitation. The mining community of Bellshill population 2,760, serviced by 35 public houses were, believed Lewis 'more sinned against than sinning'

'These toiling and struggling workmen and their families are simply being legally despoiled of their hard earned wages by overwhelming temptation'.⁴

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1. Revenue from drink taxes between 1819 and 1900 accounted for an average of 30 - 40 per cent of total revenue. G.B.Wilson Op.cit p 197. For a discussion of the major sources see G.B.Wilson Chs. 18 and 21.
 2. Op.cit David Lewis The Drink Traffic in the 19th century p 86
 3. David Lewis Britain's Social State Glasgow 1872 p 220
 4. Op.cit David Lewis The Drink Traffic in the 19th century, its Growth and Influence London 1885 p 13

In Professor Kirk's view the 'mistake that is made in blaming the lower classes for their recklessness is so great and so cruel' that he felt justified in devoting a whole chapter of Social Politics to refuting it, concluding that

'It is a tremendous affair to bring temptation to bear on men. Blessed is he that endureth it; but what shall be said of him who organises it, licenses it by law and when its victims are perishing plumes himself on his "providence" and speaks of the "improvidence" of those led astray'. 1

Lewis and Kirk therefore took the conventional assumptions of the middle classes about working class inadequacies and middle class virtues and stood them on their head.

1. Op. cit John Kirk D.D. Social Politics Ch XXIV

Conspiracy theories were common enough in 19th century radical politics and there are broad similarities between these ideas and views first encountered in the early period of teetotal radicalism.¹ A belief that the people were exploited and rendered passive by the sale of drink had been the assumption behind the Chartist plan to undermine the oppressive system of government by universal abstinence. The early teetotallers had argued that responsibility for drink and its attendant evils lay with the socially influential. Prohibitionists placed more emphasis on legal and administrative provisions for the sale of drink. In both periods the desire of radical teetotallers to raise the political consciousness of working people in the fight for political rights led them to the conclusion that alcohol was truly the opiate of the masses. The continuity of ideas between the early teetotallers and the prohibitionists helps to explain why both rejected licensing restriction. The main problem, however, of reconciling their philosophies is the apparent gulf between individual abstinence through rational conviction and prohibition secured by Act of Parliament. The difference was essentially one of means. Both assumed that

1. Chapter 5.

the widespread rejection of alcohol would release the energies of the people and make them more self-reliant and both embodied a deep suspicion of government. By demanding legislation, prohibitionists were in no way abandoning the commitment to self help for a permanent Government agency of control over the liquor traffic. They agreed with Ernest Jones that 'the secret of good legislation is as little legislation as is consistent with general safety', that the main task of reformers was to unmake old repressive legislation and to create a framework of laws within which men could become self sufficient and independent by their own efforts.¹ It sought to remove from the jurisdiction of the rulers the question of where and whether alcohol was to be sold and leave it to a decision of the electorate. Working men, suitably enfranchised would then be able to defend themselves against exploitation by their votes. Anything further from the Fabian predeliction for the rule of the experts or the administrative procedures of the modern state is difficult to imagine. Prohibitionists made much of putting their trust in the people. The Fabian Society with no such illusions primly dismissed the Permissive Bill

1. The Reformer (Edinburgh) Nov. 21 1868

'Legislation on the principle of asking the blind to lead the blind is not up to the standard of modern political science'. 1

It may be true, as Brian Harrison argues, that the Permissive Bill marked an important step in the use of the legislative powers of the state for social and moral reform and involved a concept of Government which placed the good of society above the rights of individuals.² Certainly there were few more resolute attacks on the principle of the inviolability of the rights of private property in the 19th century than the attempt to deprive publicans of the right to trade without compensation. Prohibitionists expected, however, that once drink was voted out, the poverty and crime which it fostered would decline and the need for state officials and institutions would diminish. Their intention was not to increase the interventionist role of government but to reduce the need for its agencies. The Permissive Bill did not mark a step towards the modern administrative state so much as it enshrined the hope that the state would wither away a good deal.

1. Fabian Tract No. 86 Municipal Drink Traffic 5th Ed.
London 1907 p 5.

2. Op.cit Brian Harrison Drink and the Victorians Ch. 9

The major problem for 19th century movements of reform apart from the danger of losing momentum was the loss of a sense of direction. The co-operative movement is the classic example of the means of social reform becoming the end but the Scottish Temperance League in the 1850s exhibited a similar tendency. Permissive prohibition in the eyes of men like Lewis and Kirk was a pre-requisite for more general social change. Like other more famous revolutionaries they omitted to provide an exact blueprint of the post-prohibition society but their writings and political activities give a glimpse of the topography of the promised land. Both men especially deplored the erosion of independence. Kirk traced this to the process of industrialisation. His analysis of its social consequences, while lacking academic nicety and depending overmuch on the experience of the Scottish Highlands, was firmly in the pessimistic tradition given academic respectability by the Hammonds.¹ The peasantry were driven from the land into the cities to become a class dependant on wages or charity for subsistence, victims of the ravages of disease and the greed of rapacious landlords.

1. J.L. and B. Hammond The Rise of Modern Industry London 1925

Once their sense of independence and self respect was sapped by the urban environment they were open to the grand exploitation of the drink traffic. Alcohol completed the process by which a sturdy peasantry were transformed into an industrial proleteriat.¹ The most entertaining and original portrayal of the social relations and values which prohibitionists wished to strengthen was given by another pioneer leader of the Scottish Permissive Bill Association, John Paton of Barrhead.² He claimed that Robert Burns, the national bard, was a pioneer temperance reformer. Given the poet's known fondness for drink this might seem difficult to justify. Paton however selected Burns' works which eloquently stated the social ideals of temperance reformers. The 'Cottars Saturday Night' illustrated the same family relationships, ethical values and simple piety which were the subject of a hundred temperance tracts. 'The Twa Dugs' showed the possibility of political and moral independence for the poor without the need for economic equality. 'A Man's a Man' crystalised the feelings of prohibitionists exactly.

'The man o' independent mind
Is King o' men for a' that'.

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1. Op.cit John Kirk D.D. Social Politics
 2. John Paton Robert Burns, the National Bard and Temperance Reformer of his Age Manchester 1887.

The problem for radicals was how to recreate a society of independent men when the prevailing tendencies were in the opposite direction. Kirk like many other better known figures favoured a return to the land, but the chief hope of breaking the spiral of dependence and degradation was vested in permissive prohibition. Once the drink traffic had been swept away a self reliant, non-alienated population would emerge able to participate actively in the democratic process of a highly devolved system of government.

With the hindsight of history it is easy to dismiss these ideals as utopian. The whole edifice of the sober new Jerusalem rested on a foundation of assumptions which now seem highly questionable. For instance, it was never adequately explained how working men would be prepared to abolish by political action the use of a commodity which many were reluctant to relinquish socially. Nor was the problem seriously examined of how temperance social ideals were to be made relevant to the population of the industrial areas of Scotland. Edinburgh, where Lewis and Kirk had nearly all their experience of temperance affairs and radical politics, had a social structure very different from that of, say, Airdrie and Coatbridge and this had a profound influence on their perception of the political situation.

The working class of Edinburgh had an unusually large proportion of skilled craftsmen and a relatively small proportion of workers in heavy industry.¹ These labour aristocrats of Edinburgh had a close cultural affinity with the small businessmen and shopkeepers in the city.² Moral force Chartism had flourished in this environment and the temperance movement received much of its support from this section of society. The kind of society which prohibitionists wished to construct reflected the attitudes, values and political circumstances of this group and this was expressed in a radicalism which was at heart hostile to industrialisation.

In the 1860s and 70s the political dominance of the middle classes in Edinburgh began to be challenged. David Lewis, an artisan who had become a successful shopkeeper, was well fitted to be the spokesman of radical working men in Edinburgh and in 1869 he became the editor of the 'Reformer', a newspaper sponsored by the trades council. Conflicts of interest between social classes were just as apparent in local politics as in great national issues like franchise reform, or legal recognition for trade unions for which the 'Reformer' campaigned.

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1. Op.cit R.Q. Gray Class structure and class formation of skilled workers in Edinburgh p 57/58
 2. Ibid p 182

Edinburgh's water supply was the subject of a bitter dispute between the working classes who were poorly supplied with water from wells and standpipes and the middle classes whose areas of the city were adequately supplied and who wished to minimise expenditure.^{1,2.} Reform of the Poor Law was a more complex issue but one of Lewis's main objectives was a more equitable share of the burden of poor rates and an end to the situation whereby 'the great bulk of the taxation falls upon those less able to bear it while the more able escape'.³ The division in the temperance movement must be seen in the context of this wider social conflict. The licensing reform question posed a problem for temperance men, familiar in movements of social and political reform - whether to reach accommodation with the established order to obtain limited but tangible gains or to continue a policy of confrontation. Those in the leadership of the movement whose conception of its aims was least political and who were closest in sympathy and outlook to the middle classes tended to favour the former course. Those like Lewis and Kirk who saw temperance reform ultimately as a means to democratise society and who were closely in touch with the attitudes and aspirations of respectable working men tended towards the latter.

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1. James Colston Edinburgh and District Water Supply Edinburgh 1890
Ch XVIII
 2. David Lewis Edinburgh Water Supply - a sketch of its history
past and present Edinburgh 1908 Ch. X
 3. Select Committee on the Poor Laws of Scotland.
Parl. Papers 1870 Vol XI Q 4989
Lewis opinions summarised by the chairman.

The question of the acceptability of legislation to working class consumers of alcohol was recognised to be an important constraint on anti-drink legislation in England. In Scotland where there is no evidence of working class hostility to temperance legislation in the style of the Hyde Park riots, it is perhaps more important to consider the extent to which the range of anti-drink measures were limited by the need for acceptability to supporters of temperance reform. Licensing legislation was not the only approach rejected as inequalitarian. There was no pressure from the Temperance movement for the overall reduction of alcohol consumption by heavy taxation, although Sir. A. Alison, William Collins and William Collins II all expressed approval for it. Scotsmen interested in the drink question were aware of the possibilities, therefore, and the effect of duty increases in the 1850s showed that considerably heavier drink taxes were now possible without a reversion to illicit distilling. Such a policy was not attractive to those who regarded the high price of whisky in relation to its cost of production as evidence of the extent of exploitation of working class consumers by the Government and the trade. Lewis calculated the 'share of interest in liquor sold' as 58 per cent to Government, 14½ per cent to the distiller, 24½ per cent to the publican and only 3 per cent to the consumer.¹ Kirk

1. Op.cit David Lewis The Drink Traffic in the 19th Century p 56

thought it outrageous that poor men were charged 6d. per gill for a commodity that cost 1/10d to 2/6d per gallon to manufacture.¹ Higher drink taxes might reduce the amount of whisky drunk but it would increase the rate of exploitation and make heavier the burden of the victims of the drink traffic and their helpless families. In any case it was not conceivable that an aristocratic establishment and a class elected Parliament could put an augmented income from the excise to any good purpose. The examples of licensing legislation and drink taxation serve to remind us that executive action on questions of social reform were unattractive to an important section of society as long as the absence of a formally democratic political system made the motives and actions of the executive suspect.

Other explanations have to be sought for the opposition of temperance men to the last of the great 19th century schemes for controlling the use of alcohol, the idea of disinterested management. The large number of independent public houses in Scotland ensured that the retailing of alcohol was a competitive business and it was assumed, reasonably enough, that publicans sought to maximise their profits, even when their customers were clearly not in a fit state to exercise rational choice. Drunkenness, it was argued,

would be reduced if the element of competition was reduced and the capitalist owner replaced by sellers who were more concerned about the social repercussions of selling alcohol and not with maximising sales. Scandinavia produced the first practical schemes of this kind, and the idea came to Scotland under the name of the Gothenberg system. Gothenbergs, or goths as they were known, while not numerous overall, were quite common in Fife mining communities by the end of the 19th century. The system usually operated in Fife was to raise capital from a group of shareholders who took no part in the day to day running of the concern and were paid a fixed rate of interest.¹ The Gothenberg public house, anticipating the managerial revolution and the soulful corporation, was run by a salaried manager who was expected to feel responsible for the state of his customers and the good reputation of the house. Profits over and above those required to cover running expenses and the fixed dividend to shareholders were distributed to the local community, usually to improve sports and recreational facilities. The Gothenberg system in Norway and Sweden really depended for its success on the ability of municipalities to confer a licensed monopoly on a

1. For first hand descriptions of the Gothenberg system in Scotland see K. Durland Among the Fife Miners Op.cit Ch VII and R.C.Licensing Laws (Scotland) Parl. Papers 1899 Vol XXXV Op.cit. Evidence of Mr. Carlow, managing Director, Fife Coal Co.

public house company which ran all the pubs in the town. In Fife, Gothenbergs were established singly and operated in competition with conventional public houses which led Durland to doubt their effectiveness.

'For myself I do not see how any public house run in competition with a half dozen or more ordinary public houses, however well it may be managed, can diminish drinking' 1

The Gothenberg system proper was never operated in Scotland, therefore, although there were advocates of a thorough municipalisation of the sale of drink either on Scandinavian lines or by direct ownership of public houses by municipalities. Aberdeen and Dundee town councils seriously considered a variation of the Gothenberg system in the 1890s.² The Scottish Threefold Option Alliance included it as one of their trinity of temperance reforms, along with local option and licensing restriction.³

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1. Op.cit K. Durland Among the Fife Miners p 173.
 2. Op.cit Fabian Tract No. 86 Municipal Drink Traffic p 7
 3. Scottish Threefold Option Alliance Handbook of Legislative Temperance Reform Glasgow 1897.

Complete municipal ownership of public houses was advocated by Joseph Chamberlain in 1877 and by the end of the century had been adopted as their most favoured anti-drink measure by the Fabian Society. Scottish socialists who were closer to the grass roots than the Fabians did not follow them in condemning local veto but generally followed Keir Hardie in supporting both local veto and municipalisation.¹

Disinterested management again shows the tendency of the drink problem to generate attitudes and solutions which were at least implicitly critical of capitalism's lack of concern for the social repercussions of a competitive system. It should not be assumed that the temperance movement's opposition to municipal involvement in the sale of drink was the result of doctrinaire free enterprise beliefs and hostility to public enterprise. The most vocal opponents of municipalisation, David Lewis in the 1870s and the Rev. James Barr in the 1900s, were among the most radical temperance men in their respective generations, Lewis being a pioneer of municipal enterprise and Barr a socialist who desired

1. Socialist Leader Jan. 5 1906

a great extensions of municipalisation and rationalisation.^{1,2.}
If drink was indeed the opiate of the masses as temperance radicals and Scottish socialists agreed, would municipalisation root it out? It did not seem to Lewis that the well appointed bars of Gothenberg managed by 'men of reputedly high character' staffed by 'attractive female assistants, numbers of them Sabbath school teachers' were likely to discourage drinking.³ By making the public house into a respectable place they were more likely to encourage the extension of drinking, a view which Durland's observations in the Kelty Gothenberg tended to support.⁴ Added to this was the danger that municipalities would develop a vested interest in the continual prosperity of the drink trade in the same way as central government. Lewis saw no contradiction in championing a municipal water supply and opposing the municipal sale of alcohol. His conclusion in each case

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1. David Lewis The Gothenberg Licensing Scheme - a lecture
delievered at a public meeting 14th July 1873.
Edinburgh nd.
 2. Rev. James Barr Shall we municipalise the Liquor Traffic in
Scottish Temperance Annual 1910
 3. David Lewis The Drink Problem and its Solution Glasgow 1881
p 181
 4. Op.cit K. Durland Among the Fife Miners p 159

was founded on the same conception of the proper duties of government, to provide a framework which would enable the citizen to provide for himself. Municipal water did this by ensuring a higher standard of public health. Municipal alcohol was incompatible with this aim. Lewis's position was at least consistent, but it was one which the Scottish Permissive Bill Association departed from in the 1880s as its former opposition to licensing restriction was quietly shelved.¹ By the end of the century all the major Scottish temperance organisations supported licensing restriction but opposed municipal ownership although both were essentially methods of controlling the drink traffic rather than abolishing it. In abandoning principle, as Lewis saw it, the Scottish temperance movement was rejecting nevertheless the most promising scheme so far devised for the strict control of the sale of alcohol and was cutting itself off from the Independent Labour Party, which was beginning to attract the kind of working men who had hitherto supported the temperance movement.

1. Chapter 9.

CHAPTER 9

The Scottish Temperance Movement and Politics

1868 - 1890

In the history of the Scottish temperance movement, the 1860s appear as something of a lull between the intense political activity and dramatic controversies of the 1850s and the long battle for permissive prohibition which began in earnest towards the end of the 1860s. The Scottish Temperance League was resting on its laurels and licking its wounds while its new and vigorous rival needed to build up organisational strength and popular support. This of course is to see the progress of the movement in terms of the interests and actions of the national organisations. At the local society level, the early 1860s appear to have been a successful period of expansion, partly attributable to the after effects of the great religious revival of 1859 which left a fertile recruiting ground for temperance organisers. The movement was not stagnating therefore, but from the point of view of its political activity the 1860s was a prelude to a new and intensive political campaign. In principle the

earlier campaign should have provided valuable experience and contacts. In practice there were considerable differences between the campaign to defend the licensing laws and the struggle for permissive prohibition. The former law rested on established precedents while the latter was an exotic innovation. Licensing reform had been initiated by respectable men of political status and was supported by a number of Scottish M.Ps. Permissive prohibition, its Scottish advocates believed, depended for its success on the support of working men and it evoked no enthusiasm among M.Ps. Licensing reform had divided the trade, but prohibition tended to unite it while conversely it divided the temperance ranks. The tactics employed on the two occasions reflected the different situations. Success in the earlier campaign was achieved by skilful Parliamentary lobbying and the creation of a favourable climate of public opinion and, despite the controversy, licensing reform did not become a great election issue. Supporters of permissive prohibition were determined on a campaign that would be fought as publicly as possible and would above all be a major issue at the hustings. Votes, not skilful diplomacy, were to be the weapons in this struggle and for these prohibitionists looked to political reform.

'we shall have strength and no weakness from the passing of the Reform Bill. The lower the suffrage comes, the greater the number of voters who have no beneficial interest in the distillery and tavern and who have a direct and momentous interest in the removal of both'. 1

'It was', reiterated Bailie Lewis a few years later, 'the working men of Scotland who would put down this traffic and not capitalists and commercial men'. 2 Scottish prohibitionists were not politically inactive in the 1860s, organising for instance petitions to Parliament in support of Sir Wilfred Lawson, but the passing of the Second Reform Act really marks the opening of their political career in earnest.

The essential problem for the movement in the early stages was to establish the credibility of temperance electoral power. This required public demonstration of the strength and single mindedness of temperance organisation and at the same time proof that the claim of widespread support for permissive prohibition outside the ranks of the movement was not an idle boast.

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1. Social Reformer Vol 1 No. 2 May 1886.
 2. Social Reformer Oct. 1874.

Two techniques were widely used, the petitioning campaign and the canvas. The accompanying tables show how petitioning was extended in the late 1860s.¹ Petitions varied enormously in size and significance. The Scottish Permissive Bill Association thought that the 38,610 signatures from Glasgow inhabitants in 1872 helped to support their contention that theirs was a citizen platform.² Number of signatures alone was not the only criterion of importance. In 1871 the petition lists carried for the first time the prestigious imprint of five town councils.³ The petition from Glasgow Trades Council in 1872 was held, in the best tradition of the block vote, to represent the views of 150,000 working men.⁴ Petitioning in its simplest form was a primitive opinion poll technique which measured the extent of support for the Permissive Bill among the electors of selected areas. The results, invariably showing a high incidence of support, were widely publicised in the temperance press. There were drawbacks to these techniques. To be effective, petitioning campaigns had to be organised around a specific issue, almost invariably the presentation of a Parliamentary Bill. The canvas only indicated general assent

1. Table 7

2. 14th Annual Report of the S.P.B.A. 1871/72.

