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**THE WORKING MEN'S CLUB MOVEMENT, 1862-1912:  
A STUDY OF THE EVOLUTION OF A WORKING CLASS  
INSTITUTION.**

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## SUMMARY

This is a study of the working men's club movement from its foundation in 1862 until its silver jubilee in 1912. The structure of the study is as follows:-

INTRODUCTION: The basic themes addressed in the study are set out and the method of investigation is discussed.

CHAPTER 1: This chapter reviews key themes in the development of the club and the notion of 'clubbability' through a critical overview of the role of the club in British society from the late seventeenth century until the mid nineteenth century. Among issues given particular attention are the role of political factionalism in developing the club, the exclusive character of membership and the strong but not unchallenged stress upon the "maleness" of clubbability.

CHAPTER 2: This chapter evaluated the first twenty years of the working men's club movement. It is shown that the club emerged as a product of the rational leisure movement and the specific influences which shaped the early years of the movement are discussed. This section also sets out the basic features of the club and discusses the ideology of paternalism which dominated the movement until the early 80's.

CHAPTER 3: This section examines the development of the movement after the "revolt" of the early 80's which democratised the Union. Clubs were now run by as well as for working men. It is also argued that despite this break in organisational structure there was a strong degree of continuity in the ideological concerns of the two eras of the movement. In particular there was a great deal of agreement regarding the ideals which club membership ought to set before the working man. It is also argued in this section that the club movement had to monitor its progress carefully in order that its character as a national movement would be maintained.

The following three chapters discuss crucial aspects of the internal life of the clubs. The aspects selected not only affected the evolution of particular clubs but also shaped the character and public image of the club movement.

CHAPTER 4: The issues raised by the supply of intoxicants in the majority of clubs are discussed in this chapter. It is argued that while the income generated by the sale of excisables produced a valuable source of revenue for the clubs which helped to assure its development the introduction of drink also had less beneficial consequences. In particular the club became reviled as a "menace to sobriety" and concerted attempts were made, led by the licensed trade and the temperance movement, to place the clubs under legislative control. The history of that campaign is discussed and the role of drink in club life evaluated.

CHAPTER 5: Educational work carried out in the club provides the focus of this chapter. It is argued that despite much criticism club education was more extensive and valuable than has been recognised. Moreover the ideology of citizenship which inspired much of that educational work has to be understood if the character of the club movement is to be appreciated.

CHAPTER 6: The facilities developed for the amusement of the members are discussed. It is shown that clubs developed a varied and extensive programme of entertainments. The debate in the movement regarding the quality of club provision is also evaluated.

CONCLUSIONS: The main themes examined are reviewed. It is noted that in objective terms the movement had made great progress from the humble beginnings of 1862. However it is also noted that there was some debate about the extent to which the ideals of clubbability had been realised.

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ABBREVIATIONS.

|             |  |
|-------------|--|
| <u>CIJ</u>  | <u>Club and Institute Journal.</u>                           |
| CIU         | Club and Institute Union.                                    |
| M.R.F.      | Metropolitan Radical Federation                              |
| N.A.P.S.S.  | National Association for the<br>Promotion of Social Science. |
| P.P.        | Parliamentary Papers.  |
| S.C.        | Select Committee   |
| S.P.E.L.    | Social and Political Education<br>League.                    |
| <u>WMCJ</u> | <u>Workmen's Club Journal</u>                                |

Note: All money values expressed in £.s.d.

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The early history of working men's social clubs is a subject which has not yet, and perhaps never will be explored by historians.

G.Slater, The Growth of Modern England, (1932), p.452

How difficult it was to gather up the material from so many different sources, and to piece together into a consecutive history so many separate threads of distinct corporate existence.

S and B Webb to Brentano on the problems of writing the History of Trades Unionism, in S and B Webb, Letters, Vol.2, (Cambridge, 1978), p.37

INTRODUCTION.

This is a study of the working men's club movement during the first fifty years of its existence. Founded in 1862 the movement was intended to provide the working man with a pleasant resort where, after the day's toil, he could find amusement and relaxation of an improving character. Until recently little attention had been given to the evolution and structure of this important working-class institution save for a few patronising and sometimes inaccurate asides in general histories of labour. However, of late a series of studies have presented the basic contours of the development of these bodies. This thesis builds upon the established work to present a detailed account and analysis of the movement in the years 1862-1912.

The core of the thesis is given over to a consideration of the work of the dominant club organisation, the Club and Institute Union, whose familiar initials, CIU, are still to be seen outside the majority of present day working men's clubs. It was by association with this central body that individual clubs became welded into an important social movement and pressure group in Victorian and Edwardian Britain. To be "affiliated" was, and remains, a mark of the bona-fides of the club, an indication that it is democratically organised, a guarantee of its good management and concern for collective welfare. Although the CIU was the largest and most important club body there were other co-ordinating organisations. The Manchester Association of Working Men's Clubs was an autonomous branch of the London dominated CIU. In Kent, Hyde, Worcester and

Hampshire there were District Unions of Clubs. These seceded from the CIU in the mid 80's because of disagreements over policy and management. A Federation of Working Men's Social Clubs was established in London in 1837. This drew most of its recruits from various teetotal social clubs set up under the auspices of or as adjuncts to religious or philanthropic undertakings. With its headquarters at Oxford House, Bethnal Green, the Federation played an important part in the work of settlements in the capital. Not to be outflanked by the numerous Liberal and Radical Clubs which sprang to life in the artisan and lower middle class districts of the cities and towns from the mid-80's, the forces of Conservatism organised its own club bodies. In the early 1890's after much hesitancy the Party established a Conservative Working Men's Club Union. When this was dissolved an Association of Conservative Clubs was set up to provide for the marshalling of Tory forces. Inaugurated in 1895 the Association was not confined to working men's clubs but was to provide for the sociability of the Conservative, be he aristocrat, clerk or plebeian. Notwithstanding marked political differences between those clubs which affiliated to the CIU and those in the Conservative camp the two organisations co-operated on a number of issues where, as club men, they shared a common interest and purpose. Besides these major organisations set up to cater specifically for the promotion and strengthening of the club cause there were smaller unions of clubs usually restricted to a particular district.

There were also examples of working men's clubs which affiliated to other organisations. In the 1860's, for example, some clubs in South Staffordshire joined the South Staffordshire Union of Working Men's Institutes, while in Yorkshire some clubs belonged to the Yorkshire Union of Mechanics' Institutes.

In addition to those clubs which belonged to a local, regional, or national organisation, there were countless clubs which, for one reason or another, retained their independent status. Some of these clubs were shadowy ventures set up for purposes far removed from those benevolent ambitions which had animated the original founders of the movement. Here must be numbered the gaming club, usually owned by a syndicate though carefully giving the appearance of being democratically run. Here too skulked the "drinking den" which posed as a club in order to evade the licensing laws. Drink was the only attraction offered by these clubs and their existence was to plague and trouble the respectable movement until 1902 - when the licensing act of that year confirmed the legal status of the bona-fide club and ruled the fake counterpart to be illegal.

Few independent clubs brought so much distress in their wake. Many were attached to settlement work in the cities such as Leicester and Liverpool for it was held that clubs offered a powerful instrument for bringing civilization to the poor districts. A number of clubs were set up by socially concerned clergymen for their working class parishioners. Clubs were part of a wide variety of activities

developed by zealous pastors anxious to show that the church was alert to the needs of working men for amusement. The claims of religion and ethnic identification were also important factors in prompting the foundation of a number of large and well-appointed Jewish clubs in London as well as a smaller number of Catholic clubs in London and the provinces. Finally there were those clubs which were formed by the working men themselves without any outside assistance or interference. Some grew from an occasional meeting to play dominoes or discuss politics, for example, to handsome purpose-built establishments, having taken the trouble, as they matured, to affiliate to one of the major club organisations. It was one of the major concerns of the CIU that such clubs be brought into association with the Union. Other independent ventures prospered for a few years then, as the result of re-housing say or the removal from the neighbourhood of its core members, disappeared. Such abiding enthusiasm for club membership served to confirm the idea that whatever form sociability took on the Continent, in Britain it was a "national characteristic" for men of all classes to form clubs. Every directory for a city or town had an entry for clubs and from the middle of the century that listing grew longer and more detailed. In addition to the working men's clubs, there were clubs for the Liberal and the Tory, clubs for different activities, such as cycling or golf, clubs set up by one of the convivial affiliated orders such

Foresters or Buffaloes, lodges for masons, and even clubs which catered for professional women. Thus, the working man's club has to be seen as one example of the considerable expansion of club facilities which were so marked a feature of the second half of the nineteenth century.

Paradoxically, perhaps, for an essay in labour history the first chapter considers sections of society—the well-born and the rich—far removed from the life of the working man. The aim of this chapter is to provide some of the material necessary to explain the development and structure of the club in British society. Much of this section of the work is taken up with a discussion of the progress of the club which grew from the tavern and coffee-house life of Restoration England. From ad-hoc and irregular meetings in such surroundings clubs evolved, slowly sloughing off their reliance on landlords and coffee-house keepers. A variety of factors contributed to the promotion and sustenance of club sociability. Party factionalism and ideological cleavage were of great importance in club formation and many clubs continued to reflect political division, a facet of life which received its strongest affirmation in the nineteenth century with the establishment of the Carlton and Reform Clubs following the crisis over the first Reform Bill. Indeed, it can be suggested that political difference was the most important cause of the establishment of the club, far outweighing

the attractions of witty conversation, fine food and good companionship which have been unduly stressed in some discussions of the origins of clubs. This chapter also considers the objections to club life made by various critics in the two centuries after 1660, especially the repeated allegation that the growth of the club was realised at the expense of the home, the stability of which was threatened by such a powerful rival. A further theme considered is that of the maleness of clubland, the idea that it was a particular feature of the male personality to be "clubbable", to seek and enjoy the company of other men. One of the reasons regularly adduced for the absence of clubs for women was not the lack of independence, financial or social, which constrained their free-time, but the particular character of women which made them either unfit for or unable to enjoy club life. In the late nineteenth century, in keeping with the evolutionary ethos of the age, some bold spirits advanced the suggestion that women might acquire such sociable temperament. But such Lamarckian sentiments were normally missing from most analyses of the poor showing of women in clubland. While women were confined to the private sphere of the home men of the upper and middle classes were able to enjoy an increasingly varied life in the public sphere. Clubs were one of a number of institutions which constituted this sphere. By setting out some features in the development of the club it is hoped that a more specific context for



evaluating the emergence and ideology of the working man's club has been offered. For it is important to investigate the meaning of the "club" and "clubbability" as well as to examine the processes by which this form of sociability was taken up by the working man.

The next two chapters review the growth and development of the club movement from its inception in 1862 to the Silver Jubilee of the CIU in June 1912. These chapters attempt to clarify the ideological shifts in the movement, especially the contrast between the ideology of paternalism which characterised the movement up to the early 80's, and the ideology of democracy which moved into the ascendancy after the successful "revolt" against middle class control in 1883-1884. These chapters also set out a full account of the geographical distribution of the movement as well as charting the various obstacles to sustained growth which the movement had to overcome if it was to achieve enduring success. It is also argued that while the "revolt" marked a distinct break in club history the degree of discontinuity must not be over-emphasised. In both periods the Union faced similar external threats and internal difficulties. Moreover, leading figures in the reformed club movement became increasingly conscious of the need to undertake propaganda work in order to encourage new clubs to affiliate to the Union. By the early 90's there was the worry that if work in the provinces was neglected then the Union would become little more than an

association of metropolitan clubs. Its position as a national organisation would be lost and its claim to speak for the movement on such matters as education or licensing would be diminished. To remedy this weakness from the mid 90's Union officials undertook a sustained campaign of provincial propaganda. One indication of the success of these tours was the fact that by 1912 London was no longer the dominant centre of club life. Numbers of clubs in the metropolis were growing slowly, while the movement was expanding rapidly in the northern counties, especially Lancashire, Yorkshire and Durham. Some consideration is also given in these chapters to describing the basic features of the club in this period and to illustrate the variety of resorts linked by the generic name "working men's clubs."

Methodologically, the approach taken throughout this study can best be described as "history from within," that is in addition to an account of the club movement in terms of objective factors such as number of clubs, size of membership, and financial resources, attention is also concentrated on showing how that development was understood and interpreted by the leadership and the ordinary membership. In examining working class organisations more attention needs to be paid to questions of internal structure and dynamics in order to understand adequately the manner in which such bodies grew and related to other organisations. In this respect, therefore, this study owes much to the

perspective on labour history associated with the work of Cole and which greatly influenced much early labour history in Great Britain. His highly institutional approach has rightly been criticised for its lack of attention to the world of the working class outside the formally organised labour movement, for its over-emphasis on the work of leaders, and for its uneven attention to questions concerned with ideology and culture. These are telling accusations and a conscious attempt has been made in this study not to reproduce the deficiencies of the Cole methodology. As far as sources allow the voice of the ordinary member has been presented as well as the pronouncements of the leading figures and there is much detail on the changing ideology of the club movement. Despite the reservations of some critics it is implicitly suggested in this study that as a model for the investigation of popular organisations the value of Cole's work is far from exhausted and has proved of considerable usefulness in providing a framework for the study of the club movement.

The remaining three chapters are concerned with what is termed "the internal economy of club life." In these chapters an attempt is made to examine the everyday aspects of the institution and to investigate key aspects of club life which helped to determine the character and direction of the movement. The benefits conferred as well as the problems raised by the decision to supply intoxicating

drinks in the club is the subject of one study. The implications of supplying alcohol went far beyond the walls of the individual club. Analysis is focused both on the manner in which clubs responded to the addition of this facility as well as the response of external bodies, especially the temperance movement and the licensed trade, to what they saw as a threat to their particular interests. One theme stressed in this study is the effect of drink-selling upon the popular image of the working man's club. It is argued that sensational stories of drunkenness and excess promoted by interests hostile to the club brought much odium to the movement and helped to create a stereotype of the working man's club which the Union and other club organisations found hard to displace.

Clubs were also intended to provide for their members' improvement and the various ways in which clubs sought to fulfill this objective forms the core of the next chapter. Many critics and supporters of the club movement have dismissed the educational work which they undertook as desultory and with little long term success. While recognising that few clubs managed to carry out those educational programmes which some of the ideologues of the movement thought appropriate, it is contended that educational endeavours were far from negligible. By detailed discussion of the various forms of indirect and direct educational work carried out throughout club land it is suggested that club education needs to be evaluated far more positively and that both the range and intensity of activity found in

the clubs requires them to be taken seriously in any study which offers an evaluation of the progress of adult education in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Moreover, the clubs provide an illuminating instance of the ideology of citizenship, that is the idea that education should instruct individuals in the rights and duties necessary for the discharge of democratic responsibilities. This ideology which was either grafted on to prior notions of self-help or which supplanted the dominance of individualism was an important feature in a number of working class educational ventures at this time, for example, it can be found in the Workers' Educational Association or in the educational work of the co-operative movement. Concern for the values of citizenship, therefore, had the effect of bringing the working men's club movement closer to other sections of the working class world, which compensated somewhat for the isolation from the mainstream of organised working class life which the leadership felt was the consequence of its drink-selling policy.