3. Ibid. Stirling Greenock Dumfries Darvel and Aberdeen.

4. Ibid.

Table 7

Petitions from Scotland in support of Sir Wilfred Lawsons
Permissive Bill

<u>Date</u>	<u>No. of Petitions</u>	<u>No. of Signatures</u>
1864	284	81,481
1869	387	125,034
1871	541	141,860
1872	1148	202,518

Source: 14th Annual Report S.P.B.A. 1871/72.

Table 8.

Analysis of Source of 471 Petitions to Parliament from
Scotland in favour of Sir Wilfred Lawson's Permissive
Bill, 1871.

Citizens	Town Council & other Official bodies.	9	165	67	53	6	12
	Temperance Societies.						
	Churches.						
	Church affil. organisations						
	Co-ops & Trades Councils.						
	Miscell. & Unattributable.						
159							

Source: 'Social Reformer' April to July 1871

and not voting intention. More suited to the needs of election campaigns was the practice of asking electors to give a written pledge that they would vote only for candidates who undertook to support the Permissive Bill in Parliament. It is difficult to gauge how effective these techniques were in impressing politicians, although the last was obviously persuasive. At a time when M.Ps lacked modern guides to movements of public opinion, constituency petitions and canvasses may well have been influential. Less fortunate perhaps was the tendency for temperance reformers to accept uncritically their own results.

Such activities, along with conventional electioneering processes such as registering electors, ensuring that they got to the poll, organising meetings and distributing propaganda, called for a considerable degree of organisational skill which the agents of the Permissive Bill Association were expected to provide. Unlike their Scottish Temperance League counterparts, some of whom were all round entertainers, the duties of Permissive Bill Association agents were directly related to the political aims of the organisation. Since the Scottish Permissive Bill Association relied for its income almost entirely on subscriptions, the collection of money was a vital activity and was the principal occupation of two or three of its seven full time agents. ¹

1. Social Reformer Feb. 1874. The regular District Agents reports give a good indication of their work.

The others were each responsible for an area of the country. For example, J.H. Waterston, based in Edinburgh, covered Fife, the Lothians and the South East of Scotland. The number and geographical extent of the districts was simply a function of the number of agents that the Association could afford to employ. Within his area the agent was expected to publicise the cause, maintain morale in the movement and impress on local societies the need for active political involvement. A constant round of visits kept the agent in touch with the state of organisation which it was his duty to make ready for electoral contests. Temperance agents led an arduous life of constant travel and uncomfortable lodgings. Waterston normally addressed between 200 and 250 meetings in the course of the year. The widespread adoption of petitioning campaigns added to the volume of work. In 1876, for instance, the Association set itself the task of canvassing 27 burghs containing 20 per cent of the Scottish electorate. Like their predecessors in the temperance movement and their direct descendants in the I.L.P., the agents of the Scottish Permissive Bill Association showed prodigious energy.¹ But their task was really beyond the strength of mortal man. It is not surprising that Waterston on one occasion broke down through exhaustion and had to be rested for a number of months.

1. 14th Annual Report of the S.P.B.A.

The limited number of professional agents meant that the main burden of work in the field fell on local temperance activists. Some of these were members of Permissive Bill Association auxiliaries but these were by no means the most numerous and successful of local societies. It was invariably necessary to co-ordinate the efforts of men drawn from different temperance organisations as well as sympathisers outside the movement. Temperance electoral associations were set up to do this. The earliest known of these was established in Glasgow in 1864 and even at that date included members of the Scottish Temperance League, the Glasgow Abstainers Union and non-abstainers as well as Permissive Bill Association men.¹ Edinburgh, Aberdeen and Greenock followed in 1866 and by the 1870s a network of temperance electoral associations had been set up in the main Scottish towns.² In theory these associations were kept in perpetual existence, their machinery oiled by involvement in municipal elections. In practice they were usually ad hoc bodies which were hurriedly reconstituted for elections, weeks or even days before the polling date. The penalty for

1. Social Reformer Oct. 1866.

2. Social Reformer Nov. 1866

relying heavily on the volunteer labour of enthusiasts was frequently inspired improvisation rather than the implementation of a carefully laid strategy. On occasions it failed badly, as when the ambitious electoral canvas of 1876 revealed insufficient support from local societies for the professional agents.¹ Inadequate organisation was a constant subject of complaint and reports of elections, both local and Parliamentary, almost invariably mentioned shortcomings.² The call in 1866 for 'organisation and united temperance action' had often to be repeated.³

One reaction to this situation was to call for more professional workers. Dr. McCulloch, outlining the 'true method of political temperance electoral organisation', believed that the only big name speakers were worthwhile and that paid canvassers were essential.⁴ Such schemes were impractical because sufficient funds could not be raised. The major obstacle to greater political effectiveness, however, lay in the very nature of the temperance movement. Prohibitionists hungry for more resources

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1. 19th Annual Report of the S.P.B.A. p p 16/17
 2. Social Reformer Dec. 1874 A town by town survey after the election in that year showed temperance organisation at a particularly low ebb.
 3. Social Reformer Oct. 1866.
 4. Ibid Dec. 1874.

for professional assistance looked jealously at the Scottish Temperance League with its larger income and bigger team of agents, engaged, it seemed to them, in frivolous activities. The provision of leisure and entertainment which the League encouraged and served was a major attraction of the movement for the majority of its members. Soirées and lantern lectures were ultimately vital to prohibitionist success by sustaining the membership of local societies. The highly decentralised structure of the movement with its myriad of local organisations, active and moribund by turns, not always on friendly terms, was a nightmare for would-be co-ordinators although it presented a multitude of opportunities for internal social mobility. Complexity was increased over the period in question by the increase in the number of major national organisations from three to five, each with its own staff of professionals.¹ There was a contradiction between the elitist organisation and centralised structure, which the political ambitions of prohibitionists inclined them towards,

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1. These were the Scottish Temperance League founded 1846 the Scottish Permissive Bill Association founded 1858 The International Order of Good Templars, Grand Lodge of Scotland founded 1869. The British Womens Temperance Association, Scottish Christian Union founded 1878 The Free Church Temperance Society founded 1849 and reorganised 1884.

and the actual instrument that was available to them. What they required was a network of disciplined cadres; what the temperance movement resembled was rather closer to a confederation of women's rural institutes. It is probable that temperance political organisation was as good as could be attained by any body of part-time volunteers and that its shortcomings were, and are, characteristic of British political activity at grass roots level.

The techniques of persuasion and problems of organisation were similar for Scottish prohibitionists to those in England but the political circumstances in which they operated were made different by the fact that Scotland in 1868 was virtually a one party state. Liberal party predominance, and a situation in which a significant number of seats were uncontested, transferred the main interest in many electoral contests to the stage of choosing the liberal candidate. Disputes over the choice of candidates were more common in Scotland and the Permissive Bill issue was a common cause of them.¹ Prohibitionist pressure was brought to bear on aspiring Liberal candidates and local electoral committees, by threatening that vital party activists and potential voters would be alienated by the acceptance of a candidate not pledged to vote for the Permissive Bill. After the Liberal defeat of 1874, the party was aware of the reality of this threat.² Temperance men were often active on Liberal electoral committees and in Liberal associations. They represented a radical element in the party which sought to drive it to the left by influencing the choice of candidates. This is well illustrated by the activities of J.H. Waterston and David Lewis in the Perthshire and

1. T. Lloyd 'The General Election of 1880' Oxford 1968 p 20

2. Ibid p 114.

Leith by-elections of 1878 and by opposition to the candidature of men like Sir John Campbell of Edenwood at Kirkaldy Burghs, condemned for his 'effete hollow liberalism',^{1,2.} The association of temperance reformers with the dominant party resulted in a constant tension between their general political preferences and their stated commitment to the primacy of the Permissive Bill among reforming measures. The problem of whether to implement their threats at the cost of splitting the Liberal vote arose again and again and the decision was inevitably complicated by the existence of other issues in which temperance reformers were interested. Sir George Campbell was easy to reject because, as well as being cool towards permissive prohibition, he was lukewarm on disestablishment and entirely opposed to other 'vital social reforms' like woman franchise and repeal of the Contagious Diseases Acts.³ On other occasions however, compromises were made, placing the support of the temperance forces behind a Liberal who was the best available candidate even if he would not pledge himself to vote for the Permissive Bill. It was fortunate that the situation which arose at the East Aberdeenshire by-election of 1875 was rare. There the Conservative promised

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1. Social Reformer April 1878
 2. Ibid May 1875.
 3. Ibid.

to vote for the Permissive Bill and the Liberal refused. Many temperance men with the courage of their convictions voted Conservative dividing the Liberal vote and letting in the Conservative.¹ The dilemma for prohibitionists was that unsatisfactory compromises weakened the credibility of their threats while resolute adherence to principle could produce unwanted political consequences.

The Scottish Permissive Bill Association always insisted that it was a politically neutral organisation and that its aim was above party. From time to time the voting discipline of supporters was raised, as at the annual conference of 1874. A motion was proposed that the Permissive Bill should always be placed first and that members should undertake to vote for the best candidates 'irrespective of their political beliefs'.² Prominent men in the movement, Bailie Lewis and Dr. McCulloch among them spoke in its favour and although the motion was modified the official policy was now more clearly defined. To emphasise it

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1. Social Reformer Jan. 1876.
 2. Social Reformer Oct. 1874

Dr. McCulloch produced a paper that was printed in the Social Reformer and circulated in pamphlet form for use at elections.¹ In the best temperance tradition, care was taken to discuss the matter in a simpler and more graphic manner in a dialogue between Tom and Sam, two ardent Liberals.

Tom: 'Well Sam, you have got so wild on the Permissive Bill that you are prepared to sacrifice everything to it. Sink your principles, your party and your very Liberalism'.

Sam explains that he could not support a Liberal candidate whose actions strengthen a traffic which does so much 'to obstruct the onward progress of Liberal ideas and principles' and that unthinking loyalty produces Liberal governments which are no better than the Conservatives.

Tom: 'But if neither Liberals would go for the Bill and the Tory would - there have been such cases - what would you do?

Sam: 'Work for the Tory with might and main'

1. Social Reformer July 1875.

After that members of the Permissive Bill Association could be in no doubt where their first duty lay. It had to be reported however that at the 1885 election when the Liberal party split over Irish home rule that 'many friends of the direct veto supported those that will be found its most determined opponents in the House of Commons'.¹ Among them was David Lewis who had spoken so forcibly against such behaviour eleven years before. Policy decisions could never ensure that prohibition would always override other considerations among even its most dedicated supporters.

The Scottish Permissive Bill Association in the late 1860s had made two important political assumptions. One was that the chief efforts of prohibitionists should be directed towards Westminster and that local political activity was mainly justified as providing "drill practice" for our forces initiating them into the art of political warfare.'² The other was that the

1. 20th Annual Report of S.P.B.A. p 22

2. Social Reformer Oct. 1866

Scots should give their support for a Permissive Bill for the United Kingdom as proposed by the United Kingdom Alliance. Within a decade both these assumptions were being questioned with important consequences for temperance policy and the unity of the Scottish movement. By following the Alliance's lead the Scottish Permissive Bill Association was ignoring certain advantages which the Scots had in the battle against drink. There was the precedent of separate Scottish legislation and there was the continued weakness of the drink trade in Scotland. Although Scottish publicans were united in opposition to the Permissive Bill it aroused little concern among the distillers who gave very little money for the defence of the trade. In 1883, four years after its recognition on a more effective basis, the expenditure of the trade association was £535 compared with about £10,000 for the combined expenditure of the two main national Scottish temperance organisations and not much more than the expenditure (£464) of the Aberdeen Temperance Society. The publicans candidly admitted their weakness.¹

1. 26th Annual Report of the S.P.B.A. 1883/84.

'In England where the Trade is well organised the action of teetotal bodies is met by its proper counterpoise. In Scotland the organisation of the Trade.....is comparatively powerless against the organisation and funds of a widespread association'. 1

The Scots were soon complaining that their greater success in persuading M.Ps to vote for Sir Wilfred Lawson's bill was outweighed by the continued adverse vote from England.² They indignantly refused to 'tamely submit to the dictation of the English members' and set about promoting a separate Liquor Traffic Local Veto Bill for Scotland.³ The fate of this bill on its first presentation in Parliament provides an indication of the naivety of temperance reformers in regard to the Parliamentary process. It was expected that the overwhelming Scottish vote for Lawson's Local Option Resolution would be transferred to the new bill which incorporated the same principle.

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1. Scottish Standard quoted by the Social Reformer Jan. 1869.
 2. Table 9 Voting behaviour of Scottish M.Ps on Sir Wilfred's Lawson's Permissive Bill and Local Option Resolutions 1864-1883.
 3. 24th Annual Report of the S.P.B.A. 1881/82
28th Annual Report of the S.P.B.A. 1885/86.

Table 9
Voting behaviour of Scottish M.Ps on Sir Wilfred Lawson's Permissive
Bill and Local Option Resolutions 1864-1883.

	<u>Aye</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Absent</u>
1864	10	24	19
1869	12	18	30
1870	16	12	32
1871	24	14	22
1873	18	20	22
1874	16	19	25
1875	19	24	17
1876	18	16	26
1878	20	15	25
1879	32	10	18
1880	32	10	18
1880	43	5	12
1881	43	5	12
1883	46	2	12

Source: S.P.B.A. Annual Reports.

NOTE: Lawson introduced the P.B. every year he sat in the house up to 1878, except the period 1865-69 when he was not re-elected. It never progressed beyond the second reading and after 1879 he proposed instead a local option resolution. Scottish prohibitionists held them to be the same thing but in fact the resolution seems to have been adopted because it would be less vigorously opposed. In 1880 Lawson's Local Option Resolution was passed by 229-203 and again in 1883 by 228 - 141.

Lawson's resolution was passed for the second time in 1883 and Scottish members, including five members of the Government, voted 46 to 2 in its favour. The Scottish Local Veto Bill reaching its second reading in the same session, was rejected by 150 votes to 83, Scottish M.Ps voting 38 to 12 against it. It is easy to see that M.Ps happy enough to make a gesture favourable to permissive prohibition would be unprepared to support a serious attempt at legislation which had no government backing. Scottish prohibitionists saw it in simpler terms as a betrayal. By exposing the 'hollowness of local option' as represented by Sir Wilfred Lawson this bitter experience confirmed the belief that subservience to English leadership had worked to the disadvantage of the Scots.¹ The result of this defeat therefore was to strengthen the determination to seek separate local veto legislation for Scotland.²

Like the Scottish Nationalists in the 1960s the Scottish Prohibitionists in the 1860s soon realised the importance of local politics even for a movement whose objective could only be attained through Westminster. Few teetotallers had been elected to Scottish Town Councils before 1868 but thereafter they began to be returned in substantial numbers, suggesting that the

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1. 26th Annual Report of the S.P.B.A. 1883/84
 2. 28th Annual Report of the S.P.B.A. 1885/86

anticipated support from working class voters was forthcoming. Out of the 18 men elected in Glasgow in April 1869, 9 claimed to be temperance reformers.¹ In Aberdeen, 6 of 7 newly elected councillors supported the principle of permissive prohibition.² The power of the temperance electoral association in Edinburgh was shown by the presence of 4 teetotallers among the 6 new councillors elected, making eight teetotallers on the town council.³ 'Temperance parties', loosely connected groups of men drawn from different temperance organisations supported by outsiders sympathetic to anti-drink efforts, came into existence. Aberdeen became the first Scottish city to petition on behalf of the Permissive Bill and by the late 1870s, 27 members of Glasgow town council supported similar action, fifteen of them being teetotallers.⁴ The size of these 'temperance parties' fluctuated according to the amount of enthusiasm and organisation in local temperance societies and the amount of opposition engendered by the activities of temperance men in office. Temperance reformers seldom achieved the position of a majority in Scottish town councils but from 1869 to the end of the century and beyond they were

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1. Social Reformer Dec. 1869
 2. Ibid quoting Aberdeen Free Press.
 3. The Reformer (Edinburgh) Dec. 4. 1868
 4. Social Reformer Dec. 1877

almost always well represented in local government. In the 1890s the Scottish Temperance League began to publish, along with numbers of teetotal ministers and doctors, a list of teetotal provosts. By 1910 the movement could point with pride to the fact that the provosts of 51 Scottish burghs, including Edinburgh, were teetotallers.¹ For men who believed that government was best which governed locally, at a time when the initiative in matters of reform had not yet passed entirely to Westminster, participation in local politics was more satisfying than the frustration of a distant interminable Parliamentary struggle and this brought about a shift in the relative importance of national and municipal politics to the movement.

The experience of political activity after 1868 had a remarkable effect in unifying the Scottish temperance movement and by 1890 the fierce controversies over which legislative course to pursue had largely abated. All the major Scottish temperance organisations in the 1890s supported maximum legislative restriction through the licensing system and permissive prohibition by means of the Local Veto (Scotland) Bill. The major change that had taken place was that the Scottish Temperance League had become more wholehearted in its proclaimed support for local option

1. Scottish Temperance Annual 1910

and the Permissive Bill Association had dropped its earlier objections to the licensing system. It is not difficult to see why licensing restriction became more attractive to prohibitionists in the 1870s. Their opposition to the licensing system had its roots in a situation in which few temperance reformers had the vote and fewer still had any prospects of becoming magistrates. A decade after the Second Reform Act the change in their political status was exemplified by the fact that the Lord Provost of Scotland's largest city and his two senior magistrates were respectively the president of the Scottish Temperance League and the chairman of the executive and honourary secretary of the Scottish Permissive Bill Association.¹ In many towns in Scotland men who had once denounced the licensing system found themselves operating it. Very few seem to have taken a principled course of refusing to have anything to do with the system they had condemned. More typical was Bailie Kennedy, applauded at the Association's annual conference for his account of how in Dumbarton 'they had been a great deal engaged in crippling the trade by taking away a public house here and there'.² The Social Reformer in the same year drew attention to the new political

1. Sir William Collins Bailie James Torrens and Bailie J.L. Selkirk.

2. Social Reformer Oct. 1876

situation which now made it possible to 'prevent an increase in licenses in these burghs where the temperance reformers have become masters of the situation'.¹ Prohibitionists were presented, like the Scottish Temperance League in the 1850s with the opportunity to support efforts for new licensing legislation which they had not originated, but which would strengthen the hands of local authorities in controlling the public house. The Permissive Bill Association gave approval and support to Sir Robert Anstruther's Spiritous Liquors (Scotland) Bill which proposed a fixed ratio of licenses to population and Dr. Cameron's Publicans Certificates (Scotland) Bill which sought to abolish the publicans right of appeal to quarter sessions.^{2,3.} By the 1880s the Association's objective was being described as 'the Permissive Bill and anything tending in the direction of the Permissive Bill'.⁴ This change of course, reminiscent of the League in the 1850s, evoked some remarkable examples of semantic ingenuity and constitutional slight of hand as prohibitionists sought to reconcile their present actions with past statement of principles. When some members objected to the annual conference

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1. Ibid April 1876
 2. Social Reformer June 1874
 3. Ibid April 1876
 4. Ibid Oct. 1881

being asked to express satisfaction at the passage into law of Dr. Cameron's bill, the chairman of the executive denied that this implied official approval for licensing. The conference, he said, was only asked to give its approval as individuals.¹ When the executives of the League and the Association had joint discussions to draft a local veto bill it was denied that this amounted to co-operation. It was only communication. Attempts at annual conferences to point out the inconsistencies in the attitude of the Permissive Bill Association to licensing were not well received.² The Association overcame the problem by refusing to recognise that there had been any change of policy and asserted that its activities were entirely in accordance with its original principles. The Scottish Permissive Bill Association illustrates a familiar tendency for the mentality of opposition to be altered by the taste of power and the difficulty this poses of reconciling actions with ideology.