Examination of the facilities for the amusement and entertainment of members completes these studies of club life. This chapter considers the theory and practice of rational recreation and surveys the forms of entertainment found in the clubs from the 1860's . It is suggested that by the turn of the century many clubs had come to rely on professionals and semi-professionals for much of their entertainment, although there still remained significant

areas where amateur talent retained its importance, such as in the numerous club dramatic societies which toured the clubs regularly. Consideration is also given to the debates in the movement concerning the kind of entertainments which clubs ought to foster. The contrast usually alluded to was the need to set before the membership pieces drawn from legitimate drama whereby the tastes of the membership would be raised, as opposed to the low melodrama, or even worse the music-hall variety evening which many members seemed to find most attractive. Such controversies were a feature of the late 80's and 90's and are important in highlighting the divergent ambitions which characterised different sections of the membership. Some wanted clubs to provide their members with an Arnoldian feast of culture showing the best that had been written or composed. Club membership would help to bring the beauties of civilization to the working man at a price he could afford. In this respect clubs would resemble co-operative cultural institutes. Other members were less troubled by such grand objectives. While they had no wish to make their club some form of low-cost music-hall where the best acts could be seen at the cheapest prices, they discounted the insistence, usually articulated by the leadership, upon the humanising and improving consequences of membership. In part the divide between the two views was tactical. To present the club before the potential member in terms of severe aesthetic ideals would be likely to drive the man away. Far better, it was argued, to make the working man's club a bright and cheery

place where he felt at ease, and where, by stages, he could be set upon the path of improvement. Much good could be done by stealth. But there was also a deeper gulf between those who saw the clubs as the means to some ultimate noble end, such as fellowship or class reconciliation, and those who saw their progress in more prosaic terms. This chapter also looks at a number of activities which the membership undertook to make their free-time pleasurable, notably, brake visits, trips, and club bands.

Finally the various themes addressed in the study are summarised and reviewed in a concluding chapter. The aims originally set for the movement by its founders in the middle of the century are compared and contrasted with the actual achievements of the movement as its premier organisation celebrated its fiftieth birthday. While there was some complacency abroad in the movement, this was matched by the realistic recognition that club organisations had had to struggle hard for recognition, and that on certain issues, the supply of excisables, for example, it would be necessary to remain vigilant if the hard-won privileges enjoyed by the clubs were not to be removed by the curious alliance which had formed against them. It is suggested that 1912 marks the end of one stage of club history which began with the foundation of the Union in 1862. Bonds of affiliation and organisational loyalty had greatly contributed to the formation of a distinct and well-recognised club world, representatives of which could be found in every working class district in the country. It was very much a male world, in some areas clubland was strongly linked to the political

culture of the locale, while in others it presented itself as a meeting place far removed from the political divisions present in the wider community. Potential members could opt to join clubs which proudly proclaimed their position as "Liberal and Radical" or "Socialist" while others avoided sectarian difference calling themselves "Non-Political" or "Social" clubs. Democracy had also triumphed in the club movement for although some smaller clubs and lesser club bodies continued to operate upon principles of paternal government, the CIU, was a thoroughly democratic organisation, and following the reforms enacted in 1910 which placed provincial representatives upon the Executive, it once again deserved the designation of national association. But whatever the structure of the club organisation or the political loyalties of the individual club, by 1912 the working man's club had become a major institutional landmark in the landscape of the working class community. Clubs were integral to working class culture.<sup>(1)</sup>

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1. The geographical coverage of this thesis has been restricted to England. Developments in Scotland and Wales were generally similar although differences in such matters as licensing laws meant that on particular issues there might be marked differences in the experience of the national movement. However, more remains to be discovered of the history of the provincial club movement. Some of its history can be pieced together from the standard club sources but at times, the mid and late 80's, for example, such material offers little illumination of provincial developments. Notwithstanding careful and systematic searching in a variety of newspapers the coverage given to provincial clubs is not complete. This point also holds for the evolution of the club in the rural world. In many cases clubs were only mentioned when they did something out of the ordinary which deserved wider notice, for example a police raid entailing subsequent court proceedings. Thus, this study does contain, at certain points, a bias towards the capital and its hinterland.



PART I: THE GROWTH AND STRUCTURE OF THE CLUB MOVEMENT.

CHAPTER 1: CLUBBABLE ENGLISHMEN: THE DEVELOPMENT AND  
IDEOLOGY OF THE CLUB IN BRITISH SOCIETY.

Le veritable club n'existe ni en France ni dans les autres pays de l'Europe ... En France, le vrai club est le cafe ... Le peuple clubiste par excellence est le peuple anglais ... C'est que, chez l'Anglais, la sociabilité et l'exclusivisme se font admirablement contrepoids. (1)

Our clubs are thoroughly characteristic of us. We are a proud people ... and have a horror of indiscriminate association; hence the exclusiveness of our clubs. (2)

Augustan England has often been depicted as the golden age of clubs. (3) In London, as in most major cities, clubs of every sort flourished. Their nineteenth-century descendants may have offered to their members more in the way of comforts—chefs imported from France, fine furniture and attentive servants—yet they lacked the robustness, the bustle of eighteenth-century club life. Visitors from abroad marvelled at the liberty enjoyed by the Englishman which allowed him to associate in this way, although they were less delighted with the sauciness of the urban lower orders which also appeared to be the product of the same licence. (4)

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1. J. Harley, Les Clubs de Londres, (1870), pp. xxvii-xxviii. Original emphasis.
  2. J. Timbs, The Club Life of London, (1866), Vol. 1, p.252. Original emphasis.
  3. C. Marsh, The Clubs of London, with Anecdotes of Their Members, Sketches of Character and Conversations, (1828), Vol. 1, pp.10-11; R. Nevill, London Clubs: Their Histories and Treasures, (1911), p.8.
  4. W. Quarrell and M. Mare (Eds), London in 1710 from the Travels of Z.C. Von Uffenbach, (1934), pp.27-28; B. Muralt, Letters describing the Character and Customs of the English and French Nations, (1726), pp.2, 82-83; P. Grosley, A Tour to London: Or, New Observations on England and Its Inhabitants, (1772), Vol. 1, pp. 145-51; R. Bayne Powell, Travellers in Eighteenth Century England, (1951), Chap. 4, passim.

Samuel Johnson has often been held to embody those qualities from which the club drew its strength and without which its life would have been impoverished. His sociability and enjoyment of manly conversation have been given due prominence in a number of vignettes of the good doctor.<sup>(5)</sup> Of his friends, Johnson was said to ask "not that they should be literary or even virtuous, but that they should be clubbable."<sup>(6)</sup> For his part he was content to define the club as "an assembly of good fellows, meeting under certain conditions."<sup>(7)</sup> If this characterisation appears too terse, it is of little consequence. For what has given this definition such authority is not its comprehensive coverage of varied empirical instances, or its evocation of the irreducible essence of club life, but the imprimatur of the personality of its author. Johnson's own regard for the pleasures of good company has been presented as the guarantee of the veracity of his characterisation; the perception there displayed is the consequence of Johnson's involvement with and experience of convivial association.

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5. See, from a vast literature, J. Macaulay, Dr. Johnson: His Life, Works, and Table Talk, (1884); A. Birrell, "Dr. Johnson," Contemporary Review, Vol. 47, January 1885; W. Barker, Dr. Johnson as Representative of the Character of the Eighteenth Century, (Oxford, 1899); C. Roger, Dr. Johnson, (1939); J. Hawkin, The Life of Samuel Johnson, (1961 edition); F. Halliday, Dr. Johnson and His World, (1968); M. Lane, Johnson and His World, (1975).
  6. S. Roberts, "Dr. Johnson in Grub Street," The Eighteenth Century Gentleman and Other Essays, (Cambridge, 1930), p.43.
  7. S. Johnson, A Dictionary of the English Language, (4th edition, revised, 1773), Vol. 1.

Johnson took an active part in two clubs. The first he established in Ivy Lane, Paternoster Row, in 1747. A few close friends constituted the membership, brought together "to enjoy literary discussion, and amuse his evening hours."<sup>(8)</sup> Of this association, little is known in detail, but it has been suggested that its convivial meetings entertained and comforted Johnson during his long and solitary labours on the Dictionary.<sup>(9)</sup> The second club was brought together by Sir Joshua Reynolds, holding its inaugural meeting at a dinner in the Turk's Head Tavern, April 1764.<sup>(10)</sup> Although the original idea may have come from Reynolds, the Literary Club, as it has since become known, is more usually associated with Johnson.<sup>(11)</sup> Its eight founding members met to debate a wide variety of subjects. By 1776, the membership had increased to encompass the majority of the savants and artists resident in London, including Garrick, Burke, Gibbon, Goldsmith, Fox, Smith, and William Jones.<sup>(12)</sup> Club activities

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8. J. Boswell, Life of Johnson, (R. Chapman, editor; Oxford, 1953 edition), p.137; S. Johnson, Diaries, Prayers, and Annals, Yale edition of the Works of Samuel Johnson, Vol. 1, (New Haven, 1958), p.42; S. Roberts, op.cit., states that the club had ten members.
  9. J. Clifford, "Johnson's First Club," in R. Wellek and A. Ribiero (Eds), Evidence in Literary Scholarship, (Oxford, 1979).
  10. C. Leslie and T. Taylor, The Life and Times of Sir Joshua Reynolds, (1865), Vol.1, pp. 319, 477; C. Fifer, "Founding of Dr. Johnson's Literary Club," Notes and Queries, New Series, Vol.3 (7), July, 1956.
  11. Boswell, Life, pp. 338-39, 529-30; M. Duff, The Club, 1765-1905, (Publications of the Roxburghe Club, 1905); L. Curtis and H. Liebert, Esto Perpetua: The Club of Dr. Johnson and His Friends, (Hamden, Conn., 1963); P. Oretogo, "The Club: Samuel Johnson's Literary Society," Topic, No. 23, 1972.
  12. A membership list is given in Gentleman's Magazine, 56, February, 1785; see also, C. Miller, Anecdotes of the Literary Club: The 'Club' of Dr. Johnson and Boswell, (New York, 1948); F. Hilles (Ed), The Age of Johnson, (New Haven, 1949), Part 1, has a series of essays on Club members; G. Cannon, "Sir William Jones and Johnson's Literary Club," Modern Philology, 63(1) 1965.

consisted of a regular fortnightly dinner, during the Parliamentary sittings, at various taverns in the environs of Fleet Street.

Excluding politics from the topics available for discussion had the effect of keeping the club united during a period of increasing political partisanship.

The Club's membership list shows that Johnson's interest in good-fellowship was widely shared by other prominent intellectual figures. Affection for the club went beyond concern for bodily comfort. Steele and Addison, for example, made a conscious attempt to adopt the intimate, dialogue form of discourse present in the coffee houses and clubs as one basis for the elaboration of a new style of literary realism. (13)

Yet to approach the history of this form of popular association solely through the activities of famous literati is to give a falsely literary interpretation of institutional evolution, one which, moreover, neglects the humble but no less important contributions of less exalted persons. Thus this review of the growth of the club will situate it in the context of changing class relations, political conflicts, and mores from

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13. Spectator, No. 403, 12 June 1712 for account of coffee-house conversation. On the development of literary style see, E. Drew, "Clubland Two Hundred Years Ago," Nineteenth Century and After, Vol. 75. February 1914, pp. 387-88; H. Routh, "Steele and Addison," in A. Ward and A. Waller (Eds), The Cambridge History of English Literature, Vol. 9, (Cambridge, 1912), pp. 32-33; B. Dobree, English Literature in the Early Eighteenth Century, (Oxford, 1959), p. 8; E. and L. Bloom, Addison's Sociable Animal, (Providence, 1971), p. 207; R. Bond, The Tatler: The Making of a Literary Journal, (Cambridge, Mass., 1971), pp. 163, 173-75.

the Restoration to the zenith of Victoria's reign.<sup>(14)</sup> The presentation offered is not strictly chronological for it is not the intention of this study to offer a full study of the club's role in British society. The more limited objective of this essay is to review some of the more notable features of the club as they developed. Having said something about clubs in general the specific nature of the working men's club can be examined in greater detail.

The tavern life of Elizabethan and Jacobean London has been seen as providing the necessary conditions for the creation of clubs. Taverns, known also as "ordinaries," besides selling ale and wine functioned as a "resting place for the gallants and men-about town."<sup>(15)</sup> They were places to converse as well as drink, where men could adjourn to hear the latest news and exchange "all sorts of town talk."<sup>(16)</sup> A club life of a more elevated kind was

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14. The literature on clubs is enormous, but most of it is a farrago of stale anecdotes, erroneous facts, and dubious interpretation. The only serious discussions of clubs were contained in the books of Allen and Jones, referred to below. But these were written over thirty years ago and new studies are urgently needed. The latest addition to club literature, A. Lejeune, The Gentlemen's Clubs of London, (1979), is an undistinguished addition to the "Leather Armchair" school of writing.
15. N. Zwager, Glimpses of Ben Jonson's London, (Amsterdam, 1926), p.61. H. Wheatley, "London and the Life of the Town," Shakespeare's England, (1916), Vol. II, pp. 173-75.
16. I. D. Israeli, Curiosities of Literature, (5th edition, 1807), Vol. II, p.323.

provided by the ageing Ben Jonson at the Appollo Club held at the Devil's Tavern from 1624. Here Jonson presided over gatherings of young poets, taking an active part in the life of the club including the drafting of the rules in latin. (17) While the cultural renaissance may have assisted the establishment of such primitive clubs, social and political considerations restricted the enjoyment to be found there to a favoured few. (18)

Two factors during the Interregnum supplied the impetus for the development of clubs-political divisions and the advent of the coffee-house.