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1. Social Reformer Oct. 1876.
 2. Social Reformer Oct. 1883

The desire for political effectiveness made for closer co-operation between temperance reformers belonging to different organisations during election campaigns and on local councils. In Edinburgh and Glasgow leading members of the League and the Association became allies in the council chamber on licensing matters and in petitioning in support of the Permissive Bill. Incidents like the Aberdeen by-election of 1872 when restrictionists and prohibitionists supported rival candidates, undermined the political credibility of the movement.¹ By contrast the united efforts of Glasgow temperance reformers in securing the election of Dr. James Cameron to Parliament in 1874 increased the movement's prestige and gave it a valuable voice at Westminster.² It was again demonstrated when the Local Veto (Scotland) Bill was defeated in 1883 that a divided movement would not be taken seriously by politicians. Sir William Harcourt used the argument that the Scots were still not agreed amongst themselves on the issue to justify government opposition to it.³ The realisation that legislative ambitions could only be achieved by united action to increase the political

1. Social Reformer Oct. 1872.

2. Social Reformer July 1874

3. 25th Annual Report of S.P.B.A. 1882/83

effectiveness of the movement was a strong incentive for rival organisations to sink their differences. The Scots, faced with a more favourable political situation than the English, were also drawn together by the prospect of early success, provided they were prepared to reassert the principle of separate drink legislation for Scotland. This had always been advocated by the Scottish Temperance League and in the 1880s it was accepted by the Permissive Bill Association.¹ Inevitably prohibitionist links with the United Kingdom Alliance declined in importance relative to those with other Scottish temperance organisations. The new found unity of the Scottish temperance movement was marked in characteristic temperance style by the decision of the former rival organisations the League and the Association to combine their annual excursion. 'The large party' on board the excursion steamer *Ivanhoe* in 1888 'included almost every temperance reformer of note'.² The Scottish temperance movement had once more adapted itself to new circumstances and sailed into the last decade of the century ready to fight the final campaign for permissive prohibition for Scotland.

1. 28th Annual Report of the S.P.B.A. 1885/86

2. 31st Annual Report of S.P.B.A. 1888/89

SECTION IV

Temperance and the Churches in Scotland.

SUMMARY

The single chapter in this section considers the changing position of the Churches on the drink question and their relationship to the temperance movement. The Churches whose indifference had been a factor in the failure of the anti-spirits movement continued to have misgivings about the movement throughout the 1840s but by 1860 had come to accept it agree with its assessment of the seriousness of the drink question, but not to recognise the need for total abstinence. Evidence of temperance activity in the Churches in the 1840s is traced to the activities of small groups of teetotallers mobilising a more widely spread concern about drunkenness. The spread of abstinence among the clergy and the use of unfermented wine at the sacrament is used to measure the extent of penetration of the temperance movement's viewpoint into the Churches. This is shown to have happened mainly within the last quarter of the century, varying from denomination to denomination with least success in the Established Church. It is argued that acceptance of teetotalism in the Churches is related to the growing uncertainty about their role and especially to concern about inability to reach the lapsed masses.

CHAPTER 10

Temperance and the Churches in Scotland 1845 - 1900

References have already been made in earlier chapters to the connection between temperance and organised religion. The growth of teetotalism among the clergy, the formation of temperance societies in the main denominations, the important role of the Free Church in the reform of the licensing laws convey a scattered impression of the Scottish Church becoming increasingly identified with the temperance cause in the course of the 19th century. A similar general picture in a more detailed and organised form is given by a relatively recent study.¹ The Rev. M.B. McGregor's book remains a useful account of the Churches activities in the temperance field but it lacks critical insights and does not address itself to some of the questions which now occur to historians. For instance the early opposition to the temperance movement by

1. Op.cit Rev. M.B. McGregor Towards Scotland's Social Good .

Churchmen is quickly passed over in favour of the Churches increasing involvement in the fight against drink. This is not altogether surprising in a book published in 1948 when the temperance movement had declined and the Church had become the main custodian of the anti-drink cause and chief defender of its victories. Important questions remain to be discussed, therefore. The most basic of these relate to the Church's changing position on the drink problem in the course of the century. Between 1835, when the disapproval of the religious community contributed to the collapse of the anti-spirits movement, and the 1900s, when the united support of the Scottish Churches helped the passage of the Temperance (Scotland) Act, a notable change in the attitude of Churchmen came about. It is desirable to be more precise about the real extent of this change, its timing and the factors which influenced it. The efforts of the temperance movement whose founders set out to influence the Church is one obvious factor and it is necessary to investigate the methods and arguments it used to put pressure on the Church. It may contribute to our general understanding

of religious change to suggest reasons why these methods and arguments were apparently more effective in particular periods and with particular denominations. Finally an attempt must be made to assess the significance for the Church of a closer association with temperance reform.

Any study of this nature must take into account the peculiarities of the religious situation in Scotland. The close association between temperance reform and Dissent in England is well documented and is one of the major factors used to explain the militancy of the temperance movement and its tendency to depart from Fabian ideals of political strategy.¹ In Scotland also Dissent versus Establishment was a recurrent feature of the political scene after 1830 but the similarities between the two countries are in many ways superficial. English Dissent, Methodism excepted, had its roots in the religious and political struggles of the 17th century. In forms of worship and church government there was little in common between Dissent and the Church of England. The distinctiveness of what has been called the culture of non-conformity owed something to this historical tradition.² Scottish religious groups outside

1. Op.cit Brian Harrison Drink and the Victorians esp. Chs 8 and 16.

2. Stephen Koss. Nonconformity in Modern British Politics London 1975 p 24

the Established Church were the products of the schisms and heresy hunts of the 18th and 19th centuries. Despite the bitterness these often left, there was much more commonality of religious tradition, theology and institutions of church government between Establishment and Dissent in Scotland. Of the 3,395 recorded places of worship in Scotland at the time of the 1851 religious census only 1,183 were of the Established Church but 2,614 were Presbyterian churches of one form or another. Of the 42.5 per cent of the population who went to church on census Sunday 30.8 belonged to one of the three major Presbyterian denominations which came into being in the 1840s.^{1,2.}

After 1843 the Established Church in Scotland while it remained the largest single religious organisation, was a minority church. Moreover the creation of the Free Church s Rev. Professor Blaikie put it

'gave a better position to dissent, it helped to lift it from the obscurity and social inferiority in which it had hitherto been and to place it on the level of the community at large'. 3

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1. A.L. Drummond and J. Bulloch The Church in Victorian Scotland
1843-1874 . Edinburgh 1975
p 112.
 2. A.A. MacLaren Presbyterianism and the Working
Class in a Mid-19th Century City
Scottish Historical Review Vol 46. 1967
 3. Op.Cit Rev. Professor W.G. Blaikie Recollections of a Busy Life
p 113

The first indications of Church involvement in the temperance question in Scotland came in the period 1845-62. During this time denominational temperance societies were formed in all three of the major Presbyterian groups and temperance committees were set up which reported annually to the Church assemblies. The Established Church published an influential report on national drunkenness while the Free Church played an active role in reforming the licensing system. There is also evidence of a gradual move away from the suspicion with which the temperance movement was regarded by most churchmen before 1845. The misgivings which had greeted the anti-spirits phase of temperance reform deepened with the advent of teetotalism in Scotland. The early movement, even though in error, had been promoted by pious men for religious ends, but the new phase was introduced by a confessed Owenite.¹ Criticism from churchmen that temperance societies might be used for secular ends had much more obvious justification during the Chartist period. Orthodox churchmen in Scotland, accustomed to thinking in terms of strict adherence to a creed and ever on the lookout for heresy, were horrified at the pluralism of the temperance movement whose leaders welcomed men of all beliefs

1. John Dunlop. Diaries Vol I April 6 1838.
Manuscript N.L.S.

or none to join them.¹ The criticism that temperance societies formented seclarism, socialism and heresy continued to be made up to the early 1850s, but by 1862 the Rev. James Robertson was able to report that accusations of infidelity from the religious community were now fortunately rare.^{2,3.} The indications are that as anti-drink activity by the major denominations increased, there developed a less hostile attitude to the temperance movement.

After 1845 a number of factors began to operate to allay earlier suspicion. The stigma of Chartism ceased to apply as the political threat of the movement waned, although many ex-Chartists continued to be associated with the temperance movement. Accusations of secularist tendencies diminished as more and more churchmen came to recognise the interdependence of the physical and spiritual needs of the people. Churchmen

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1. Robert Kettle The Principle and Practical Operation of Temperance 2 page tract C 1840.

'We ask no one to think as we do on any other subject connected with total abstinence or otherwise'. Kettle was less effusive than John Finch. see John Finch's Temperance Tracts, No. 4 1836 and not everybody shared Kettle's view in Scotland. see Alex Campbell (Cong.Church Greenock) The Total Abstinence Scheme brought to the test of Scripture . Glasgow 1838.

2. Scottish Temperance Review. July 1847 The Witness. 25th Dec. 1847 See also Cowan The Newspaper in Scotland Op.cit p 353.
3. Rev.James B. Robertson Relation of the Temperance Movement to the moral and religious condition of Scotland in Temperance Congress of 1862, Papers Op. cit.

were influenced by the publicity given to the drink question in Scotland in the 1840s, and shared in the growing concern about the problems created by drink. Teetotal tactics after 1845 shifted away from uncompromising confrontation with all who were not with them towards influencing public opinion against the drink traffic. Thus the advantages of influencing Churchmen were becoming apparent to teetotallers just as the latter were becoming more receptive to the anti-drink message. One can understand therefore why the assessment of the temperance movement by the religious community was in the process of changing from that of a potentially dangerous organisation to one which was doing much good even if its insistence on total abstinence was still regarded by most churchmen as eccentric.

As part of their more outward looking approach, teetotallers after 1845 attempted to involve ministers in condemning the drink traffic. An interesting example of this is the campaign against funeral drinking customs. Liberal dispensation of whisky at funerals was a tradition in Scotland and although 19th century funerals appear seldom to have attained the sublime intoxication of fabled Highland burials, they occasionally led to scenes which were not thought to be in keeping with changing standards of dignity and solemnity. The move against funeral

drinking included some rare scenes of clerical solidarity. In Dundee for instance almost every minister in the city was on the platform at the meeting called to discourage the custom.¹ Ministers who were unprepared to associate themselves with any other manifestation of opposition to drink gave their support to this campaign. Teetotallers saw the attack on funeral drinking as a vital blow against the drinking customs of society. For ministers it was a safe gesture against one of the least defensible of alcoholic excesses. The attack on funeral drinking may be regarded as an interesting example of teetotal tactics but there is little evidence that it brought ministers into the temperance movement.

The activities of teetotallers working within the churches were more successful and some of the manifestations of temperance activity which have been mentioned can be explained in this way. There had always been a few teetotal ministers in the various denominations although these constituted a tiny minority of the ministry. After 1845 teetotallers began to work more

1. Dundee Advertiser. Feb.6th 1846
On the other hand the widow of a prominent highland Free Church minister buried in 1848 spent £9 on whisky for the mourners, enough to buy about 15 gallons.
A.L.Drummond and J. Bulloch The Church in Victorian Scotland
Op.cit p 25

systematically to influence the Church from within, through an Association for the Promotion of Temperance by Means of the Church and by involvement in the denominational temperance societies and temperance committees.^{1,2.} The Presbyterian institutions of Scottish denominations lent themselves to activity of this kind. Although as a form of government Presbyterianism was far from democratic, even when it appeared formally so, its hierarchy of Church courts attended by ministers and laymen made it possible for teetotalers to introduce the temperance question into its deliberations. Such efforts were not always immediately fruitful. The Rev. Robert Forbes of Free Woodside Aberdeen worked for years to influence the local Presbytery without success. A handful of teetotal within the Church of Scotland organised a considerable coup. The Rev. T.C. Wilson of Dunkeld initiated an overture from that Presbytery condemning drunkenness and proposing a committee of the General Assembly to inquire into the evil. The proposal was accepted and another teetotaler, John Hope W.S., was appointed secretary.³ An impressive report was presented to the General Assembly the following year, emphasising the grave extent of the evil. In this way a small group of activists had

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1. Scottish Temperance Review March 1847.
 2. Ibid June 1848
 3. Scottish Temperance Review July 1848

exploited the current concern about drunkenness to secure an endorsement by the Church of Scotland of a major plank in the temperance movement's platform. In the Free Church, skilful use of the General Assembly's Temperance Committee was made by Professor Miller of Edinburgh University who became its convenor in 1854. Teet^{to}llers gravitated to the temperance committees and their creation furnished the temperance movement with a permanent platform at the annual assemblies of the Presbyterian churches.¹

The sudden appearance of temperance committees, societies and reports should not be interpreted to mean a major conversion to the teetotal viewpoint of large numbers of churchmen in the major denominations. While the Church of Scotland commissioned and accepted the 1849 report on drunkenness, the level of enthusiasm in the Church on the temperance question may perhaps better be gauged from Dr. Patrick Brewster's observation that the report was read to an empty assembly hall.²

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1. Church Temperance Societies had no formal place in the constitution of the Church but in practice they were closely in touch with the temperance committees which were formally constituted.
 2. Scottish Temperance Review July 1849

In the Free Church the main burden of the early reports of the Temperance Committee was the indifference of the ministry and eldership to its activities.¹ Membership of the Free Church Temperance Society was apparently growing but membership was a poor measure of commitment. The society had no money, 'most of our members never send any', and no recorded activities.² Moreover the preoccupation of members with finding loopholes in the pledge to allow drinking for medicinal purposes hardly conveys an impression of deep conviction.³ Within the Free Church there were a number of men of considerable reputation who were able to influence that body on temperance matters. The forceful eloquence of Dr. James Begg was an important factor in aligning the Free Church behind licensing law reform.⁴

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1. General Assembly Proceedings of the Free Church of Scotland 1850 - 1856 Reports of the Committee on Temperance.
 2. Circular from Free Church Abstainers Society 4th May 1853. in Misc. papers of the Rev. Robert Forbes. Aberdeen P.L. P.393
 3. Report of the 6th Annual Meeting of the Free Church Temperance Society May 1855.
 4. D.H. Bishop Church and Society - a study of the Social Work and Thought of James Begg. unpublished Ph.D. Thesis. Edinburgh University 1952 Ch 2 subsequently D.H. Bishop James Begg.

Professor Miller's energy and prestige as convenor of the temperance committee helped to hold the church to that commitment. An impression is created therefore that the early signs of temperance activity in the Scottish Church are more than anything else the result of energetic efforts by a stage army of teetotallers and fellow travellers, taking advantage of the growing concern about drunkenness, manipulating the machinery of presbyterianism and exploiting the rivalry between the denominations.

A survey of the positions of the three main presbyterian denominations on temperance matters is useful at this point to bring out the differences between them. The Established Church having led the way in drawing attention to the extent of national drunkenness in 1849 could hardly go back on that statement but it showed little enthusiasm in the 1850s for action to remedy the situation.¹ Teetotallers were rare in the ministry of the Established Church and its attitude to the temperance movement remained cool.^{2,3.} In contrast the Free Church by 1860 strongly supported anti-drink legislation.

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1. Op.cit M.B. McGregor Towards Scotlands Social Good p 47
 2. Scottish Review 1860 p 175
 3. General Assembly Proceedings of the Church of Scotland 1869. Report of the Temperance Committee.

Alliance with the Scottish Temperance League in defence of the Forbes Mackenzie Act helped to remove some of the earlier suspicions of the movement. While there were a few important Free Church recruits to the temperance movement in the 1850s, there is no evidence of widespread enthusiasm for total abstinence on the part of the ministry.¹ The United Presbyterian Church did not associate itself so unequivocally with licensing reform as the Free Church, a fact perhaps explainable in terms of voluntarist reluctance to invoke the power of the state. However, United Presbyterian laymen and ministers were sufficiently numerous in the higher reaches of the Scottish Temperance League for it to be regarded by critics as 'a U.P affair'. A significant proportion of the United Presbyterian ministers became teetotalers between 1845 and 1862.² While there were no formal links, the United Presbyterian Church was more closely identified with the temperance movement than the other major denominations. Of the smaller religious groups only the Evangelical Union had a collective attitude to the drink question at this time. All its ministers were abstainers and drinksellers were excluded from membership.³ The Congregationalists, still dominated by conservatives like the

1. Table 10

2. Ibid

3. H. Escott A History of Scottish Congregationalism
Aberdeen 1960 p 128

Rev. Ralph Wardlaw who had been hostile to the Temperance movement did not form a church temperance society until 1867. In 1862 the Rev. James Robertson, reporting on the temperance movement's relationship with the Church, was able to tell the Temperance Congress that considerable progress had been made since 1845. It was already clear however that temperance pressure was uneven in its effects and in the view of the movement disappointing in its results.

The major failure, in the temperance movement's own estimation, had been to persuade the Church to accept the central dogma of the movement, that universal abstinence from intoxicating drink was essential if its use was to be discontinued throughout society. All the main denominations in Scotland, and most of the smaller religious groups, took the view that while total abstinence by individuals was permissible (except at the Communion) it had no special virtue in relation to the drink problem and was certainly not something which they as institutions were prepared to recommend to members and clergy. The corollary of this

was that men engaged in the manufacture and sale of alcohol were not discriminated against and could become members and officers of the church without encountering criticism of their occupation. The Evangelical Union was the only exception to this rule. From the 1860s on however the position of the Church on these matters began to change and it is possible to evaluate the extent and timing of that change by considering two indications, the growth of abstinence among the clergy and the adoption of non-alcoholic wines for the sacrament.

Both these phenomena need to be seen in the context of the relationship between clergy and communicants in the Scottish Church. The ministry was a highly competitive profession in the 19th century. Its considerable social status made it attractive to upwardly mobile sons of lower middle class and upper working class families. Entry into the ministry was oversubscribed and, once established, the aspiring minister hoped to gain advancement by attracting 'calls' from wealthy and influential congregations. Competition was especially strong in the towns where the parochial system had been eroded and churches had become essentially congregational.¹ A man who sought that goal of the successful minister, the growing

1. Op.cit Dr. Guthrie Autobiography p 365

congregation, was more likely to attract members from his professional rivals than by converting the home heathen. It was no help to a successful minister to hold unpopular views or to dissent radically from the accepted norms of social behaviour.¹ Nor, once established in a charge, was it wise to alienate the wealthy and influential members of the congregation from whom were recruited the members of the kirk session, the governing body of the congregation. There were considerable pressures on the minister to be conformist, to be the mouthpiece of the values and attitudes of his congregation.² In a presbyterian system ministers had also a wider reference point, the consensus of views of the denomination. While it did not do to profess opinions which were unacceptable or eccentric, it was often the mark of a coming man that he was able to identify himself with views that were gaining ground in the church. The minister was more than a mirror of the values and attitudes of his congregation, he also shaped and made articulate changes in its values and attitudes. The decisions as to whether he should become an abstainer or whether his congregation should use unfermented wine at the communion were ostensibly personal decisions

1. In addition there were particular problems encountered by teetotal ministers who had drinksellers in their congregations. See *Social Reformer* March 1875.

2. Kingsley Martin *Father Figures* Penguin ed. London 1969 has delightful examples of this.

for the minister alone. They were not however decisions which were typically made in isolation, without reference to the views of the congregation and the wider consensus of opinion in the church. The behaviour of ministers in these respects provides a broad indication of the movement of opinion in the church on temperance matters.

The preoccupation of temperance reformers with reforming the drinking habits of ministers was based on an unsentimental appraisal of the relationship between ministers and congregations. Experience up to the 1860s showed that it was particularly difficult for ministers in wealthy and influential charges to be abstainers. The Rev. William Arnot, a leading figure in the temperance movement in the 1850s, quickly disappeared from the scene after a call to a fashionable Edinburgh church and was soon a moderate drinker. Ministers still drank on public occasions and this was a focus of temperance criticism. A pithy broadside from 'A Working Man' carefully listed the 15 toasts at a Free Church dinner attended by leading ministers of that denomination.¹ 'We dare not insinuate that excess existed

1. A Working Man (pseud)

The Philosophy of Toasts and Health
Drinking .
Edinburgh 1864.

here' wrote the working man, insinuating that very thing. It was in vain for ministers to protest that they had had no more than half a glass of wine. The righteous must abstain from all appearance of evil.¹ A decade later that kind of display had become less common. Dr. Guthrie noted of ordination dinners that

'Happily these old convivial customs are to a large extent abandoned'.²

Drink was still sold in the refreshment rooms at both Free Church and Established Church assemblies in 1875 and the Scottish Temperance League in one of its periodical appeals to the ministers of Scotland still expressed 'surprise and regret that so few ministers have yet identified themselves with the temperance movement'.^{3,4.}

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1. I Thes. Ch V v 22.
 2. Dr. Guthrie Autobiography p 118
 3. Social Reformers June 1875.
 4. Appeal to the Non-Abstaining Ministers of the Gospel from the Directors of the Scottish Temperance League. Published in S.T.L. Register 1877 pp 53-55

By the 1880s however 'drinking was looked upon quite dubiously' within the Free Church.¹ The extent of change in the social behaviour of ministers was nicely brought out by the Rev. W.S. Swanson in 1908. He recalled the days when in a northern presbytery they did not enquire about a new minister 'Does he drink' but 'Is he peacable when he's in drink'. Such a question observed Swanson 'could not be put about a newly inducted Presbyterian today'.²

The impression of a growing tendency towards abstinence among the clergy can fortunately be supported by quantitative data. From 1862 onwards the Scottish Temperance League published annually the names and denominations of ministers who were members of the League.³ After 1890 the Free Church Temperance Society published a list of declared abstainers in the ministry of that church.⁴ These lists need to be interpreted with some care. The former does not provide a comprehensive list of all teetotal clergymen in Scotland. In the Evangelical Union where teetotalism were proportionately

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1. Op.cit D.H.Bishop James Begg p 49
 2. Rev. W.S.Swanson A Plea for Total Abstinence in Scottish Temperance Annual 1909
 3. Summarised in Table 10 Ministers in Scotland who were members of the Scottish Temperance League by denominations.
 4. Summarised in Table 11 Ministers of the Free Church who were declared abstainers and membership of the Manse Ladies Total Abstinence Society.

strongest, clerical support for the League was small because of that denominations' association with the rival Scottish Permissive Bill Association. Even among the United Presbyterians, the denomination most closely identified with the S.T.L., there were in 1888 303 teetotal ministers of whom 177 belonged to the League.¹ However the League, as the most moderate respectable and middle class of Scottish temperance organisations, was the one ministers were most likely to join. Membership lists of the League have some advantages over denominational statistics. Joining the League involved a contracting in process and payment of a fee and membership was meant to signify active support for temperance reform. In contrast the Free Church list of abstaining ministers involved only a verbal commitment to personal abstinence in response to a circular from the Free Church Temperance Society. Scottish Temperance League lists are particularly useful as indicators of long term trends and for measuring the relative support for the temperance movement in the various denominations.

1. S.T.L. Register. 1888 p 50

Table 10

Ministers in Scotland who were members of
the Scottish Temperance League, by denominations
in quinquennial years.

	<u>Established</u> <u>Church.</u>	<u>Free</u> <u>Church.</u>	<u>United</u> <u>Presby-</u> <u>terian</u> <u>Church.</u>	<u>Evangelical</u> <u>Union.</u>	<u>Congrega-</u> <u>tionalist.</u>	<u>Baptist</u> <u>Union.</u>	<u>Others</u>	<u>Total</u>
1862	17	24	111	16	41	16	40	265
1865	14	35	106	9	37	13	41	255
1870	16	36	100	12	36	12	43	255
1875	19	40	108	20	42	11	54	294
1880	23	89	120	30	46	13	45	366
1885	32	120	151	37	36	13	52	441
1890	42	155	189	42	37	9	67	550
1895	40	188	214	<u>51</u>	<u>42</u>	9	70	614
1900	32	<u>200</u>	<u>227</u>	95*		17	77	648
1908	38	435*		84		18	43	620
1910	41	467		81		21	58	654
1913	43	471		78		21	45	658

Source. Scottish Temperance League Register 1862 - 1913
1870 is an average of 1869 and 71, 1905 not available.

* indicates union of denominations in adjacent columns.

Table. 11

Ministers of the Free Church* who were
declared abstainers and membership of the
Manse Ladies Total Abstinence Society.

* United Free Church after 1900.

	<u>Ministers who were declared abstainers.</u>	<u>Manse Ladies</u>
1890	621	-
1891	645	708
1892	681	758
1893	712	781
1894	741	810
1895	754	832
1896	764	845
1897	782	868
1906	1131	-
1910	1110	-
1913	1246	-

Source: Free Church of Scotland Temperance Yearbook
1891 - 1897.

United Free Church of Scotland Temperance Yearbook
1906 - 1913.

It is clear that teetotalers remained a comparative rarity among ministers of the Established Church throughout the century. A sizable number of United Presbyterian ministers were already teetotalers in 1862, but it was not until 1875 that the number began to grow again. The Free Church is in many ways the most interesting case. Despite its important role in consolidating the licensing laws in the 1850s, Free Church ministers showed hardly more enthusiasm for total abstinence than their Established Church colleagues until after 1875. Within a decade their membership of the Scottish Temperance League was almost on a par with the United Presbyterians.

An attempt by the League to show numerically the progress of the cause in the various denominations makes it possible to give the proportion of the ministry who were abstainers at the turn of the century.

<u>Table 12</u>	<u>No. of Ministers</u>	<u>Per Cent Abstainers.</u>
Established	1480	30
United Free	1800	66
Congregational	172	87
Baptist	117	100
Others	105	87
Total	3674	50

Source S.T.L. Register 1901 p 92.

This of course uses personal abstinence (the short pledge) as the criterion.

Table 11 shows that the number of abstaining ministers in the Free Church was growing rapidly in the 1890s, embracing the

majority of ministers, not to speak of their wives. The proportion of teetotalers is rather smaller and it cannot be calculated but the tendency was in favour of total abstinence. Over 90 per cent of the students at Free Church colleges in the 1890s were total abstainers. In the United Presbyterian Church the majority of ministers were teetotal by 1888. The formation of the United Free Church therefore created a denomination rivaling the Established Church in size in which abstinence from alcoholic drinks was the norm amongst the ministry. Although some progress had been made earlier, particularly in the 1850s, it was not until the last quarter of the 19th century that temperance principles, as measured by the number of non-drinking ministers, began to make rapid headway in the Scottish Church.

The number of congregations in the various Scottish denominations using unfermented wine at communion provides another quantitative indication of the growth of temperance in the Scottish Church. In a number of respects it is less useful than the numbers of abstaining ministers. For one thing the issue only became active in the church in the 1870s

and the Scottish Temperance League only began to publish lists in 1887. The Bible Wine question is important in other respects, however; for instance, it provides insight into the religious frame of mind of temperance reformers. In an age when the Bible was regarded literally as God's truth, embodying all essential instruction for man's everyday behaviour, it was a major problem for the temperance movement in its efforts to influence the religious community that it did not have scriptural authorisation. This was perhaps especially true in Scotland whose church had rejected ritual in favour of an approach to religion through the intellect, emphasising therefore the need for scriptural study and exposition. There was no mention of total abstinence societies in the Bible. Worse still it was equivocal on the evils of drink. Assiduous temperance researchers might prove that there were more pronouncements against drink than for it, but a majority verdict on such a vital issue was clearly unsatisfactory. The problem was openly recognised by temperance spokesmen.

'Among religious men and especially among ministers, the greatest obstacle to the adoption of this method is the conception that it enjoins and advises a rule of morality different from that which the Saviour practised and the Scriptures prescribe'.¹

1. Rev. William Arnot

The Workers and their Work or Christian duty in relation to Drunkards and Drink Glasgow S.T.L. n.d. c 1855.

There was no dispute that drunkenness was a sin and that drunkards were excluded from grace and as such were punishable under the disciplinary procedures of the Scottish church. Teetotalers however were always having the miracle at Cana cast in their teeth as part of the counter argument that the moderate use of this 'good creature of God' was quite consistent with Christ's example and the Bible's teaching.¹ In teetotal theory, however, moderate drinking by respectable citizens was more reprehensible even than drunkenness and, if Christians were to be influenced, it was imperative that the movement found religious arguments against the practice. They could find few better arguments than William Collins' 'Harmony between the Gospel and Temperance Societies' which was republished by the Scottish Temperance League in 1856. Collins had argued that temperance societies, while not mentioned in the Gospels, were in accordance with its ideals of self denial for the good of others and were a practical expression of love and charity to those whose souls were in mortal peril. Teetotal writers followed Collins in arguing that the temperance question must be interpreted 'by the general scope of Christ's precept and example'.² Christ, it was admitted, was not a total abstainer.

1. Rev. James Gibson A.M. Principles of Bible Temperance
Glasgow 1854

2. Aristides (pseud) A Reply to the Rev. James Gibson's Principles
of Bible Temperance Glasgow 1855 p 22

There was no need for him to be, 'Drunkenness.....was not a sin of that country and age as it is prominently of ours'.¹

The case rested therefore on the spirit and not the letter of the Gospels and demanded of Christians that they interpret Christ's teaching in the light of modern circumstances. Such a relativist position was not always well received by those who desired that the temperance movement be founded, not on the shifting sands of contemporary expediency, but on the eternal rock of Scripture Truth. Surely, they reasoned, an omnipotent God would have known that drink was to become a serious obstacle to His purposes for mankind in 19th century Scotland and would not have allowed His Son to put weapons in the hands of the enemies of religion. The problem, they believed, must lie in the misinterpretation of scripture and the solution in a correct reinterpretation. Bible Wine enthusiasts therefore subjected those parts of the Bible which referred to drinking to detailed textual analysis and concluded that the word 'wine', carelessly translated by the scholars of King James and uncritically assumed to be the modern drink of that name, was in the original language a variety of drinks, some of which were non-alcoholic. While this thesis, which originated in England, had its supporters in Scotland it was not immediately well received there.² The leading temperance

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1. George Marr (Farmer, Cairnboogie) Total Abstinence from Intoxicating Beverages London 1860 p 27
 2. The earliest Scottish publication seems to have been a pamphlet by Rev. Peter Mearns, then a U.P probationer entitled, A Brief Illustration of the evidence in favour of the use of unintoxicating wine in the Lords supper, with a reply to some objections . Glasgow 1843.

paper dismissed it with the contemptuous comment

'that the Abstinence cause could well have been spared the "learning" which has been displayed on what is called the "wine question". ' 1

Up to 1860 temperance writers, particularly concerned to reach the religious community, made little mention of the Wine Question and confined themselves to the Christian expediency argument.^{2,3.}

By the 1870s the publication of the Scottish Temperance League which outlined the dogmas of the movement and expounded the standard justifications for total abstinence gave a prominent place to the Bible Wine question.^{4,5.} A movement for the use of unfermented wine in the churches was established and was supported by the major Scottish temperance organisations. By the 1880s, the belief that the wines of scripture were generally unfermented grape juice and that this non-alcoholic beverage was the form of wine used by Christ had become the orthodox belief in the Scottish Temperance movement.

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1. Scottish Temperance Review No. 1845.
 2. Rev. Alex. Spencer (Free Church Cornhill) A Plea for abstinence with suggestions on the duty of the church in reference to it . Glasgow n.d. C 1856.
 3. Rev. Dr. Brown (Dalkeith) Nehushtan or the principles of Hezekiah's Reformation appeal to the Temperance Question . Glasgow n.d. C 1858.
 4. The Temperance shorter catechism and confession of Faith. Glasgow 1877.
 5. Rev. William Reid. The Temperance Cyclopaedia Glasgow 1880

The accuracy or otherwise of Bible Wine scholarship is not an issue here, but it is relevant to explain why this question made such ground in the Scottish temperance movement after its initial cool reception. This was not, on the face of it, one of the more constructive controversies in the movement. It created bitterness and division on a matter which was unrelated to policy or strategy. The exotic nature of the argument and the persistence with which it was pressed raised opposition within the Church. More generally the justification of the temperance cause by reference to scriptural authority seems less compatible with the tendency of the movement to advocate a socially aware Christianity than the argument from the spirit of the Gospel. The explanation for this curious episode seems to be in some of the changing characteristics of the movement. Early teetotallers who had once been drinkers themselves had little difficulty in making exceptions in their pledge for both the sacramental and the medicinal use of alcohol. As the movement became imbued with its own demonology, exceptions to the pledge became less tolerable. By 1880 a growing proportion of the movement's members had never touched alcohol and had been exposed since childhood to stories of its horrific effects. To touch drink under any circumstances seemed a dreadful defilement and the revulsion felt was multiplied by the circumstances in which alcohol had to be consumed. It seemed wickedly

incongruous to teetotallers that the commodity which they portrayed as the great destroyer of man should be used to symbolise Christ's promise of resurrection and eternal life.^{1,2.}

Once the belief that the wine of the scriptures was un-intoxicating had become established in the temperance movement it began to be an issue in the relations of the movement and the Churches. In the 1870s the question of whether it was permissible to use unfermented wine instead of alcoholic wine at the communion came before the courts in all three presbyterian denominations.³ Attempts were made to hold special services for those who conscientiously refused to drink wine. In the United Presbyterian church, where feelings ran high, elders who passed the cup at the communion were deprived of their office and a sizable proportion of the Coldstream congregation left the church.⁴ There were inevitably cases in the church courts and these soon reached the assemblies. It was the Established Church where teetotalism was weakest that showed the way out of

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1. Rev. William Reid. Temperance Autobiography of the Rev. William Reid Glasgow 1885 p 80
 2. Rev. James Smith (Tarland) Communion Wine Glasgow 1886.
 3. For a more detailed account of this controversy see D. Jamie John Hope Philanthropist and Reformer Op.Cit Ch XXIV and Alexander Black J.P. The Churches and Unfermented Wine in Scottish Temperance Annual 1913.
 4. S.T.L. Register 1877 p 40

Table 13 Number of Congregations in Scotland using
unfermented wine at the Communion
by denomination

	Established Church	Free Church	United Presbyterian Church	Evangelical Union	Congreg. Church	Baptist Union	Others	Total
1873	2	5	10	71	14	7	7	116
1887	17	70	80	73	60	27	18	327
1888	17	75	88	77	64	30	18	369
1889	17	78	94	79	64	31	18	381
1891	22	106	116	85	66	35	25	455
1900	43		375		167	119	125	829
1906	49		521		185	124	127	1006
1910	75		639		184	136	159	1192
1912	87		711		186	136	163	1283

Sources: S.T.L. Register in available years.

The spread of unfermented wine was regarded with satisfaction by temperance reformers but it would be unwise to read too much into this victory. In calvanist theology the wine used at the communion was only symbolic of the blood of Christ and perhaps the beverage used did not matter overmuch. The acceptance by the churches of unfermented wine - the United Free Church General Assembly used it in celebrating communion in 1908 - does not mean they accepted the scriptural analysis justifying its use. The success of temperance pressure in this instance may indicate that after initial opposition, the issue was not regarded as sufficiently important to risk dissention in the Church. Nevertheless the rapid adoption of unfermented wine after 1880 provides corroborating evidence of increasing temperance influence in the dissenting churches in the last quarter of the 19th century.

Comparing the position of the churches on the temperance question around 1900 with that of about 1860, the major change had been that the churches, as well as recognising the seriousness of the drink problem, had to a far greater extent accepted the temperance movement's version of the nature of the problem and prescription for its cure. Churchmen speaking of this subject used the language and assumptions of earlier teetotallers.

There were still important differences between the denominations. The United Free Church commended abstinence to members as 'a lawful and honourable course' and conversely warned its communicants of the dangers of participation in the drink traffic. The Established Church refused to do either of these things, and its temperance society, like that of the Church of England, was open to moderate drinkers. Its official position, as explained to the Royal Commission on Licensing, was that 'we refuse to declare that the temperate use of alcohol is sinful' but at the same time its use was 'full of peril, full of danger'.¹ It was a commodity to be used with the utmost caution and one whose sale required stringent control. The Established Church, like the other protestant denominations, supported temperance legislation, including local veto. Wider acceptance of the ideas of the temperance movement was accompanied by closer and more sympathetic relations between the churches and temperance organisations. Ministers now played a leading role in temperance societies and occupied important positions in the higher reaches of the movement's hierarchy. The denominational temperance societies had ceased to have only a token existence

1. Op.cit R.C.Liquor Licensing Parl. Papers 1898 Vol. XXXVIII Evidence of Rev. J. Paton representing the Church of Scotland. Q. 52,096.

and had adopted the model of the established secular organisations, with a network of local societies on a congregational basis. Again it was the Free Church, which reorganised its temperance society in 1884, which showed greatest energy. By 1900 the Free Church Temperance Society was the largest and fastest growing temperance organisation in the country, giving it an influential voice in the federation of Scottish temperance organisations which attempted to co-ordinate the movement's activities.¹ Institutionally as well as ideologically the churches and the temperance movement were more closely linked.

Explanations of the change in the churches' position on temperance have already been made and emphasis has been placed on teetotallers acting as pressure groups within the denominations. Such activity became a permanent feature of church affairs, reaching a climax at each annual assembly, as befitted a presbyterian system. Activity of this kind may help to account for the

1. Table 14 Membership of the Free Church Temperance Society
1891 - 97.

Table 14

Free Church of Scotland Temperance Society
Membership 1891 - 1897.

	No. of Adult Societies.	No. of Bands of Hope.	Membership of Adult Societies.	Membership of Bands of Hope.
1891	294	400	30,795	49,214
1892	349	462	37,560	52,970
1893	437	552	42,543	63,626
1894	506	586	46,969	64,633
1895	528	628	52,366	73,296
1896	541	657	55,919	77,376
1897	572	696	57,100	81,096

Source Free Church of Scotland Temperance Yearbook
 1891 - 97.

Church's reaction to the newly recognised drink problem in the 1840s and 50s but it does not adequately explain the conversion of the clergy to abstinence after 1875. That implies the acceptance of temperance arguments which had previously been rejected or ignored. The temperance case, as addressed to the pious, had consisted of two basic arguments. The first, dating from the inception of the movement, was that religious persuasion and religious institutions in themselves were inadequate to bring the unconverted of an industrial population to God. It was essential if the souls of men were to be saved that attention be given to their physical needs. The second argument, emphasised by the early teetotallers, was that responsibility for drunkenness lay with the whole of society not only with the drunkard and especially lay with those in positions of moral authority. In a Scottish context this pointed to the Churches and the ministry whose traditions included claims to moral leadership and pretensions to responsibility for the state of the nation.¹ Ministers above all had a duty to set an example to weaker brethren to do, as Paul advised, 'nothing whereby thy brother stumbleth'. Once the Church had accepted the enormity of the drink problem, teetotallers chided them for denying liquor to the poor and punishing them for drunkenness in

1. Op.cit S. Mechie The Church and Scottish Social History
Ch. 1 contains a good statement of this claim.

in church courts while refusing to provide Christian example.¹
The arguments were refined and elaborated and presented in a
multitude of forms from the sermon to the temperance novel but
they remained the basis of the temperance case to the end of
the century.²

There were a number of general and particular reasons why
the temperance movement's views should have become more widely
acceptable in the churches in the course of the 19th century.
The early temperance movement was rejected by churchmen not just
for the company it kept but because it challenged important
assumptions of the prevailing Evangelical orthodoxy and because it
seemed superfluous in the great task of saving souls. Men
who confidently sent out missionaries to convert the Jews and
the Heathens did not expect the religious message to be rejected
in Glasgow. In addition the thinking of the Church in
Scotland was still largely conditioned by its rural past. There
was, for instance, little understanding of the change in class
relations and social values which were taking place in industrialising

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1. Op.cit Aristides (pseud) A Reply to Rev. James Gibson's
Principles of Bible Temperance
 2. 'The Fallen Minister' - 'a new tale from the pen of the
Rev. John Mason of Dundee', presented
the familiar temperance case 'in
the garb of fiction'.
S.T.L. Register 1876 p p 53/54

areas. The cities were seen to be like small rural towns writ large, amendable to the familiar machinery of parish government. Evangelical beliefs and church traditions combined to interpret intemperance as a religious problem requiring for its solution the strengthening of ecclesiastical institutions. Robert Kettle, once a follower of Chalmers and a deacon of St. Johns, sought to refute these views. 'Our churches are more destitute of people than our people are of churches'.¹ Drunkenness was more than a sin having its origins only in the corrupt heart of man

'Its prominent cause comes from the habits and not the hearts of men..... Drunkenness is a compound evil, it is a disease as well as a sin. Conversion of itself will never cure a bodily disease'.²

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1. Robert Kettle Compulsoryism and Endowments exposed in a letter to William Collins . Glasgow 1836.
 2. Rev. William Reid (ed) Temperance Memorials of the late Robert Kettle, containing selections from his writings on the Temperance Question . Glasgow S.T.L. 1853.