The "Rota," founded in 1659, has been honoured as being the first club worthy of the name. It was a popular, political debating society of radical and republican persuasion, which took its name from Harrington's tract, The Rota: Or, The Model of a Free State, Or Equal Commonwealth. Harrington was numbered

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17. M. Chute, Ben Jonson of Westminster, (New York, 1953), pp. 289-90. One of the more unusual features of this club was the admission of women into its deliberations. Shakespeare, too, has been credited with being a clubbable fellow, allegedly carousing with his compatriots at the Mermaid Tavern. This is fiction, as has been recently shown, see, S. Schoenbaum, Shakespeare's Lives, (Oxford, 1970), pp. 294-96. For versions of the myth, see "Clubs," Encyclopaedia Britannica, (11th edition, 1911); I. Shapiro, "The Mermaid Club," Modern Language Review, 45 (1), 1950; C. Clark, "Elizabethan Tavern Life," Shakespeare Club Papers, 1918-19.
18. On the uneven development of the club prior to the mid-seventeenth century, see R. Allen, The Club of Augustan London, (Cambridge, Mass., 1933), pp. 5-7. For tavern life, see A. Everitt, "The English Urban Inn, 1560-1760," in A. Everitt (Ed), Perspectives in Urban History, (1973), especially pp. 113-14.



among the membership, which conducted all its votes by ballot. With the restoration of the monarchy in 1660 the club, which met at Miles Coffee House, New Palace Yard, Westminster, quietly disbanded. (19) This club was the best remembered of a network of tavern and coffee-house gatherings which sprang into existence during the relative freedom of the Commonwealth to debate pressing religious and political ideas and to pass judgement on the propriety of the policies pursued by the Lord Protector. (20) Many magistrates took a sorry view of such loose assemblies and the places which gave them shelter, seeing them as a pretext for the dissemination of blasphemous ideas, for plotting against the good order of the commonwealth, or, more simply, as resorts of idle and dissolute persons, where sensual indulgence and sexual irregularity were commonplace. (21)

"With the restoration of the king," wrote Bishop Burnet,

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19. D. Masson, The Life of John Milton, (1877), Vol. V, pp. 484-508; "The Clubs of London," National Review, Vol. 4, April 1857, p. 297; H. Routh, "The Advent of Modern Thought in Popular Literature," in A. Ward and A. Waller (Eds), The Cambridge History of English Literature, Vol. 7, (Cambridge, 1911), p. 389; C. Hill, Milton and the English Revolution, (1977), pp. 197 and 202. The Royalists had a club, the Sealed Knot which also began in 1659, See Timbs, op. cit., Vol. 1, p. 16.
20. C. Hill, op. cit., pp. 97-98; Idem, The World Turned Upside Down, (1972), pp. 159-62.
21. R. Bretheron, "Country Inns and Alehouses," in R. Lennard (Ed), Englishmen at Rest and Play, (Oxford, 1931), p. 151; A. Epstein, "The Social Functions of the Alehouse in Early Modern London," (Ph.D., New York Univ., 1976); P. Clark, "The Alehouse and the Alternative Society," in D. Pennington and K. Thomas (Eds), Puritans and Revolutionaries, (Oxford, 1978).

"a spirit of extravagant joy spread over the nation."<sup>(22)</sup> In the cities, and in London in particular, much of that overflowing joy was channelled into support for the growing number of coffee-houses which mushroomed after 1660. To Oxford belongs the honour of having been the site of the first coffee house in England in 1650, a few years after the drink had been introduced. London's first house was opened in 1652, thereafter "men of all stations in life assembled in them to converse with their friends and to make the acquaintance of the new, exotic liquor."<sup>(23)</sup> Other countries had also adopted the new beverage and established places to sell it; Paris, for example, had a good number of cafés by the end of the century.<sup>(24)</sup> The particularly open character of class relations and the slightly greater tolerance of dissenting opinion in England made it a more amenable home for the coffee house. Thus the coffee house took the premier position in that general expansion of facilities for public amusement and intercourse which accompanied the Restoration.<sup>(25)</sup> By 1708 it was estimated that

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22. Bishop Burnet, History of His Own Times, (Oxford, 1823 edition), Vol. 1, p.157.
23. R. Allen, op. cit., p.14; The literature on coffee-houses is as extensive and generally as undistinguished as the material on clubs. For general history see, E. Robinson, The Early History of the Coffee Houses in England, (1893); M. Wotton, "Some Old Coffee Houses," Cornhill, New Series, Vol. 9, November 1887; J. Ashton, Social Life in Queen Anne's Reign, (1882), Vol. 1, Chap. XXIII; H. Shelley, Inns and Taverns of Old London, (1909), Section II; A. Ellis, The Penny Universities, (1956).
24. A. Leclant, "Coffee and cafés in Paris, 1644-1693," in R. Forster and O. Ranum (Eds), Food and Drink in History, (1979).
25. G. Harris, "Domestic Everyday Life, Manners, and Customs in this Country... to the End of the Eighteenth Century," Transactions, Royal Historical Society, First Series, Vol. IX, (1881), p.229; R. Bell "Social Amusements Under the Restoration," Fortnightly Review, Vol. 2, September 1865.

England contained over 3,000 houses, of which 500 were located in the metropolis. (26) No district in the capital was said to be without its cluster of shops catering to a regular clientele, although the greatest concentration was to be found in the City districts and the newly fashionable streets of west central London around Covent Garden. (27) The popularity of the coffee house as a place of resort prompted Muralt to Comment that:

A Man is sooner asked about his Coffee-House than his lodging ... Here they treat of Matters of State, the Interests of Princes, and the Hour, of Husbands &c... (28)

As Muralt's statement shows, the novelty of the aromatic drink was only a minor inducement to enter the coffee-house: that institution discharged far more important and valued functions than the humble retailing of coffee and liquors. They were centres of news and gossip where affairs of state and of the heart were dissected with equal enthusiasm and satisfaction; places to meet and read newspapers, journals and broadsides, to exchange political information, or enlist support for commercial ventures. Talk, not drink, was the staple fare of the coffee-house. (29)

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26. F. Wendeborn, A View of England Towards the Close of the Eighteenth Century, (1791), Vol. 1, p.307; This figure is also cited by W. Lecky, The History of England in the Eighteenth Century, (1913), Vol. II, p.217, and L. Stephen, English Literature and Society in the Eighteenth Century, (1904), p.37. The figure for London is given in P. Clark and P. Slack, English Towns in Transition, (1976), p.74.
27. For a list of metropolitan coffee-houses giving topographical references see, B. Lillywhite, London Coffee-Houses, (1963), and P. de Castre, "Principal London Coffee Houses, Taverns and Inns in the Eighteenth Century," Notes and Queries, 12th Series, Vol. 6 February-May, 1920.
28. B. Muralt, op. cit., p.82.
29. A. Beljame, Men of Letters and the English Public in the Eighteenth Century, (1948. Originally published in France, 1881), pp. 162-64; 249.

Much of this talk was of an innocent, even trivial kind, the sort reported, for instance, by Pepys:

Thence to the Coffee-House, whither comes  
Sir Wm. Petty and Captain Grant, and we fell  
into talking ... of Musique, the Universall  
Character-art of Memory-Granger's counterfeit  
of hands-and other most excellent discourses...(30)

To those charged with the government of the kingdom, such discussions often ran into matters of sedition and the debating of ideas inimical to orthodox Christian religion.<sup>(31)</sup> At impious gatherings given shelter by the coffee house, "God could be denied in an afternoon, and the Church destroyed in the intercourse of a week."<sup>(32)</sup> Hostility to these academies prompted the King to issue a Proclamation for the suppression of coffee-houses.

Issued on the 29th December 1675, it was to come into force on 10th January, 1676. Coffee houses, as well as houses for the sale of tea, chocolate, and sherbert, were to have their licences withdrawn because they had:

produced evil consequences from idle and disaffected persons resorting to them, and by leading tradesmen and others to mis-spend their time, and occasioning the spread of false reports to the defamation of the Government and the disturbance of the peace of the realm. (33)

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30. The Diary of Samuel Pepys, 11 January, 1664; (R. Latham and W. Matthews, editors; 1971), Vol. 5, p.12.
31. M. Bateson, "Social Life," in H. Traill (Ed), Social England: A Record of the Progress of the People, Vol. IV, (1895); The Patrician, Vol. 4, No.17, 1847, pp. 272-73; London Clubs: Their Anecdotes and History, Private Rules and Regulations, (1853), p.11.
32. J. Redwood, Reason, Ridicule and Religion: The Age of the Enlightenment in England, 1660-1750, (1976), p.41; See also the attack in The Character of a Coffee House, with the Symptoms of a Town Wit, (1676), where coffee houses are denounced as "phanatick theatres."; J. Miller, The Coffee-House, (1737).
33. Calender of State Papers: Domestic Series, Charles II, Vol.III, Proclamations, p.343; P. Fraser, The Intelligence of the Secretaries of State and Their Monopoly of Licensed News, (Cambridge, 1956), p.119.