Dr. Guthrie looking down into the Cowgate from George IV bridge was reminded of the vision of Ezekial and the valley of the dry bones. Experience of working with the people there led Guthrie to the same conclusions as Kettle. Building churches and schools 'though they be as thick as trees in the forest', would avail nothing until social evils like intemperance were tackled.¹ The most pious temperance reformers with the most impeccable evangelical credentials were driven by experience to suggest social explanations and social remedies for the drink problem. Their interpretation and example gained ground as the earlier confidence in the efficacy of religion was eroded.

The Church in Scotland in the second half of the 19th century was faced with some particularly difficult problems of adjustment. It lost the prestige which had formerly come from the exercise of secular authority. While traditional doctrines and beliefs in general faced new challenges, Calvinism, the theological foundation of most of the Scottish churches, established and otherwise, became especially untenable.²

1. Dr. Guthrie Autobiography pp 372-379

2. R. Mitchison A History of Scotland London 1970 pp 396/397

New scientific theories of the origins and development of man, especially those based on geological discoveries, gained currency in Scotland, raising awkward questions about the interpretation of scripture.¹ By and large the church adapted gracefully to these new ideas. Morison, the heretic of 1843, became a respected theologian in his old age. The implications of the new scientific ideas were not explored in great depth and the church managed to avoid bitter debate and division.² One by one the established certainties of the church's role and teaching had to be quietly abandoned. The glad confident morning of evangelicalism was over. It became increasingly obvious as Scotland became predominantly an urban industrial society, that the Church had ceased to be the church of all the people. Concern at their inability to reach the working classes gave the old temperance argument, that drunkenness was an obstacle to the success of religion, a new relevance to churchmen. Prohibitionists added to this the explanation that working men were alienated from the Church because it had failed to identify itself with their problems and struggles.³ 'The Christian conscience', observed the Rev. Professor Blaikie, explaining the

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1. C.C.Gillespie Genesis and Geology New York Harper Torchbook Edition 1959.
 2. Op.cit Drummond and Bulloch The Church in Victorian Scotland Ch. 8.
 3. Social Reformer Sept. 1867

changed attitude to teetotalism in the Free Church, 'has been stung by the condition of the lapsed masses'.¹ In a church which was becoming concerned to justify itself, which was seeking new roles and was perplexed to find solutions to the problems facing it, the combination of social involvement and moral crusade offered by the Temperance movement had greater appeal.

So far no explanation has been offered for the differential penetration of the temperance viewpoint in the different denominations. Why in particular did the Free Church prove more susceptible to teetotal arguments than the Established Church? An ideal explanation of this would require a more detailed consideration of the structure, basis of support and general attitudes in the respective denominations than can be attempted here. However, if the churches were indeed attracted to temperance reform by an increasing need to prove their relevance and to seek new roles, then there are a number of ways in which these circumstances apply particularly to the

1. Rev. Professor W.G. Blackie The Attitude of Christians towards the Temperance Reformation in Free Church Temperance Yearbook 1891.

Free Church. On leaving the Establishment, Free Church ministers experienced a most dramatic change in their status, cushioned at first by the crown of martyrdom and the magnitude of the task in hand. By the 1870s the Free Church had reached the end of its period of expansion and its original self image of an established church in exile was becoming unreal. The initial momentum and sense of purpose of the Disruption era had been expended. What remained was a strong sense of moral superiority over the Established Church, although it was not always clear how this could be manifested. Pressures on the Free Church ministry to maintain a position of moral authority by precept and example were especially strong and it was precisely on such pretensions that temperance arguments played, offering at the same time the opportunity to become part of an on-going crusade. The pioneers of social Christianity in Scotland, Thomas Guthrie and James Begg, were Free Churchmen and the tradition of social concern established in the denomination was continued later in the century by W.G. Blackie, W.S. Swanson and James Barr. These men represented a wide variety of interests in social affairs but all of them saw temperance reform as a key issue in the effort to improve social conditions in industrial Scotland. Compared to the Established Church where the influence of the landed class remained strong the

Free Church (and even more the United Presbyterian Church) had a relatively urban base. This may have made the indifference of the working classes to religion a more familiar and pressing concern, predisposing them to accept the temperance movement's viewpoint on this question. The general and particular reasons why temperance arguments should have been accepted in the churches apply especially to the circumstance of the Free Church.

The paradox that Christians in their concern for the triumph of religion should have pushed the Church in the direction of secular concerns recalls Professor Chadwick's conclusion that 'the Christian state was dismantled by Christians for the sake of keeping the people Christian'.¹ One cannot regard the temperance movement as in itself a great secularising influence, it was too unintellectual for that. Its significance is as an agency transferring doubt into practical action. As faith became less certain, the Church sought to compensate in works. In some respects the temperance cause became attractive to religious men because drunkenness was a

1. Owen Chadwick The Secularisation of the European Mind in
 the 19th century .
 Cambridge 1975 p 93

sin and a moral outrage as well as a social problem and therefore a small step away from their traditional preoccupations than other causes. The idea of temperance reform as a halfway house in the process of the secularisation of the church has to be seen against the fact that few temperance reformers considered it to be in isolation from other questions of social reform. About the turn of the ^{20th} 19th century, men like the Rev. James Barr were beginning to question whether solutions to these problems could be found within the existing social and political system but this did not inhibit him from continuing to advocate temperance reform.¹ By this time however the suspicions of the early critics of temperance reform were beginning to be confirmed, that in attempting to improve the material conditions of men in order to save their souls, the ultimate objective would be lost sight of.

One of the most prevalent popular beliefs about the Scottish temperance movement is that it had its roots in the deeply ingrained puritanism of the national Calvinistic heritage. It might be expected that if this was indeed the case, the Church in Scotland, guardian of that heritage, would have espoused the temperance cause with great alacrity and enthusiasm than it did.

1. W.H. Marwick James Barr, Modern Covenanter
Scottish Journal of Science. Vol 1 Oct. 1973.

Curiously enough one of the common criticisms of total abstinence was that it was a 'monkish austerity' unbecoming to protestantism. The general impression is of the Church somewhat reluctantly, and of course incompletely, aligning itself with the cause of temperance reform. Sometimes one is left with a vague suspicion that churchmen were even more reluctant converts than the available evidence suggests and that they were pressurised into tacit support for a cause for which they had no deep sympathy. The temperance report at the General Assembly of the United Free Church

'rarely attracted a large attendance of members; on the other hand the galleries were uncommonly well filled, a fact which might lead the unthinking to suppose that public opinion - at least Church public opinion - was more interested in temperance than the Assembly'. 1

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1. op.cit Rev. George M. Reith. Reminiscences of the United Free Church General Assembly 1900-1939 .

Maybe so, but one recalls the 1848 Church of Scotland Report on Drunkenness, read to an empty assembly hall. The suspicion remains, for all the numbers of abstaining ministers, of a well organised pressure group at work whose claims the Church found difficult to reject but was not over eager to accept. Whether this speculation has any validity or not, by the end of the century a position had been publicly taken up by important sectors of the Church on total abstinence and temperance reform which was difficult to relinquish quickly. Ironically the Church which was late in taking up the temperance cause was left as its chief defender after the rapid decline in popular support for the movement after 1918, a position likely to be interpreted today as a factor increasing the alienation of working men from the Church.

SECTION V

Teetotallers and their Activities.

SUMMARY

In this section I have tried to approximately measure the extent and social basis of support for the Temperance movement in Scotland and to consider the ordinary activity of temperance societies in an attempt to explain how that support was sustained over a long period of time.

Estimates of the number of teetotallers is complicated by the fact that the movement did not have a modern concept of membership, by the decentralised structure which meant that no comprehensive record of temperance support was ever kept and by the existence of cross membership of different organisations. The figures that are available show that membership of the movement after falling in the 1840s after the initial enthusiasm for total abstinence grew unevenly over the second half of the century. In 1900 there was still no obvious sign of decline in support.

Support for the original total abstinence societies had come predominantly from working people and a breakdown of the membership of the Hawick Total Abstinence Society is used to illustrate this. Occupational classification of the membership of the Scottish Temperance League between 1850 and 1900 shows an increase in middle class support by the end of the century. The indications are that the movement drew much of its support from marginal groups at the bottom fringe of the

middle class and the upper section of the working class. Tensions between teetotallers of different social class, religious persuasion or political views was minimised by the existence of large numbers of organisations catering for special groups within the movement.

The normal activities of temperance societies were less politically orientated than earlier chapters might suggest and much more lighthearted than the current gloomy reputation of the movement would lead one to expect. There was much emphasis on the provision of entertainment and this performed a number of important functions for the movement. It sustained the interest of members, attracted people into the ambit of the movement, raised funds and established links between local societies and the national organisations which supplied professional lecturers. It was a major objective of the movement to encourage new recreational patterns and its actions supply interesting examples of the use of the arts in the service of social reform. The attitudes and practices of teetotallers in relation to recreation go some way to redressing the current popular estimate of the Temperance movement as a narrow minded expression of Scottish puritanism.

CHAPTER II

The support for the Scottish Temperance Movement.

References have been made in earlier chapters to the social groups from which the membership of temperance organisations came and to fluctuations in support for the movement. Middle class concern about drunkenness created the possibility that they would see in the temperance movement the best means of combating the evil. The growing tendency for ministers to become abstainers indicates that teetotalism was becoming more acceptable to a section of the middle class by the end of the century. It is desirable therefore to elaborate on earlier statements and to show as far as possible what kind of people joined temperance organisations, and in what numbers, and at the same time to investigate the extent to which the social basis of support for the movement changed over the long term.

Any attempt to discover the most basic of information, the number of teetotallers and thereby the fluctuations in support for temperance, immediately comes upon a number of problems. Firstly the Temperance movement for much of the 19th century lacked a modern concept of membership. Secondly the decentralised structure of the movement meant that there was no single central

body faithfully recording the existence of branches throughout the country. A teetotaler was one who had signed the pledge and was normally placed on the roll of a temperance society. Payment of a subscription was deemed less important than this declaration not to use alcohol and to contribute to the abolition of its social use. Even when the movement became more institutionalised, payment of money as a test of membership of local organisations was resisted. For instance, the levying of a subscription as a condition of membership was tried by Aberdeen Temperance society in 1844 but was quickly abandoned.¹ The annual reports of the Aberdeen society and the minute books of the Hawick Total Abstinence Society record the number of enrolled members or the number of new enrolments in the course of the year and this was the normal practice of societies of this kind. 'The Aberdeen Temperance Society' complained^{Cook,} 'has been upwards of fifty years in existence and it cannot trace or tell its membership. The same applies to similar associations'.² On the other hand national temperance organisations like the Scottish Temperance League and the Scottish Permissive Bill Association did have membership based on the payment of subscriptions and published annual lists.³ Both these organisations invited the affiliation of local societies but only a minority of these actually did so. There is often no means of knowing accurately therefore how many local temperance societies were in existence. Later

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1. Op.cit A.S.Cook Pen Sketches and Reminiscences of Fifty Years p 43
 2. Ibid p 230
 3. Figure 5 p 384

temperance bodies such as the International Order of Good Templars were more centrally organised with local lodges having both district and national attachments, resembling a branch structure. The number of Good Templar lodges and their membership can therefore be stated accurately as can the membership of the Free Church Temperance Society organised after 1884 on a congregational basis.^{1,2.} For obvious reasons the Independent Order of Rechabites, the leading temperance friendly society, kept accurate records of its members.³ From about 1870 therefore information as to the number of temperance societies and their membership improves. The problem then becomes one of overlapping membership. As the number of local and national temperance organisations increased and the antipathy between former rivals abated it became commonplace for teetotalers to join more than one of them. There is however no means of estimating the extent of cross membership.

Estimates of the number of temperance societies connected to the four regional unions together with their membership were made in 1840/41. Ten years later the Scottish Temperance League sent a circular to known temperance societies in Scotland asking for details of their membership. These estimates are summarised in Table 15. Although the two sets of figures

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1. Table 16
 2. Table 14
 3. Table 17

TABLE. 15

Membership of Temperance Societies in Scotland

1840/41 and 1850

1840/41	<u>No. of Societies</u>	<u>No. Members.</u>
(a) West of Scotland Temperance Union.	110	61,905
(b) East of Scotland Temperance Union	89	37,544
(c) Fife and Kinross Temperance Union.	29	5,500
(d) North of Scotland Temperance Union	62	20,214
	<hr/>	
Total	290	125,164
1850		
(e) Adult Societies	201	77,189
Juvenile Societies	126	46,182

- Sources: (a) Scottish Temperance Journal July 1840
 (b) (Scottish Temperance Herald Jan. 1842
 (2nd Annual Report of Edinburgh T.A.S.
 (c) Fifeshire Teetotal Courant Nov. 1840
 (d) Report of the Executive Committee of the North of
 Scotland Temperance Union 1840/41.
 (e) S.T.L. Register. 1851.

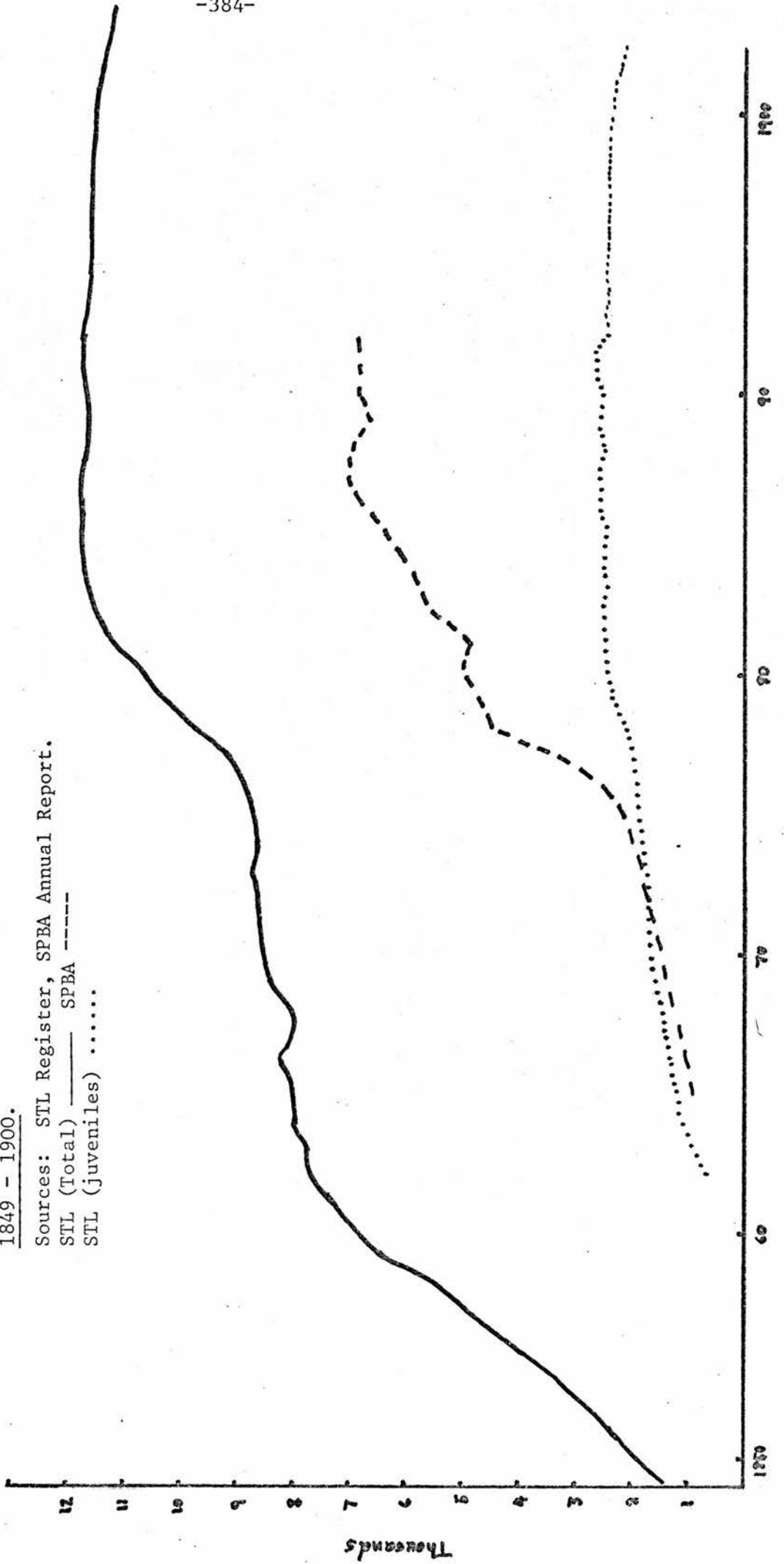
are not directly comparable they support the view that the movement suffered serious decline in adult membership in the 1840s. From 1849 the membership of the Scottish Temperance League was published annually and this rose rapidly in the 1850s. This growth trend, although not necessarily its rate, was probably experienced by most local societies in a period of increasing interest in the temperance question. At the end of the decade the great religious revival had a spin-off effect on their recruitment. By 1863 the number of societies affiliated to the League had increased from 145 in 1851 to 413 in 1863. Numbers fell slightly over the next decade but remained steady at just over 400 for the best of the century. The movement received fresh impetus in 1869 from the formation of the International Order of Good Templars whose lodges to some extent replaced old established total abstinence societies. From about the mid 70s, the League and the Permissive Bill Association experienced a sharp upward trend in membership lasting about a decade.¹ From 1878 the British Women's Temperance Association and from 1884 the re-organised Free Church Temperance Society grew rapidly until the end of the century, as did the Independent Order of Rechabites founded as far back as 1838 but insignificant before the 1880s.² Apart from a period in the 1860s, therefore the Scottish Temperance movement seems to have had growth sections during most of the second half

1. Figure 5

2. Tables 14, 17

Figure 5.
Membership of the Scottish Temperance League
and the Scottish Permissive Bill Association
1849 - 1900.

Sources: STL Register, SPBA Annual Report.
STL (Total) ——— SPBA -----
STL (juveniles)



of the century. However there was no period in which all the temperance organisations mentioned grew rapidly all at the same time. The Good Templars were going into decline in the 1870s just as the League and the Permissive Bill Association were beginning to grow again. The League and the Association stagnated in the 1890s when all the others were enjoying growth. After 1850 the recorded membership of the national temperance organisations show a pattern of uneven growth rather than violent fluctuation. Wide variations in levels of support were more likely to be experienced by local societies which for the reasons mentioned cannot be illustrated numerically but can certainly be inferred from the records of Aberdeen and Hawick. Fluctuation in support and enthusiasm was rather taken for granted, 'temperance work', according to Bailie Lewis 'being of necessity somewhat fitful, it being impossible to maintain it always at high pressure while the liquor traffic never sleeps'.¹ Around the turn of the century the membership of the major national temperance organisations was as follows.

1. Op.Cit David Lewis. The Drink Traffic in the 19th Century its Growth and Influence p 25.

Table 16. Membership of International Order of Good Templars,
Scotland. 1869 - 1903.

(Sources: Good Templary, its work and workers 1869-1894 Glasgow 1893
Good Templary in Scotland 1869 - 1929 Glasgow and (C 1930)

	No. of Lodges	No. of Members	No. Juvenile lodges.	No. Juvenile members.
1871	486	50,000(est)	-	-
1876	804	62,334	317	21,673
1888	670	37,086	-	-
1894	663	38,027	406	29,609
1903	-	51,530	-	46,110

Table 17. Membership of Independent Order of Rechabites (Scottish Districts)

1885-1910

	<u>Adults</u>	<u>Juveniles</u>
1885	1706	1884
1890	6849	6752
1895	16,438	9835
1900	26,938	16143
1905	38,571	27352
1910	47,717	39445

Source: R. Campbell Rechabite History Manchester 1911

Table. 18. Membership of the leading national temperance
organisations in Scotland. C 1900

	<u>Adults.</u>	<u>Juveniles</u>
S.T.L. (1900)	9,106	2,126
S.P.B.A. (1890)	6,880	-
I.O.G.T. (1903)	51,530	46,110
I.O.R. (1900)	26,938	16,143
B.W.T.A. (SCU) (1900)	25,000	-
F.C.T.S. (1897)	57,100	81,096
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	176,554	145,472
	<hr/>	<hr/>

The total is not a very meaningful figure even as an indication of the number of active teetotalers. Cross membership would tend to reduce it; on the other hand members of local Temperance societies and denominational societies other than the Free Church may not appear in this list at all. There is of course no means whatever of knowing how many people were practising teetotalers but did not belong to any temperance organisation. The number of these must have been very small in 1850 but in the light of changing drinking habits and social attitudes could well have been quite numerous by 1900. We can conclude with a fair degree of certainty that active support for the Temperance movement in Scotland had never been higher and that there was no obvious sign of decline in support for the movement at the end of the 19th century.

What kind of people joined temperance societies? Previous chapters have argued that around 1840 they were mainly working men and women and that there were good reasons why the middle classes should have shunned these organisations. Conceptions of social class in 1840 were still at a formative stage. What for instance are we to make of the declaration the

'the temperance movement originated and has been chiefly sustained by the middling and hard working classes'

receiving little support from the 'more intelligent and influential classes'? ¹ Fortunately the roll book of the Hawick Total Abstinence Society gives us a more precise picture of the social make-up of one such early society. The Hawick society was formed at a meeting held on the 9th April 1838. By the 10th, 303 people had enrolled, by the 21st of May, 659, the thousandth member enrolled on October 22nd and by the end of 1839 there were, including probationary members, about 2000 in the roll. ² By then a good many had withdrawn or been expelled and about 300 are listed as such in the roll book. At its peak the society had perhaps 1500 members. Given the reservations

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1. Scottish Temperance Journal July 1840.
 2. Roll Book of the Hawick Total Abstinence Society. Hawick P.L. The roll was not very neatly kept and was abandoned in 1840.

stated earlier about the concept of membership applied to a society of this kind the number itself is less significant than the general indication of a great wave of interest in total abstinence. About 29 per cent of the total population of Hawick signed the pledge in 1838/39. After July 1838 the occupation of most new male members was given. Between that date and the abandonment of the attempt to keep an accurate roll in 1840, 964 persons joined of whom 575 were males, 305 females and 84 juveniles. Of the males 517 gave their occupations. The nine most common occupations are listed below.

Stockingmakers	235
Shoemakers	31
Spinners	22
Joiners	20
Tailors	19
Weavers	18
Labourers	13
Warehousemen	11
Blacksmith (including smiths)	10
	<hr/>
Total	379

With the exception of warehousemen all these occupations involved manual work and together they account for 73 per cent of the males whose occupation is known. Using the system described below devised to analyse the membership of the Scottish Temperance League the occupations of the Hawick teetotallers can be classified thus.

Table. 19 Occupational classification of 517 members
of the Hawick T.A.S. Source: roll book
of the society 1839.

Mins & Miss.	Prof. Men	Manuf. Contr. & Shipbldrs.	Merchts. & Ship owners.	Shopkprs & Ind. props.	Clerks & S/V workrs.	Skilled Men	U/skilled Men	Size of Sample.	% Occ. given.
-	-	-	-	1	3	80	13	468/ 575	81

A large proportion of the skilled manual workers were almost certainly self employed, the hand loom stocking makers for instance. It is possible of course that the founders of the society were of a quite different social class but this does not appear to have been the case. The leading figures in the society were working men, many of them with Chartist sympathies. The membership of the Hawick society reflects the occupational structure of this textile and market town. In Hawick as in Paisley, support for total abstinence was especially strong and this gave the society a position of some importance in the movement. However, in its pattern of growth and social basis of support the Hawick society was probably quite typical of a local temperance organisation around 1840. Even in Edinburgh where there were 16000 teetotallers in 1839. Dr. Guthrie recalled

'there were very few persons....above the rank of working men who were abstainers and these few were regarded as well meaning enthusiasts at best'. 1

The most prominent middle class teetotallers in Edinburgh were Rev. Henry Wight, a dissenting minister and William Menzies, a doctor. Both men were well known for their sympathy with

the working class. In the North-east the support of a few landowners, notably Sir Francis Mackenzie of Gairloch and a number of ministers, gave the movement greater respectability there. Even so the committee of the Aberdeen Total Abstinence Society 'were almost all working men who had but a limited education and experience of business'.¹ Middle class support was most influential in Glasgow. The Rev. William Reid recalled that meetings there were addressed by two classes of men, 'working men of different crafts', some of them reformed drunkards and 'practical men of business'.² Of this latter group Reid mentioned eight names, seven of whom are traceable. Only two of them, Robert Kettle and John McGavin were substantial merchants at this time. Two ministers in Glasgow supported total abstinence, Rev. Dr. Bates and Rev. Thomas Pullar,

'the entire body of Gospel ministers with these two exceptions holding aloof from the movement'³

The decline of Chartism and the falling away of mass support coincided with a small increase in the numbers of ministers and business^{men}/associating themselves with the movement in the later 1840s.

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1. Op.cit A.S.Cook Pen Sketches and Reminiscences of Fifty Years p 14.
 2. Op.cit Rev.William Reid. Temperance Autobiography p 13.
 3. Ibid.

Robert Smith merchant and shipowner of Glasgow, William Service a Glasgow manufacturer and William Smeal a Quaker well known for his anti slavery activities joined the movement at this time. The attempt by the Scottish Temperance League to woo the middle classes in the 1850s had some success. Its president Robert Smith pointed to the increased membership of men who did not need for financial reasons to be teetotaliers.¹ In Aberdeen A.S.Cook noted in 1860 that the 3000 abstainers in that city were 'not now confined to one class or section of the Church'.² By 1860 the support base of the movement had widened to include a larger middle class membership. J.L. Lang went unchallenged however when he reminded the League that the backbone of the movement was still the working men and women in the local societies and indeed this was true of the membership of the League itself.

From 1849 onwards the Scottish Temperance League printed annually the names, addresses and in many cases the occupations of its members. This occupational data is used to supplement impressionistic evidence of the social basis of support for the temperance movement. Like all occupational data it suffers from inherent limitations, compounded in this case by the

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1. Abstainers Journal May 1856
 2. S.T.L. Weekly Journal Feb 4 1860

incompleteness of the information. In 1851 about 95 per cent of males gave their occupations but this had dropped to around 60 per cent in 1881 and nearly 40 per cent in 1901. It is probable that a considerable proportion (of the order of 35 per cent) of the males with no occupations were dependants but this is only an estimate based on acquaintance with the entries which are often in family groups. An increasing proportion of the League's members were women and children, around 12 per cent in 1851 but approaching 50 per cent by 1881. By 1901 rather less than one in four of the names listed give occupation. To make the fullest use of the information a number of towns were selected and the entire adult male membership of each was classified. The criteria applied is that they should be towns with a reputation for temperance activity and with a respectably large membership of the League. Preference was given to industrial towns to try to shed light on the League's ability to attract unskilled manual workers including miners and factory workers. The towns chosen were Boness, Cumnock, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Greenock, Hawick and Paisley accounting for approximately 20 per cent of the League's adult male membership.

The classification of the occupations was kept as simple as possible. Eight categories were used.

- (1) Ministers and missionaries
- (2) Professional men
- (3) Manufacturers, shipbuilders and contractors
- (4) Merchants and shipowners
- (5) Shopkeepers and independant proprietors
- (6) Clerical and supervisory workers.
- (7) Skilled manual workers
- (8) Unskilled manual workers

Categories 3 and 4 of course say nothing about the size of the business. The most difficult problems of definition occurred with categories 2, 5 and 7. The emphasis in 2 is placed on formal training and qualifications so that, for instance, bankers and accountants (unless chartered) were placed in category 6. A large proportion of 2 therefore are doctors, lawyers and teachers. Category 6 was fairly straightforward and most occupations in this category, clerks, shop assistants and foremen were employees. Occupations where manual skills were involved were placed in category 7 although in the 19th century some of these would have been self employed or would have sold their own products. Shopkeepers included grocers, greengrocers, tobacconists, etc. occupations which

involved no manual skill requiring specialist training but demanded commercial skills and perhaps some small capital investment. Sometimes the distinctions are rather arbitrary for instance, drapers are in category 5 but tailors in 7. Distinctions between skilled and unskilled manual workers posed a few problems since a hierarchy of skills existed. Category 7 is heavily weighed by traditional skilled artizans, tailors, shoemakers, masons, joiners, blacksmiths and some new crafts, engineers, iron moulders, printers. Category 8 includes industrial and non-industrial workers, farmservants and domestic servants as well as spinners and miners.

The analysis was carried out in each decade between 1850 and 1900. Each category is expressed as a percentage of the total number of males whose occupation was given, not as a percentage of the total number of males registered. Both total figures are given in column 9 and the percentage of those whose occupations are known is given in column 10. The assumption tacitly made therefore is that males who did not give their occupations are evenly distributed over the occupational range. It is possible that working men were more likely to give their occupations and that middle class membership tends to be understated in the later years. On the other hand some distortion is introduced in the opposite direction by the fact that ministers are always identifiable and doctors usually so.

Table 20 Occupational Classification of the Membership of the S.T.L. in selected towns in each decade 1850 - 1900.
Source: S.T.L. Register (1860 not available).

	Mins Miss	Prof Men	Manuf. Ship/Bldrs	Merchants Ship/Owners	Shopkprs Indep. Proprs.	Clerks Sup/Vis Workers	Skilled Manual	Unskilled Manual	Size of Sample	% Occup given
<u>Boness</u>										
1850	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1861	3	7	10	4	17	13	23	27	30/31	97
1870	4	4	8	-	8	44	20	12	25/26	96
1880	3	3	3	-	11	35	29	15	65/77	85
1890	5	9	2	2	9	33	29	12	58/68	85
1900	7	5	2	10	7	34	27	7	41/59	70
<u>Cumnock</u>										
1850	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1861	2	2	2	5	20	7	59	2	44/53	83
1870	3	-	3	6	20	11	54	3	35/41	85
1880	5	9	5	9	27	9	36	-	22/33	66
1890	13	7	-	-	40	27	13	-	15/17	88
1900	15	15	-	-	31	23	15	-	13/21	62

Table 20 (continued)

	Mins Miss	Prof Men	Manuf. Ship/ Bldrs	Merchants Ship/ Owners	Shopkprs Indep. Proprs.	Clerks Sup/Vis Workers	Skilled Manual	Unskilled Manual	Size of Sample	% Occup given
<u>Edinburgh</u>										
1850	8	7	2	12	15	11	35	9	161/171	95
1861	5	10	1	7	24	16	33	5	166/200	83
1870	8	12	2	6	25	15	28	4	163/225	73
1880	13	16	2	4	27	15	25	2	159/260	61
1890	21	16	2	4	22	12	21	2	192/312	61
1900	27	21	1	4	19	14	14	-	124/239	52
<u>Glasgow</u>										
1850	4	5	6	10	14	30	25	5	387/409	95
1861	5	8	6	7	14	34	24	7	652/719	91
1870	7	8	5	9	18	27	21	5	500/675	84
1880	13	10	5	9	15	22	24	2	437/857	51
1890	18	15	4	7	11	22	18	3	432/1121	39
1900	22	21	2	6	11	23	14	2	474/1127	39

Table 20 (continued)

	Mins Miss	Prof Men	Manuf. Ship/Bldrs	Merchants Ship/Owners	Shopkprs Indep. Proprs.	Clerks Sup/Vis Workers	Skilled Manual	Unskilled Manual	Size of Sample	% Occup given
<u>Greenock</u>										
1850	2	14	2	7	29	14	29	-	28/31	91
1861	6	4	-	8	18	20	37	6	51/56	91
1870	5	8	2	3	26	15	40	2	62/78	80
1880	6	14	1	9	22	16	29	3	94/122	77
1890	12	12	-	8	30	8	28	4	51/85	60
1900	12	5	-	7	44	5	26	2	43/82	52
<u>Hawick</u>										
1850	4	4	-	-	35	17	39	-	23/23	100
1861	5	-	2	-	20	23	36	11	54/54	100
1870	5	-	3	-	19	22	33	16	36/44	82
1880	4	2	2	4	26	19	33	11	47/53	89
1890	7	-	9	9	18	20	25	11	44/52	85
1900	20	3	6	12	9	15	29	6	34/49	69

Table 20 (continued)

	Mins Miss	Prof Men	Manuf. Ship/ Bldrs	Merchants Ship/ Owners	Shopkprs Indep. Props.	Clerks Sup/Vis Workers	Skilled Manual	Unskilled Manual	Size of Sample	% Occup given
<u>Paisley</u>										
1850	4	4	6	9	10	31	27	6	68/77	88
1861	3	6	9	12	14	28	25	3	65/72	90
1870	4	6	18	7	17	37	11	-	54/69	78
1880	4	10	15	7	24	21	14	4	71/103	70
1890	7	7	21	10	14	12	17	12	42/67	63
1900	14	14	21	11	11	14	4	11	28/59	48
<u>Total</u>	5	6	5	10	16	25	28	6	672/715	94
1850	5	8	6	7	17	26	24	7	1021/1144	89
1870	7	8	5	7	20	24	25	5	876/1159	76
1880	10	10	5	7	19	20	25	4	894/1504	59
1890	16	13	4	6	16	19	21	4	834/1727	50
1900	21	18	3	6	14	20	15	2	760/1738	43

Paisley

Total

Table 21

Occupational Classification of the Membership of the S.T.L. in selected towns in each decade 1850 - 1900 comparison of towns.

Source: S.T.L.Register (1860 not available)

	1850	Prof Men	Manuf. Ship/Bldrs	Merchants Ship/Owners	Shopkprs Indep. Proprs.	Clerks Sup/Vis Workers	Skilled Manual	Unskilled Manual	Size of Sample	% Occup given
Boness	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Cummock	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Edinburgh	8	7	2	12	15	11	35	9	161/171	95
Glasgow	4	5	6	10	14	30	25	5	387/409	95
Greenock	2	14	2	7	29	14	29	-	28/31	91
Hawick	4	4	-	-	35	17	39	-	23/23	100
Paisley	4	4	6	9	10	31	27	6	68/77	88
Total	5	6	5	10	16	25	28	6	672/716	94
1861										
Boness	3	7	10	4	17	13	23	27	30/31	97
Cummock	2	2	2	5	20	7	59	2	44/53	83
Edinburgh	5	10	1	7	24	16	33	5	166/200	83
Glasgow	5	8	6	7	14	34	24	7	652/719	91
Greenock	6	4	-	8	18	20	37	6	51/56	91
Hawick	5	-	2	-	20	23	36	11	54/54	100
Paisley	3	6	9	12	14	28	25	3	65/72	80
Total	5	8	6	7	17	26	24	7	102/1144	89

Table 21 (continued)

	Mins Miss	Prof Men	Manuf. Ship/ Bldrs	Merchants Ship/ Owners	Shopkprs Indep. Proprs.	Clerks Sup/Vis Workers	Skilled Manual	Unskilled Manual	Size of Sample	% Occup given
<u>1870</u>										
Boness	4	4	8	-	8	44	20	12	25/26	96
Cummock	3	-	3	6	20	11	54	3	35/41	85
Edinburgh	8	12	2	6	25	15	28	4	163/225	73
Glasgow	7	8	5	9	18	27	21	5	500/675	84
Greenock	5	8	2	3	26	15	40	2	62/78	80
Hawick	5	-	3	-	19	22	33	16	36/44	82
Paisley	4	6	18	7	17	37	11	-	54/69	78
Total	7	8	5	7	20	24	25	5	876/1159	76
<u>1880</u>										
Boness	3	3	3	-	11	35	29	15	65/77	85
Cummock	5	9	5	9	27	9	36	-	22/33	66
Edinburgh	13	16	2	4	27	15	25	2	159/260	61
Glasgow	13	10	5	9	15	22	24	2	437/857	51
Greenock	6	14	1	9	22	16	29	3	94/122	77
Hawick	4	2	2	4	26	19	33	11	47/53	89
Paisley	4	10	15	7	24	21	14	4	71/103	70
Total	10	10	5	7	19	20	25	4	894/1504	41

Table 21 (continued)

	Mins Miss	Prof Men	Manuf. Ship/ Bldrs	Merchants Ship/ Owners	Shopkprs Indep. Proprs.	Clerks Sup/Vis Workers	Skilled Manual	Unskilled Manual	Size of Sample	% Occup given
<u>1890</u>										
Boness	5	9	2	2	9	33	29	12	58/68	85
Cummock	13	7	-	-	40	27	13	-	15/17	88
Edinburgh	21	16	2	4	22	12	21	2	192/312	61
Glasgow	18	15	4	7	11	22	18	3	432/1121	39
Greenock	12	12	-	8	30	8	28	4	51/85	60
Hawick	7	-	9	9	18	20	25	11	44/52	85
Paisley	7	7	21	10	14	12	17	12	42/67	63
Total	16	13	4	6	16	19	21	4	834/1727	50
<u>1900</u>										
Boness	7	5	2	10	7	34	27	7	41/59	70
Cummock	15	17	-	-	31	23	15	-	13/21	62
Edinburgh	27	21	1	4	19	14	14	-	124/239	52
Glasgow	22	21	2	6	11	23	14	2	474/1227	39
Greenock	12	5	-	7	44	5	26	2	43/82	52
Hawick	20	3	6	12	9	15	29	6	34/49	69
Paisley	14	14	21	11	11	14	4	11	28/59	48
Total	21	18	3	6	14	20	15	2	760/1738	43

The extent of change in category 1 and to a lesser degree in category 2 is therefore overstated.

While conclusions based on this data must be tentative it does corroborate some points already made. For instance J.L. Lang's contention that working men and women formed the backbone of support for local temperance societies is rendered more credible by their share of the elite of the temperance movement, as the League styled its membership. Manual workers skilled and unskilled formed the largest single category in the period 1850-61 in every case except Glasgow where clerical and supervisory workers were marginally greater. If workers by hand and brain are taken together they account for over 50 per cent of members in each town in 1861. Skilled manual workers however heavily outnumbered unskilled in almost every town in every decade. The exceptions are Boness, Hawick and towards the end of the century, Paisley, all manufacturing towns. Cumnock a mining town is notable for the absence of the unskilled. Very few miners joined the Scottish Temperance League. It would appear therefore that the League was not very successful at attracting the support of unskilled industrial workers. Support from manufacturers was most notable in Paisley and to some extent also in Hawick towards the end of the century. This may suggest that the relatively small scale capitalism of textile towns was

more likely to produce teetotal employers. The great bulk of support for the League is clearly drawn from among shopkeepers and the more respectable and prosperous section of the working class. The dominance of this grouping in the membership of the League was diminishing however over the last two decades of the century as ministers and professional men assumed greater importance, especially in the two cities. The overall impression is that the League was a rather more middle class body in 1900 than it had been in 1850.