After vigorous protests and representations from the traders whose livelihood was threatened by the Proclamation, and extension of their licences was granted until June 1676. This clemency was granted on the strict undertaking that the keepers would immediately bring to the attention of the authorities any libels or treasonable reports circulating in their houses.<sup>(34)</sup> In July 1676 an Order in Council was passed granting the magistrates the right to give a further six-months' extension.<sup>(35)</sup> Further petitions and advice from city magistrates, prompted the government to rescind the Proclamation.<sup>(36)</sup>

Attempts at state regulation did little to diminish the license enjoyed by the coffee houses or the subjects discussed there. Informers regularly brought to the notice of officials remarks of "old Oliverians" and other disaffected persons overheard in surreptitious conversations. On 4th September, 1676, a warrant was issued for the taking of Rebecca Weedon, widow and coffee-house keeper, "against whom information has been given that she disperses several papers of scandalous news."<sup>(37)</sup> Similar reports of seditious talk and suspicious consorting were sent regularly to

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34. Cal SP. Dom. Car II, Vol. I, p.503.

35. Ibid, Vol. II, p.237.

36. W. Sydney, Social Life in England, 1660-1690, (1892), pp. 413-14. Ellis, op.cit., describes to government's withdrawal of the proclamation as a triumph of liberty over arbitrary rule, pp. 92-93.

37. Cal. SP. Dom. Car II, Vol. III, p.339.

the secretaries.<sup>(38)</sup> Many contemporaries shared the state's aversion to these institutions. For Thomas Player they were clubs "producing nothing but scandalous and censorious discourses," while one Thomas Willoughby reported to the Earl of Peterborough during the Popish Plot that at the coffee houses he frequented he:

discovered the temper of Men to be Enclined to Sedition, to a dissatisfaction of the Government, and a great desire of change ... and the compliance and suffrance of the Good King had brought the esteem of his Power and Authority to so low a Rate, as Treason was spoke with that liberty, as if there had been no Laws made against it. (39)

During the same crisis, militant protestants feared the existence of popish coffee houses "where Jesuits planned, over their cups, another great fire, and cast silver bullets to shoot the King."<sup>(40)</sup>

The activities of the coffee-houses, and their various clubs, during the reign of Charles II cannot be dismissed as a product of the imaginations of harassed officials kept alive by the dubious evidence of spies and informers. Such resorts were central to the development of organised "public opinion" during the Restoration, and, in alliance with numerous forms of political propaganda—tracts, newsheets, broadsides—played an important part during both the Exclusion Crisis and the subsequent bloodless revolution of 1688, a role crucial to the triumph of the Whig cause.<sup>(41)</sup>

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38. See, for example, Cal. SP. Dom. Car II, Vol. IV, p.255, information of Robert Vyner; Vol. VI, p.527, affidavit of George Drake, and the list sent to Secretary Jenkins in Vol. VII, pp.184-85.

39. C. Christie (Ed), Letters Addressed from London to Sir Joseph Williamson, (1874), quoted in P. Fraser, op.cit., p.119. The letter was dated 10 November, 1673; R. Halstead, Succinct Genealogies of Noble and Ancient Houses, (1685), p.436.

40. Lord Macaulay, The History of England, Vol. I, (1858), p.371.

41. P. Fraser, op.cit., p.114; L. Schwoerer, "Press and Parliament in the Revolution of 1689," Historical Journal, 20 (3), 1977, p.567.

Politicians could not afford to ignore the importance of these clubs. The Whigs, particularly the grandees, were great club men.<sup>(42)</sup> Their most important club was the Green Ribbon, active in the rousing of anti-catholic prejudice during the Popish Plot and the Exclusion Crisis. It took its name, according to one hostile observer, from the favours which members wore "in their Hats in the Days of Street Engagements, like Coats of Arms of Valiant Knights of Old."<sup>(43)</sup> It had a broad membership. In addition to the grandees, rich City merchants, minor politicians, and lawyers were admitted. At the club "debates were rehearsed, party tactics worked out and personal contacts established, particularly in an effort to gain the support of the young and inexperienced."<sup>(44)</sup> While the attribution of the role of paymaster and organiser of the London "mob" to the club may have been grossly exaggerated, it did make a major contribution, both organisational and financial, to the great pope-burnings in London, commemorating the anniversary of the accession of Elizabeth I, November 17th, held in 1679, 1680, and 1681.<sup>(45)</sup> Although

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42. Whigs' Coffee House, (1694).

43. R. North, Examen, (1740), p.572.

44. J. Jones, "The Green Ribbon Club," Durham University Journal, 49(1), 1956, p.20. A small number of the members were involved in Monmouth's rebellion.

45. The Pope's Lamentation, (1679?); The Solemn Mock Procession, (1680); S. Williams, "The Pope-Burning Processions of 1679, 1680, and 1681," Journal of the Courtauld and Warburg Institute, Vol. 21, (1958); J. Miller, Popery and Politics in England, 1660-1688, (Cambridge, 1973), p.183; M. Seidel, "The Restoration Mob: Drones and Dregs," Studies in English Literature, Vol. 12(3) 1972.

seemingly less clubbable than the Whigs, the Tories too had their resorts such as the "Loyal Society" which met in a tavern in Fuller's Rents, 1679-1684, or the club which gathered at the Warder within Ludgate from late 1681.<sup>(46)</sup> More difficult to discuss with certainty are the ephemeral assemblies held by those of more extreme opinion, such as the club attended by "Anabaptists" in Pearle Street (1684) or the Sheriff Bethell Club (1682) which met at the Queen's Arms.<sup>(47)</sup>

It is impossible to estimate how many clubs entered existence, however transient, in the forty years after 1660. Few had members who left correspondence which allows the date of establishment, place and object of meeting, and names and numbers of members, to be stated with any certainty. Evidence for a number of these clubs comes from the reports or allegations of spies and informers paid to monitor the action of suspicious conventicles. Such men, no doubt fell prey to that occupational hazard of the informer, a tendency to expand the dangers and to embroider the truth. Opponents, too, may have over-estimated the importance of particular associations. They may have ascribed treasonable intent to members, particularly aristocratic ones, where none was intended in order to embarrass their enemies.

While the full story of the club prior to 1700 may elude recovery, it cannot be doubted that in London at least a flourishing, predominantly political, club life had come into existence. It is

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46. P. Allen, "Political Clubs in Restoration London," Historical Journal, 19(3), 1976, pp.565-66, 575-76. This is a most detailed study of the activities of clubs after 1660. The club in Fuller's Rents was later alleged by Oates to be one of the centres of the Popish Plot; see, J. Kenyon, The Popish Plot, (1972), p.47.

47. See, Cal. SP. Dom Car II, Vol. VII, p.269 and 236-37.



also clear that heavy handed, attempts at state repression were ineffectual in supressing such bodies.