The Scottish Temperance League of course was only one of a number of national organisations. How far was its membership representative of the movement as a whole? The League was probably the most middle class orientated of the national temperance organisations. Its subscription of half a crown, frequently multiplied by the practice of enrolling wives and children in family groups, must have deterred poorer teetotalers. The tendency for the movement to attract more middle class support is supported moreover by the advent of the British Women's Temperance Association and the re-organised Free Church Temperance Society. Working class support remained strong in other organisations, particularly the Rechabites and the Good Templars. Principal Cairns, one of the leaders of the United Presbyterian Church, was clearly rather uncomfortable as a member

of a Good Templar lodge, attending only out of a 'Keen sense of duty to the "Bretheren" most of whom were working men'.¹ The register book of the Thistle Tent No.1948 of the Independant Order of Rechabites based on the Dalry Road/Gorgie district of Edinburgh shows the membership patterns of a working class temperance society at the end of the 19th century. A dentist and a missionary were the most socially exalted members. The seven most common occupations are given below and in this case female members are included.

Mason	21
Rubber worker	9
Joiner	7
Painter	6
Clerk (or clerkess)	6
Tailor (or tailoress)	6
Plumber	5

1. A.R. MacEwen D.D. Life and Letters of John Cairns DD
London 1898 p 713

Table 22

Occupational Classification of Membership of the Thistle Tent No. 1948 Independent Order
of Rechabites 1897-1909

Mins & Miss	Prof. Men	Manuf. Contr. & Shipbldrs.	Merchants & Shipownrs.	Shopkprs & Ind. Props.	Clerks & S/V Working.	Skilled manual.	Unskilled Manual	Size of Sample.	% Occ. given.
1	1	-	-	9	16	51	22	132/ 138	96

Source: Minute Books of the Thistle Tent No. 1948 I.O.R.

The groups not reached by temperance teaching in 1909 according to the Grand Chief Templar were the 'farming population' and the 'educated and wealthier classes'.¹ 'The classes' agreed the secretary of the Scottish Temperance League as a whole are not with us the 'few bright examples' being 'the exception which proves the rule'.² There is little indication either of change at the other end of the social scale. Even in the days when the movement was associated with humble working men only a few of them, admitted Robert Kettle, were from the lowest class.³ Observers outside the movement noted that

'Temperance and total abstinence societies may count the number of their members but their influence is small over the lower ranks of a manufacturing population'.⁴

In 1909 teetotalers were still finding it a problem to contact the lowest social groups.

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1. Scottish Temperance Annual 1909 pp 149/150
 2. *ibid* p 158
 3. *Op.cit* R.C. Poor Law (Scotland) Parl.Papers 1844 Vol XXII p 387
 4. *Op.cit* Rev. William Reid Temperance Memorials of the late Robert Kettle.
quoting Annual Report of the Glasgow Royal Asylum for lunatics
1843 p li

'Speaking generally our public meetings are not largely composed of men and women from the highest ranks in society, nor yet those from the lowest grades'. 1

It is probable therefore that the impression of the temperance movement conveyed by the membership of the Scottish Temperance League as an alliance of the petty bourgeoisie and the labour aristocracy was fairly characteristic of the movement as a whole and remained broadly accurate until the end of the 19th century.

Changes in support for the temperance movement between 1840 and 1900 have to be seen in terms of age and sex as well as social class. Women had been welcomed into the movement from its earliest inception and in the 1840s formed a significant proportion of the members of total abstinence societies like that at Hawick. There is no doubt that teetotallers were generally progressive by the standards of the time on the question of women's rights. Yet, apart from a few exceptions which aroused criticism from outside and controversy within the movement, women

1. Scottish Temperance Annual 1909 p 145

rarely spoke on its platforms.¹ Until the advent of the Good Templar in which female membership was almost as high as male, women took little part in the direction of temperance organisations, and their activities were confined to making tea and visiting. The existence of separate female societies showed there were exceptions to this rule but these were few before the 1870s. Women teetotallers were given a new opportunity to work through an exclusively female organisation with the formation of the British Woman's Temperance Association in 1878. By 1900 it had 218 branches and 25,000 members in Scotland.² Female membership of the Scottish Temperance League, 9 per cent of the total registered in 1851 had reached 27 per cent by 1881. By that date female temperance advocates were no longer a dangerous innovation and by the 1890s women were commonly found on temperance platforms and taking an active part in the formulation of temperance policy. It was 1911 however before the League appointed its first women agent. While they were still in the minority of active teetotallers in 1900, women accounted for a large and increasing proportion of the movement's members, and played a much more prominent part in temperance affairs. Separate temperance organisations for children had a different rationale. Their appearance can be explained as a reaction to the decline in adult support in the

Op.cit.

1. A.S.Cook Pen Sketches and Reminiscences of Fity Years p 18
2. S.T.L. Register 1901 p 81

1840s and a shift in emphasis to train up child teetotallers in the way they should go. To some extent this is a rationalisation. Juveniles had earlier joined adult societies, but there was little in their activities to maintain their interest. Separate meetings were therefore constituted with a programme of activities suited to children. The Scottish Temperance League recognising the needs of the young, began publishing the 'Adviser' a childrens' monthly paper in 1847 followed by tracts and stories for infant abstainers. In 1851 the League's census of temperance societies in Scotland included a juvenile section and there were in addition to this, organisations such as the Dundee Band of Hope and the Edinburgh British League of Juvenile Abstainers.^{1,2.} Like later leaders of youth movements the founders of these, James Scrymgeour in Dundee and John Hope W.S. in Edinburgh, showed latent militaristic tendencies, later manifested in the Volunteer movement but this should not be regarded as typical of juvenile temperance societies. Appropriate passwords and secret signs as well as an emphasis on social activity helped to make the juvenile lodges of the Good Templars successful. The

1. Op.cit Dundee Band of Hope Scrapbook. Dundee P.L.

2. Op.cit D. Jamie John Hope, philanthropist and reformer.
Chs 7 - 9

Rechabites and the Free Church Temperance Society also had large childrens sections and by 1900 most congregations, at least outside the Established Church, had Bands of Hope attached to them. At the end of the century it is probable there were as many children as adults in the temperance movement.

It can be claimed that the temperance movement by uniting men of different social classes in a common cause acted against the tendency to class polarisation in industrial society. However, it has been noticed in earlier chapters that there was evidence of class tension in temperance societies in the 1830s, that the separate development of total abstinence and licensing reform reflected the divisions in society in the 1840s and that the middle class orientation of the Scottish Temperance League created resentment and fostered division in the movement in the 1850s. An increase in middle class support later in the century was experienced which did not immediately alienate working men. Some

features of the movements membership and structure help to explain how this was possible. The movement was always highly decentralised consisting of large numbers of virtually autonomous local societies. This it was believed stimulated local effort and initiative at the same time it was conceded that

'many things....are said and done by many temperance societies which an intelligent central committee would never had been suffered to have been done'. 1

There was nothing the Scottish Temperance League could do about that except deplore excess since it had no control over local societies. Conversely local societies had little control over the Scottish Temperance League. Affiliated societies could send delegates to its annual meetings but seldom seem to have done so and were easily outnumbered by the individual membership. This weakness in the movement's government and system of communications was a factor in the division of 1858.

1. Scottish Temperance Review July 1851

As more centralised organisations made their appearance the number of national organisations multiplied each catering for a particular segment of teetotalism. The structure of the movement therefore tended to minimise the friction arising from people of different political or religious persuasion or different social class coming together in one cause. How else could the same movement have claimed as leading figures both John Hope and Father Mathew ? ¹

The grouping of skilled artizans, clerical workers and small shopkeepers which formed such an important part of the movement's support was a section of society given great cohesion in 19th century Scotland by economic and cultural factors. Mobility within these three categories was relatively easy and was facilitated by a shared culture based on the kind of recreational activities at which the temperance movement excelled. There were certainly tensions, as between manual and clerical workers but the gulf separating skilled artizan from unskilled labourer was greater than between artizan and shopkeeper. If Professor Hanham is right, the possibilities of upward social mobility beyond the position of shopkeeper was limited in Scotland, reinforcing the cohesion of the group at the upper extremity. ² There is nothing

1. Hope was an extreme anti-catholic.

2. Op.cit H.J. Hanham Scottish Nationalism Ch 1.

very remarkable in the ability of the movement to bring together men from this area in society. Any claim that the Temperance cause transcended the class barriers must be seen against its failure (and it must be admitted that the evidence is negative rather than positive) to attract the proletariat of expanding industrial Scotland.

CHAPTER 12

The Uses of Popular Innocent Entertainment

'Let a' wha wad true comfort find
And live in peace at hame
Resolve to lead a Temp'rance life
And ne'er for drink get blame
For Temperance pleasures aye sae sweet
Aroun' a bricht fireside
Mak' cheerfu' hearts wi blythsome joys
And comforts to abide.'

Chorus

For we're a' lauchin
Lauch lauch lauchin
We're a' lauchin
At our hoose at hame.

Richard Cameron.

It might appear from previous chapters that the main activity of temperance reformers when not engaged in internecine strife was the conduct of political campaigns against the drink traffic. It is said, however, that only one per cent of armies spend one per cent of their time in direct combat with the enemy and the temperance army was no exception. The minute books, annual reports and accounts of the work of local temperance societies show a rather

different pattern of activities. Consideration of these is essential to understanding the nature of the movement and to explaining its remarkable stamina and ability to sustain popular support over a large number of years.

The most surprising feature, for a movement whose name now carries connotations of puritanism, is the lighthearted nature of much temperance activity and the strong emphasis on providing entertainment. Annual reports of the Glasgow Abstainers Union show a programme of temperance activity which would not be misplaced in the pages of 'Variety' . Each winter season from 1857 to the end of the century the Abstainers Union put on about 30 Saturday evening concerts drawing 1500 to 2000 each week at 3d. 6d. and 1/- a seat. These audiences saw a wide variety of professional acts of a basically musical type from Albain's Coloured OperaTroupe in 1860 (eight performers giving 'refined negro music') to the Glasgow Quartet (M.Maurice Sons, Herr Otto Marienhagen, Herr Max Freund and Herr Carl Piening) in 1891. In the summer the Abstainers Union changed its role from impresario to tour operator with everything from Saturday afternoon train excursions to Fair Week holidays in London and Paris. The Glasgow Abstainers

Union was unique in Scottish temperance circles for the ambitious range and professional polish of the programme but its emphasis on social enjoyment and provision of entertainment was typical of the hundreds of local temperance societies throughout Scotland.

This feature of temperance society activity had its critics both within and without the movement and their strictures add to our pictures of temperance recreation. John Mitchell the pioneer of prohibition in Scotland did not approve

'of associating the movement with amusements and hired professional singers, while the importation of the comic and dramatic element into a cause so vitally effecting the destinies of man and nations be viewed with feelings of mingled humiliation and disgust'. 1

1. Op.cit David Lewis

Recollections of James Mitchell,
Temperance reformer p 32

Temperance societies were warned occasionally that too uninhibited enjoyment brought the movement into disrepute.

'the bulk of the Godly will continue to aschew us as a song singing generation'. 1

The Godly in Hawick in the shape of the deacons of the church where the total abstinence society held its meetings objected to the singing of sentimental songs and the society had to look for a new meeting place. 2 Good Templar lodges had something of a reputation for unrestrained social enjoyment and were even accused of allowing dancing at lodge meetings. 3 The Band of Hope, that nursery of teetotal innocents, was likened to

'so many miniture music halls. I have heard popular dities and pantomime songs shouted in a Band of Hope which I have heard nowhere else'. 4

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1. Scottish Temperance Review. March 1852.
 2. Minute Book of the Hawick Total Abstinence Society, July 9th 1851.
 3. Social Reformer. June 1871.
 4. Rev. W.S. Swanson A Plea for Total Abstinence in Scottish Temperance Annual 1909.

There was no danger here of the Devil having all the best tunes. Most of these critics it is fair to say were not against amusements as such but were concerned about their propriety and the priority given to them. Dedicated politically minded temperance men regretted that among all the tea and buns and singing 'the essential part of all, the speech of the evening had somehow been omitted'.¹ Prohibitionists, at least officially, tended to attach less importance to amusements which were part of the apparatus of moral suasion. The Social Reformer however carried occasional articles on music by John Frazer, one of the vice presidents of the Scottish Permissive Bill Association and by the 1880s, it contained serialised fiction, for example a story entitled 'Down the Mine' by one James K. Hardie of Cumnock. Prohibitionists were forced to recognise the need of the movement for the lighter side of its activities.

Accounts of temperance social meetings indicate little cause for concern among moralists. John Dunlop's ideal of culture and refinement in which the temperance dinner was followed by 'the harp, piano and violin' by conversation of various funds or if the interest flagged by 'exhibitions of drawings, books, varieties and mechanism' was rather too refined and expensive for the majority of temperance societies'.²

1. Social Reformer March 1871.

2. John Dunlop. On the extent and remedy of national intemperance. quoted L.J. Saunders Scottish Democracy Op. cit p 235.

Sir J.H.A. McDonald's description of the temperance soiree for Harriet Beecher Stowe is more typical

'I took my place in the Music Hall and duly got my paper bag containing Scotch cookies and raisins and an orange and got mental food in a little book of songs and hymns to sing at the meeting. I made my way to the orchestra where tea already sugared - terribly so - was poured into our cups out of tin kettles'.¹

The programme of such^a soiree was dominated by the speeches of the distinguished guests interspersed with songs and music but at many soirees the entertainment took first place. The high point of the Aberdeen Temperance Society's year was its annual festival. This was usually addressed by a figure well known in the movement. Bailie Lewis was thought to be an especially good catch in 1872. Most of the evening was given over to professional singers and entertainers and to the society's choir. Miss Helen Kirk 'Queen of Scottish Melody' was very popular and Mr. James Lumsden 'Renowned Scottish Humourist' appeared almost every

1. Sir J.H.A. McDonald K.C.B. Life Jottings of an Edinburgh Citizen .

year from 1870 to 1895.¹ Temperance songs were sung but the programme consisted mainly of popular 19th century ballads such as 'Home Sweet Home', 'The Lost Chord', and 'The Last Rose of Summer'. 'Let Me Dream Again' sung by Miss M. Anderson in 1887 may have given concern to moralists with the lines 'I feel his kisses on my fevered brow, If we must part oh! Why should it be now'. Passion was just part of the eclectic tastes of Aberdeen teetotallers, who also enjoyed patriotic songs, despite being ardent Liberals, Jacobite songs despite being staunch protestants and the songs of Robert Burns despite the bard's reputation for alcoholic excess. Auld Lang Syne however was sung with the caveat that 'when sung at temperance meetings the cup here mentioned is understood to be a cup of tea'. These examples illustrate the tastes of teetotallers but on most occasions they supplied their own entertainment. The conversazione held by the Thistle tent of the Independant Order of Rechabites in 1902 is fairly typical. There the surroundings were humble, the company quite small and undistinguished, the programme lacking in polish and novelty since it was performed by the members themselves who would have known each others party pieces. Nevertheless 'a most enjoyable evening was spent with songs recitations games, etc. till

1. In the best Hollywood tradition Miss Kirk was discovered as a child singing in the streets by a director of the Glasgow Abstainers Union. She was sent abroad to be trained at the Union's expense.

A.S. Cook Pen Sketches and Reminiscences of Fifty Years.
Op. cit pp 195-198

12.45 when the company dispersed'.¹ Summer was the season of the fete champetre, the excursion and the procession. The latter were intended to be demonstrations of the strength of the movement but they had a carnival atmosphere with bands, banners, fireworks, balloons and entertainments.^{2,3.} On these occasions the factors dividing teetotallers tended to be forgotten. There was a delightful absence of sectarianism in the Glasgow teetotal procession of 1840 which was joined by the Catholic total abstinence society. Bitter divisions in the movement were ignored at the Dundee Band of Hope fete champetre in 1857 when the 'ten beautiful variagated balloons' released bore the names of both the Scottish Temperance League and the United Kingdom Alliance. Outdoor activities in Scotland were inevitably chancy things. The experience of the Kirkaldy Temperance Society, run aground on a steamboat trip by a drunken pilot, must at least have strengthened their temperance resolve. Edinburgh children were known to sing alternative words to the British League of Juvenile Abstainer's excursion song

'I wadna gaun tae John Hope's trip
I wadna gaun again
I wadna gaun tae John Hope's trip
For it aye comes on a rain'. 4

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1. Minute Book of the Thistle Tent No. 1948 I.O.R. 13th May 1902.
 2. Social Reformer Sept. 1866.
 3. Ibid Aug. 1872.
 4. Op.cit D. Jamie John Hope philanthropist and reformer. p 85.

Temperance societies had their more serious and improving side also. Debates were held on topical questions of the day or hardy perennials such as 'Was Burns a drunkard?' Lectures were given on a wide range of subjects, particularly in the larger towns, for instance at Aberdeen in 1865/66 the list of titles included 'The Model Woman', 'A fair days work for a fair days pay', and 'Theories of the development of man from the lower animals'.¹ In small communities there was greater dependance on the travelling advocates of the national temperance organisations to relieve the monotony of members talking to each other. Agents of the Scottish Permissive Bill Association were generally collectors or political lecturers but the agents of the Scottish Temperance League were more varied in their presentation. Some were known for their racy and amusing approach, others were blessed with a good singing voice. Thomas Dunnachie specialised in the scientific aspect of the temperance question and carried around the apparatus to demonstrate experiments.² The need for a popular approach was early appreciated and temperance lecturers must have been among the earliest pioneers of visual aids

1. Annual Reports of Aberdeen Temperance Society No. 21 1865/66 and No. 22 1866/67.

2. Op.cit A.S.Cook Pen Sketches and reminiscences of Fifty years. pp 140 - 144.

considered as entertainers. They were certainly reviewed as such in the press 'Mr. Murphy is the happy possessor of a ready flow of racy humour which has a genuine hibernian ring and at intervals creates irresistable merriment'.¹

The man referred to was not a new Irish comedian but the founder of the Blue Ribbon Army touring Scotland in 1883. There was more than a trace of show business in the earnest matter of showing the way to sobriety. The Scottish Temperance League writing to local societies to make advance engagements for its lecturers assumed something of the character of a theatrical agency. Temperance societies in turn with small incomes and smaller financial reserves had to consider carefully the box office prospects of a proposed engagement. While the temperance advocate was both an educator and an entertainer the relationship between audience and lecturer on the temperance society circuit was closer to that in the commercial theatre than that in an educational institution. This ensured that even the more serious side of the movement's activities were often infused with music, wit and drama.

1. Hawick Advertiser Feb. 24th 1883

Temperance societies were not unique in being centres of leisure activity. Co-operative societies, friendly societies and later on the Independent Labour Party also had their social programmes. All these formed part of a culture of respectability separate from and antipathetic to the public house. The recreational side of temperance activity differed from most of these in a number of respects. Firstly, the movement was more dependant on such activities to maintain its momentum than organisations, membership of which conferred direct pecuniary advantages. Secondly, the form of temperance entertainment was an important vehicle for conveying the movement's message to the kind of audiences it sought to reach. Thirdly, it was central to, not incidental to the movements objectives to foster alternative patterns of leisure activity divorced from the use of the drink institution.