The opening years of the new century saw no abatement in the popularity of coffee-house and tavern life.<sup>(48)</sup> Moreover, by the end of the first decade, Ipswich, Liverpool, Bath, and Tunbridge Wells, were but a few of the provincial cities to have their own networks of coffee-houses catering to the local population.<sup>(49)</sup> Growing popularity did nothing to diminish the low regard in which they were held in some quarters. Some thought that the attractions of good fellowship and indiscriminate association would have deleterious consequences for the manners and morals of those who habitually attended such resorts. Drinking coffee and talking to one's neighbour would encourage idleness and neglect of duty. Men were rebuked for adjourning to the coffee houses in preference to the charms of the domestic hearth by the Women's Petition against Coffee Houses (1676), which must surely rank as the first in that remarkable genre of literature written to prove that the home and places of public resort are fundamentally incompatible.<sup>(50)</sup>

Visiting the coffee house to read and discuss the newspapers, increasingly common behaviour in the early eighteenth century, also

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48. W. Besant, London in the Eighteenth Century, (1902), Chap. XII, passim; H. Wheatley, Round About Piccadilly and Pall Mall, (1870), p.326.

49. See, A. Arkle, "The Early Coffee Houses of Liverpool," Transactions, Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire, Vol. 64, (1912); A. Jones, "Early Coffee Houses in Ipswich," Suffolk Review, 2(4), 1961; A. Ellis, op.cit., Chap. 14, passim.

50. Cited in I. D'Israeli, op.cit., Vol. II, p.324.

prompted adverse comment. Both Ward and Fielding lampooned the thirstafter news and novelty present among the habitués of the coffee house. Politick, in the Coffee House Politician, on being asked whether he has read the news in the Lying Post, has to admit, sadly, that he has not found time to read it having only managed to peruse that day:

The London Journal, the Country Journal, the Weekly Journal, the British Journal, the British Gazetteer, the Morning Post, the Daily Post, the Daily Post-Boy, the Daily Courant, the Daily Journal, the Gazette, the Evening Post, the Whitehall Evening Post, the London Evening Post, and the St. James Evening Post. (51)

It was a barbed and accurate satire for the coffee-houses were one of the main beneficiaries of, as well as aids to, the expansion of literacy, particularly among the middle classes, from the late seventeenth century. (52) Shrewd proprietors of several London coffee houses supplied books as well as journals for their customers. (53) Book clubs and circulating libraries also made effective use of the coffee house for raising membership. (54)

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51. H. Fielding, The Coffee House Politician, (1730), Act V, Scene III, p.63. On the value of Fielding's portrait, see F. Dudden, Henry Fielding: His Life, Work and Times, (Oxford, 1952), Vol. I, p.73. For Ward, see The Humours of a Coffee-House, (1707), the speech of Blunt, a plain dealer, p.23. Ward also wrote a satirical account of Will's Coffee House, where Dryden held court; see, The London Spy, (Reprint, 1927), pp. 170-71.
52. R. Wiles, "Middle Class Literacy in England" in R. Brissenden (Ed), Studies in the Eighteenth Century, (Canberra, 1968); I. Watt, The Rise of the Novel, (1960), pp.38-40; W. Speck, Stability and Strife, (1977), pp.83-85.
53. P. Kaufman, "Coffee Houses as Reading Centres," Libraries and Their Users, (1969).
54. W. Sydney, England and the English in the Eighteenth Century, (1891), Vol. II, pp.134-41; A. Collins, "The Growth of the Reading Public in the Eighteenth Century," Review of English Studies, 2(7), 1926, p.293.

Publishers took advantage of the thirst for literature by holding their book sales in the coffee-houses, a practice which had become commonplace by the early eighteenth century. (55)

It is in the expansion of newspapers, made possible by the lapsing of the Licensing Act in 1695, that the effects of the articulacy fostered by the coffee houses were most fully realised. Indeed, the first newspapers were not intended to be bought by individual subscribers. They were published to be

"taken in" by the coffee house and other public places where men congregated. Often some one person read the essay of the week to groups seated about a table or gathered in front of a fire. (56)

Newspapers such as John Dunton's Athenian Mercury, (1691-97) were specifically composed to appeal to and circulate around coffee-house audiences. (57) Enterprising promoters of newspapers employed runners to visit the houses, initiating debate or bringing new information which had come to hand regarding the leading story of the day. (58) To attract a full audience to their debates some coffee-houses used the newspapers to advertise the theme to be discussed that evening. (59) By 1728 some proprietors were said

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55. P. Kaufman, "The Community Library: A Chapter in English Social History," Transactions, American Philosophical Society, New Series, Vol. 57(7), 1967, p.7; J. Williams, "London Coffee Houses and Their Literary Associations Down to the Death of Anne," (B. Litt; Oxford Univ., 1936), pp.153-70.

56. W. Laprade, "The Power of the English Press in the Eighteenth Century," South Atlantic Quarterly, Vol. 27(4), 1928, p.430.

57. G. McEwen, The Oracle of the Coffee House: John Dunton's Athenian Mercury, (San Marino, California, 1972).

58. Laprade, op.cit., p.430.

59. A. Andrews, The Eighteenth Century, (1856), p.222.

to be spending £20 per annum on a supply of newspapers to their customers.<sup>(60)</sup>

The provinces were not to be denied their right to participate in this cultural expansion. Together with conversation societies, debating associations, tavern clubs and assemblies, coffee houses provided the "better sort" of people in the cities of Georgian England with unprecedented facilities for discussion and obtaining information.<sup>(61)</sup> The creation and expansion of the provincial newspaper owed much to the energy of these institutions.<sup>(62)</sup> All this talk and speech-making served to confirm the idea that the English were "a people that are extremely [sic] taken with Oratory."<sup>(63)</sup>

Numerous other services to the public were rendered by these most amiable institutions such as providing a convenient meeting place from which electors could be conducted to the polls as well as being refreshed after voting. Less beneficially, perhaps, some coffee houses doubled as brothels. Newcomers to the city

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60. M. Harris, "The London Newspaper Press, ca. 1725-1746," (Ph.D, London Univ., 1974), p.60.
61. R. Wiles, "Provincial Culture in Georgian England," in P. Fritz and D. Williams (Eds), The Triumph of Culture: Eighteenth Century Perspectives, (Toronto, 1972); J. Plumb, "Reason and Unreason in the Eighteenth Century: The English Experience," in J. Plumb and V. Dearing, Some Aspects of Eighteenth Century England, (Los Angeles, 1971), p.17.
62. R. Wiles, Freshest Advices, (Columbus, 1965); G. Cranfield, The Development of the Provincial Newspaper, 1700-1762, (Oxford, 1962).
63. E. Chamberlayne, Angliae Notitia: Or, The Present State of England, (19th edition, 1700), p.312. Wendeborn, op.cit., Vol. I, p.301 also commented on the habitués of the coffee houses that although few of them "have any influence in politics: but though they cannot sit, or harangue, or vote in Parliament, it is a great satisfaction for them to read speeches in both houses during the session, and judge of the patriotism, the wisdom, and the eloquence of the British Senators."

could easily recognise these houses of ill-fame because they took as their sign:

a woman's arm or hand holding a coffee pot.  
There are a great number of these houses in the neighbourhood of Covent Garden ... and you are waited on by beautiful, neat, and amiable, but very dangerous nymphs. (64)

These were strictly subordinate functions compared to the attractions of conversation. All were free on payment of the humble one penny, which was the usual price of admission, to enter the house, sit down and join in the discussion going on there. Providing the particular rules of the house were observed, and the newcomer did not disgrace himself, he was free to talk to whom he pleased about any topic that took his fancy. For these reasons it has been suggested that a "republican equality was the order of the day at these houses."<sup>(65)</sup> The only blemish on this liberty was the occasional brutal or coarse tone which entered the conversation, attributable to the absence of a softening, restraining feminine influence in the Houses.<sup>(66)</sup>