Temperance societies first began to make provision for leisure during the early teetotal phase of the movement in response to one of their major problems, the defection of members. Do your teetotallers generally keep their pledge, Robert Kettle was asked by the Poor Law Commission? Kettle admitted that the majority did not. The love of social enjoyment was

recognised to be a great cause of the lapsing of abstainers and if societies were to retain their members counterattractions to the public house had to be found.¹ Attractive programmes of social activities proved to be an effective means of reviving interest in the movement in the 1850s. By catering for the leisure needs of a wider circle than its own members temperance societies were able to at least attract people away from the temptation of more vicious enjoyments and at best draw them into the ambit of the movement. The Abstainers Union Saturday evening concerts, the festivals of the Aberdeen Temperance Society the New Year's Day soiree of the Hawick Total Abstinence Society all attracted audiences from beyond the ranks of teetotalers. Such occasions were an important source of finance for societies which often received little income in the form of subscriptions and were very seldom subsidised by rich patrons. Until the 1850s, the festivals and soirees of the Aberdeen Temperance Society were its most important source of income and in many years exceeded all other sources of income put together. The profits from soirees were an important means of keeping the society solvent. For the committee of a temperance society the composition of the programme of lectures and social activities was an important task.

1. Scottish Temperance Review Feb. 1851.

It influenced to a large extent the effectiveness of the society in retaining members and attracting new adherents and this in turn determined the political strength of the temperance forces and their prestige as an energetic and successful body influencing the life of the community for good.

One of the secrets of the resilience of the temperance movement was its success in adapting its political and social message to the abilities and tastes of its audience. This is a problem which still faces reformers and it has recently been claimed that

'the old methods of propaganda which depend on a considered reading of the printed word are becoming less and less effective. More and more the arts must be used to get our message across'. 1

Temperance reformers faced with similar circumstances also enlisted the arts. The most important of these was music which as already indicated was the main feature of the more elaborate temperance entertainments. In addition to its use as a vehicle for propaganda, interest in music was cultivated for its own sake. Part of the Glasgow Abstainers Union's

1. A. Corum Music and the Fight for Socialism in
Marxism Today . 10 1966.

objective was to cultivate an improved taste in music among concert audiences. John Frazer, who found in music almost mystical properties for healing the soul and providing an escape from the grim realities of industrial life, had similar ideals.¹ Appreciation of good music was to be one of the touchstones of the elevation of the working classes. At a more mundane level hard experience showed the song to be in some respects a more effective means of delivering a temperance argument than a lecture.

'Your lecturer is sometimes thought a pedantic dry discussionist and some care very little about him, but your songster always makes his way'.²

Temperance lecturers wisely were often singers as well. Temperance songs abounded, often written by very bad temperance poets and set to popular tunes.³ Like all great moral crusades, temperance depended on stirring the emotions as well as the intellect and a simple song could do this more effectively than the majority of lectures. 'Please sell no more drink to my father' may seem funny now but it was not funny then.⁴

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1. Social Reformer. Feb 1867.
 2. Scottish Temperance Review April 1847.
 3. Richard Cameron of Edinburgh, author of Temperance Hymns, songs and verses, Edinburgh 1886 and other collections, was one of the better ones.
 4. G.F.A. Best Mid Victorian Britain 1851-75 London 1971 p 222

Such songs reminded teetotallers of the evils they were fighting. Others inspired them for the conflict.

'Dare to be a Daniel
Dare to stand alone
Dare to have a purpose firm
And dare to make it known.'

Others still reminded them of the social progress which was their ultimate objective.

'There's a good time coming boys
Wait a little longer'.

Musical abilities were highly valued and duly recognised.

Gabriel Wallace's obituary mentioned his Chartist activities but also recalled that 'his ability to sing a good song or give a humorous recitation made him a special favourite at all the meetings' ¹

John Frazer his fellow Chartist was described on his testimonial as 'the veteran musical, political and educational reformer.' ² The use of music and song by the temperance movement arose less from a shrewd appraisal of what would be effective with audiences, than it developed spontaneously from the culture of the social groups from which the movement originated and it continued to reflect their tastes and interests.

1. League Journal 28th Nov. 1891.

2. Social Reformer May 1872.

Arthur Shadwell, deploring the supercession of the melodrama by music hall turns, described it as 'a great school of ethics broad simple and intelligible appealing to profound and primitive elements in human nature,' with the power to sway multitudes.¹

The temperance version of the triumph of good over evil was particularly well suited to this medium and teetotal writers duly responded with a dramatical version of 'Ten nights in a Bar-room' and for the magic-lantern 'The Trial of Sir Jasper', 'Teetotalism Triumphant a tragic-comic tale in five acts' was a Scottish production in which the poor but honest teetotal apprentice married the boss's daughter in spite of the machinations of a wealthy and intemperate merchant's son after her for her money.²

Scottish teetotalers appear to have been uneasy about the theatre although the League's prize novel 'Danesbury House' was dramatised. The temperance novel was something of a Scottish speciality. Between 1857 when the League published 'The Burnish Family' by Clara Lucas Balfour and the end of the century, 24 full length temperance novels were issued. The most popular of them 'Danesbury House' by Mrs.

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1. A Shadwell. Industrial Efficiency - A comparative study of industrial life in England, Germany and America. London 1909 p 505.
 2. A. MacMillan Teetotalism Triumphant, a tragic-comic dramatic tale in five acts Annan 1839.

Henry Wood had sold 277,593 copies by 1900 and was still selling at a rate of about 8000 a year. If the shorter temperance tales are included together with stories written especially for children and serialised stories in temperance periodicals it is clear that imaginative fiction was an important example of the use of the arts in the service of social reform. Abstinent good invariably triumphed over alcoholic evil in the temperance novel and it is fair to say it had its share of unlikely incidents and amazing coincidences. Stock characters like fast young men, unprincipled drink sellers, broken hearted mothers and resolute heroines reappeared in familiar guises and situations. It is interesting to note that most of the stories traced, presumably intended for an upper working class, lower middle class readership, had an upper class setting. Like public school stories in the old D.C. Thomson weekly comics this may have contributed to their success. In general the novels appear to have been rather pallid copies of high culture, a rather genteel form of melodrama. Whatever their literary merits they seem to have produced the desired effects on their readers,

'I hated Mr. Groly, pitied and despised George and loved little Tiz. Above all I felt a loathing for the vice that brought the brilliant youth so low and broke his Mother's heart.' 1

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1. Symposium. Temperance Books and Literature which have influenced me in Scottish Temperance Annual 1910 p 129

was one reader's reaction to George Harrington by Rev. David Macrae. A survey among well known teetotallers revealed that temperance fiction had exerted an important influence on them. J. Keir Hardie for instance mentioned 'By the Trent' as well as Hoyle's 'National Resources' as among the temperance books which had influenced him.¹ The appearance of the temperance novel in the 1850s is an indication of the movement's relative freedom from puritan inhibitions and its ability to recognise promising media of propaganda. The novel was seen to have become an important vehicle for conveying ideas and social comment and was therefore enlisted into the service of temperance reform.² Whether teetotallers also recognised at the time that working class reading habits were moving away from a preoccupation with religious writings towards a preference for imaginative literature is not clear, but in publishing temperance novels the movement was adapting its propaganda to changing readership tastes.³

1. Ibid p 151.

2. Recent Fiction its educational and social bearings in
Scottish Review 1860 p 245

3. A.R. Thompson The Use of Libraries by the Scottish
Working Class. Scottish Historical Review
Vol 42. 1963/64.

It is necessary to remind ourselves from time to time that the temperance movement's attack on drink was a negative aspect of aims which were far more positive. One of the most important of these and one of the least controversial within the movement was the encouragement of new patterns of recreation. Temperance writers in Scotland gave reasons why this was a different problem there and in some respects a more difficult one. In England the task was to replace cruel vicious and immoral pastimes with innocent and improving alternatives. In Scotland a national tradition of hostility to the idea of leisure and enjoyment had resulted in a dearth of recreational pursuits of any sort. This was explained historically in terms of the

'erroneous notions entertained and fostered by the Puritan and Presbyterian party, who in their hostility to their opponents confounded mirth with depravity and recreation with sinful indulgence'. 1

The problem was rendered all the more serious because Scottish parents did not regard play as important and brought up their

1. Historical Considerations regarding recreation in Scotland in Scottish Review 1860 p 61

children on the 'don't bother me system'. Young people in Scotland left to amuse themselves in a land bereft of 'indoor amusements of an innocent nature' turned to the public house.¹ Outdoor sports other than golf and curling, both sadly tainted with drinking, were not widely played and in A.S.Cook's recollection golf in Aberdeen was confined to a small number of well-to-do men.² Scottish holidays were recognised to be few and far between and this may help to account for their tendency to become periods of general license

'I appeal wi' the most perfect confidence to to Glaiska publik as to whither a man michtna still be a sober man if he only got drunk at N'ear-day and the Fair; an' sumthing to the same effeck micht be said aboot anither vice'.³

The problem it was thought had been intensified by industrialisation and the growth of towns whose inhabitants 'jaded in body and mind by hard toil' did not have the compensation of proximity to nature's beauties.⁴

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1. Popular Recreations in Scottish Review 1855 p 277
 2. A.S. Cook Aberdeen Amusements Seventy Years Ago. Aberdeen 1911.
 3. Sandy McAlpine (pseud) Glaiska Fair, sum o' its humours an' sum o' its horrors. Glasgow n.d.
 4. Popular Amusements in large cities in Scottish Review 1861 p 59

The temperance movement therefore saw itself as one of the agencies working to change attitudes and hasten the demise of 'the old error regarding recreation in Scotland', to change manners through the means of a shorter working week and the provision of libraries, parks and museums and to encourage the provision of healthy and alcohol free recreations of a kind people were predisposed to enjoy at a price they could afford.

This review of the Scottish temperance movement's attitudes and practice in regard to leisure modifies the current popular view in Scotland that the movement was a manifestation of native puritanism and an opponent of the people's pleasures. Temperance reform commonly associated with the inculcation of a work ethic did not neglect the value of play. It is interesting too that teetotalers should have argued that Scotland's religious heritage accounted in part for her alcoholic traditions, thus suggesting an answer to the paradox that had puzzled John Dunlop and anticipating the idea commonly held today. In their efforts to change society's attitudes teetotalers at first encountered opposition from the religiously minded. When Dr. Guthrie opened a series of concerts in Edinburgh organised by

local temperance societies and the Half Holiday movement he was criticised for doing so. His reply was published by the Scottish Temperance League as a justification of the movement's viewpoint.¹ 'Good people', thought Guthrie, 'have too often attempted to frown down amusements when they ought to have fostered such as were innocent and to have prevented those of a harmful kind from springing up'. It was certainly argued that if men must have recreations then it were better if they had harmless ones, but temperance attitudes were generally more positive than that. Healthy leisure pursuits contributed to the intellectual and physical development of man and, unlike many contemporary recreations which were the prerogative of the adult male, women and children were not to be excluded. Play wrote Dr. Munroe in a series of articles on 'Good Health' fostered the harmonious development of children.² The work and recreation fit for men according to an article in the 'Scottish Review' were also fit for women. Swimming, for instance, was an excellent sport for ladies although a 'more rational swimming costume' (alas not illustrated) was required.³ If the temperance movement can be criticised in the field of leisure it is perhaps that for a movement of social reform and self improvement it was ^{sometimes} rather too market orientated.

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1. Rev. Thomas Guthrie D.D. Popular Innocent Entertainments. Glasgow 1856.
 2. Social Reformer July 1866.
 3. Ladies Sports and Recreations in Scottish Review 1862 p 420

'We must adapt the entertainment to the guests and by overlaying the more solid and instructive portion with a thick stratum of pure amusement we shall succeed in our first object of keeping thousands out of harms way and perhaps innoculate hundreds with a taste for enjoyments of a higher and more substantial kind'. 1

Realistic, no doubt, but this was coming very near to justifying entertainment for its own sake without any ulterior propaganda motive. As one critic put it in the slightly different context of a review of the League's latest novel 'The Curse of the Claverings', 'the novelist prevails somewhat over the social reformer in the authoress'.² In Professor Best's judgement the mid Victorian period was the time when 'mere enjoyment unintellectual and (in the contemporary sense) unimproving became more or less respectable',³. Perhaps one should date this development a little later in Scotland but temperance efforts, by dissociating recreation from any suspicion of vice and impurity, certainly helped to bring it about.

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1. Op.cit Popular Recreations in Scottish Review 1855 p 281
 2. Social Reformer July 1866.
 3. Op.cit G.F.A. Best Mid Victorian Britain 1851-75. p 210

CONCLUSION: The Temperance Situation at the Close
of the 19th Century.

Looking at the Scottish temperance movement at the end of the 19th century one cannot help being aware of a curious paradox. Here was the most successful temperance movement in the United Kingdom within sight of its greatest legislative triumph, the Temperance (Scotland) Act, yet although there were no obvious signs of decay, this was a movement on the verge of a precipitate decline.

Evaluating the success of a movement under study is a traditional way to end a work of this kind, but in this instance it is not a straightforward matter. Temperance spokesmen were fond of boasting of the movement's legislative achievements by making lists of anti-drink Acts of Parliament, some of which teetotallers had had little to do with and a few which sections of the movement had actively opposed at the time.¹ By this yardstick, however, the Scottish movement was notably more successful than its English counterpart. Less easy to identify was the

1. Joseph Malins. Temperance Legislative achievements of the last half century in Scottish Temperance Annual 1911

influence of the movement on public attitudes to alcohol. Before 1830 drink was freely used by all sections of society with little evidence of concern about its possible damaging repercussions. By 1900 it was used more abstemiously over a wide spectrum of society and its dangers to health, morality and public order had come to be recognised. A good illustration of this was the decision of a number of Scottish town councils to publicise the conclusions of the Government enquiries on physical deterioration about the harmful effects of drink and the success of temperance pressure in having temperance lessons taught in Scottish schools.¹ While progress in this latter respect was still regarded as unsatisfactory in 1905, temperance workers recognised that 'the educational authorities in Scotland are.....further advanced we think than elsewhere in the United Kingdom', and further progress had been made by 1911.² The movement had not achieved its aim of ostracising alcohol but it had reduced its social acceptability and the contention that drinking was a serious social

1. Corporation of Glasgow. Abuse of Alcohol and its results.

2. National Convention for the promotion of temperance instruction among the young. Greenock March 1915 - papers p 82.

CORPORATION OF GLASGOW.

ABUSE OF ALCOHOL AND ITS RESULTS.

The Committee on Health urge the citizens to consider the following statements from the Report, recently submitted to Parliament, of the Committee on Physical Deterioration :

EFFECT ON ADULTS.

1. The abuse of alcoholic stimulants *is a most potent and deadly agent in producing physical deterioration.*
2. Alcohol is not a food.
3. It is not a source of muscular vigour or dexterity, but the reverse.
4. It may produce temporary exhilaration, but depression soon follows.
5. Its continued use impairs the productive power of the skilled artisan.
6. Its continued use, whether in the form of beer, wine, or spirits, even though never to the extent of producing drunkenness, results in chronic poisoning.
7. It weakens the natural forces which resist disease.
8. It increases the risk of consumption.
9. It increases liability to disease, adds to its severity, and retards recovery.
10. It perverts the moral nature, affects the judgment, and impairs the memory.
11. It deadens sensibility to miserable surroundings, and destroys all desire for improvement.
12. It is increasing the proportion of men and women who are being confined in lunatic asylums.
13. It shortens life. The death rate of abstainers is little more than half that of the whole male population living between the ages of 25 and 65.

EFFECT OF PARENTAL INTEMPERANCE ON THE CHILDREN.

14. Intemperance in parents brings suffering on their children.
15. It produces physical, and sometimes mental, weakness in them.
16. If they escape death in infancy, permanent disablement may still result from paralysis, epilepsy, and idiocy.
17. The death-rate among infants of inebriate mothers is 2½ times greater than among the children of sober mothers.
18. The Report states that drinking habits are increasing among women of the working classes.

A. K. CHALMERS, M.D.,
Medical Officer of Health, Glasgow.

Sanitary Chambers,
Glasgow, 24th January, 1906.

evil was close to becoming the conventional wisdom. Drink was less defensible in Scotland and the drinking habits of the Scots could not be easily romanticised. It is possible to attribute the success of the Scottish temperance movement partly to the relative weakness of the opposition compared to England. One can argue that success would have been greater had temperance reformers showed more readiness to compromise. Scottish temperance reformers were more pragmatic than they were usually prepared to admit. This had been evident in the 1850s and by the end of the century was again causing concern to guardians of temperance principles like David Lewis. In 1900 the Temperance movement was at the end of a decade of renewed growth and unity of purpose. It had become in effect a loose confederation of national organisations which met together regularly to co-ordinate strategy. There was still disagreement within the movement on matters such as whether compensation should be paid to publicans dispossessed in future veto polls and, most contentious of all, over municipal ownership of public houses. Although the existence of numerous temperance organisations gave an appearance of inefficiency there was a fair amount of interdependence and by 1900 a degree of

co-operation and common agreement had been reached which was unparalleled in the movement's history. The numbers of abstaining provosts (51 in 1910) testified to continuing teetotal strength in local government and the Scottish movement was soon to see men brought up in its ranks taking their seats in Parliament.¹

Only with the benefit of hindsight can one see that the appearance of success in 1900 concealed a number of disquieting features which were to become apparent later. Growth in support in the 1890s was the last experience of expansion. Soon after 1900 the Scottish Temperance League and the United Free Church Temperance Society ceased to publish annually their membership figures, a sure sign that numbers were declining. The Good Templars also began to lose members after 1903. Local societies which had been in existence for many years were experiencing difficulties. At Hawick the total abstinence society met infrequently and there was a noticeable fall in new pledge signing at Aberdeen. Competition from other organisations and a growing commercial entertainments industry

1. J.Keir Hardie was the first but it was 1906 before teetotalers still active in the movement became M.Ps John M. McCallum M.P. for Paisley and John William Galland M.P. for Leith.

made the old temperance formula of popular innocent entertainment less effective. There were suggestions to adapt to new circumstances by making a temperance film, for example. The proposed title, 'Sunday closing in Scotland with views of the church activities in the open air and the crowds on Glasgow Green ALL SOBER' showed none of the old flair for adapting the message to the tastes of potential recipients.¹

The temperance movement had always had considerable potential as an instrument of politicisation, Members drawn in by the delights of the soiree could easily find themselves involved in the running of the society and involved in the movement's political activities. Temperance analysis which linked the drink problem to other social issues encouraged interest in them. Not surprisingly therefore there was a continual shift of interests and energies of teetotallers into other channels. This was not something that was deplored; rather it reflected to the credit of the movement and vindicated claims that temperance reformers were not one-eyed men. As long as teetotallers migrated to other causes which made similar social and political assumptions as the temperance movement there was little cause for concern. The path from temperance

1. Scottish Temperance Annual 1911 p 42

to socialism beaten out by Keir Hardie was becoming well trodden by 1900, taking teetotallers into a movement which not only differed on the question of temperance policy but whose analysis implied an active role for the state in social affairs which was bound in the long run to devalue the important of temperance reform, bound up as it was with the idea of self-help and minimum government.¹

The typical temperance society in 1850 may have attracted men of strong religious beliefs but it had few formal contacts with the Churches. By 1900 the temperance movement had become much more closely identified with organised religion and the congregational temperance society had become common. It might be argued therefore that the temperance movement was attaching itself to a failing force. In fact, it is more probable that without the continuation of temperance bodies in association with the Churches after 1918 there would have been little of the movement left at all. The effect of decline was to associate the temperance cause even more closely with organised religion. Decline was less marked in the women's and children's section of the movement which had also been growing relatively more important before 1900. After 1900 the temperance movement in Scotland was becoming, far more than it had been in the great days of the 19th century, a movement of women, children and the Churches.

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