The elaboration of a particular style and manner of conversation was essential to the eighteenth century conception of the civilized man.<sup>(67)</sup> In the coffee houses the style of speech was

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64. M. Van Muyden (Ed), The Letters of Monsieur Cesar de Saussure to His Family, (1902 edition), pp. 164-65; Bawdy coffee houses are also noted in T. Brown, Amusements: Serious and Comical, (1927 edition), pp. 58-59.
65. H. Routh, op.cit., Vol. 7, p.390; A. Ellis, op.cit., pp.45-46.
66. L. Stephen, op.cit., p.44.
67. S. Rothblatt, Tradition and Change in English Liberal Education, (1976), Chap. 7, passim.

based upon conventions of dialogue and patterns of stress and expression which allowed the creation of a fiction, "the fiction that social distinctions did not exist. Inside the coffee house, if the gentleman had decided to sit down, he was subject to the free, unbidden talk of his social inferior."<sup>(68)</sup> This equality could be seen in the Rules and Orders of the Coffee House (1674) which open thus:

Enter Sir freely, But first if you please  
Peruse our Civil-Orders, which are these.  
First, Gentry, Tradesmen, all are welcome  
hither,  
And may without Affront sit down together. (69)

For Mannheim, this egalitarian cast was crucial to the creation of the bourgeois order, for coffee house society was based upon not "the common style of living and not common friends, but like opinion now constituted the basis of amalgamation."<sup>(70)</sup>

It is easy to eulogize the coffee house by stressing over much the supposed freedom of entry and tolerance accorded to strangers. "Strangers of a class different from the ordinary company," Boulton remarked, "were more or less frowned upon by regular frequenters."<sup>(71)</sup> Similarly, it has been argued that

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68. R. Sennett, The Fall of Public Man, (Cambridge, 1977), pp.81-82.

69. Quoted in J. Williams, Thesis, op.cit., pp. 36-37.

70. K. Mannheim, Essays on the Sociology of Culture, (1956), p.139. See also H. Smith, "Nature, decorum, and correctness," Scrutiny, 18(4), 1952, pp.291-93. Beljame, Op.cit., p.249; G. Hertz, English Public Opinion After the Restoration, (1902), p.150; For the relationship of the bourgeoisie to the evolution of public opinion see, J. Habermas, "The Public Sphere," New German Critique, No. 3, Fall 1974, pp. 52-54.

71. W. Boulton, The Amusements of Old London, (1901), Vol. II, p.171.

from the 1720's men of substance began to disengage themselves from the rough and ready democracy of the coffee houses, to repair from the common crowd to the safety of "more select assemblies gathered in private rooms."<sup>(72)</sup> While this is true, the process predates the 1720's. Concern for exclusivity, central to the idea of the club, had been taken up in fashionable as well as literary circles before the end of the seventeenth century. At Man's Coffee-House at the rear of Charing Cross, for example, it was only possible to enter this select resort of the restoration beaux with a formal, written introduction.<sup>(73)</sup> Moreover, during the first decades of the eighteenth century, a number of coffee houses came more and more to cater for a special clientele, thereby diminishing the open character of these establishments. Omitting, for a moment, those divisions which drew their support from political partisanship, it can be seen that houses in the city and the centre were becoming the preserve of specific groups. City figures, for example, would meet at Jonathon's and Garraway's, the basis of the later Lloyd's of London insurance brokers, lawyers could be found at the Grecian or Nando's, while the Society of Arts evolved from those persons who gathered at Rawthmell's Coffee House in Covent Garden.<sup>(74)</sup> Apart from the newly arrived immigrant,

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72. W. Laprade, Public Opinion and Politics in Eighteenth Century England, (New York, 1936), p.280; P. Rogers, The Augustan Vision, (1974), pp.54-55. J. Plumb, The Commercialisation of Leisure in Eighteenth Century England, (Reading, 1973), p.18.

73. W. Sydney, Social Life in England, 1660-1690, (1891), p.21.

74. R. Nevill, op.cit., p.3; "Old Coffee Houses," Leisure Hour, Vol. 12 (No.586), 21 March 1863; W. Dawson, "The London Coffee Houses and the Beginnings of Lloyds," Transactions, Royal Society of Literature, New Series, Vol. II, 1932; "The Beginnings of the Royal Society of Arts," Journal of the Royal Society of Arts, Vol. 58, 1909. G. Rude, Hanoverian London, 1714-1808, (1971), pp.77-78.

any man wishing to appear knowledgeable about the city would know to which houses various groups and cabals repaired.

The process of the transmutation of the coffee-house into the club has been described thus:

Constant frequenters of houses of entertainment, where the custom prevailed of laying down a small sum upon entrance, now united, and by means of regular payment were able to secure to themselves the whole or part of the premises; in this manner was developed an institution better suited to the exclusive tendencies of the average Londoner. (75)

The motive underlying this desire for exclusion was to avoid the importunities of those fellows who gained admission under the "democratic" system. The pressures of political partisanship, the requirements of aristocratic hauteur, and the desire for separation from the mass by the fashionable all required the creation of places of resort where admission would not be granted simply upon payment of a copper coin. On the contrary, to gain admission would require the possession of some specific attribute not shared in common with the whole population, some mark of distinction which made its bearer worthy of belonging to a more select, more controlled assembly than that present in the ordinary coffee house. Political difference was clearly one such distinguishing mark. A number of clubs, therefore, quickly became identified with certain factions, tendencies and causes. Besides the requirements of politics, the elaboration of fashionable, predominantly aristocratic coterie also created the demand for suitable exclusive meeting places. Though two worlds overlapped, it is important to recognise that the club as it developed was a product

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75. E. Robinson, op.cit., pp.212-13.



of both fashion and politics.

Anne's reign was characterised by deep political divisions which provided a most suitable milieu in which political clubs could take root. The central antagonism was between Whig and Tory, and much to the chagrin of many observers, the spirit of faction seemed to insinuate itself at every level of society. One consequence of this was the foundation of various clubs loyal to one or other of the two political tendencies. For the Tories, the major body was the October Club. Established in 1710, it was composed mainly of country gentlemen anxious to impress their opinions upon the party leaders, especially Harley. One of the aims which they wished to urge upon the leadership was "the immediate impeachment of every member of the Whig Party."<sup>(76)</sup> These backwoods malcontents, numbering some 150, met during the Parliamentary session "at a tavern in Westminster, dining at long tables and fomenting their passion on October ale," the traditional drink from which they took their name.<sup>(77)</sup> The club lasted until 1714, increasingly riven by internal squabbles especially over the attitude to be taken to the Hanoverian succession.<sup>(78)</sup>

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76. J. Timbs, op.cit., Vol. I, p.18.

77. K. Feiling, A History of the Tory Party, 1640-1714, (Oxford, 1924), p.431.

78. H. Dickinson, "The October Club," Huntington Library Quarterly, Vol. 33(2), 1970; J. Bayliss, "The October Club, 1710-1714: A Study in Political Organisation," (M. Litt, Bristol Univ., 1973); G. Holmes, British Politics in the Reign of Queen Anne, (1967), pp.251, 279, 296-97; the most famous attack on the club came from A Member, (D. Defoe) The Secret History of the October Club, (1711); see also, March and October, (1712), Tory grandees also organised clubs in the counties such as the Royston Club (Herts.) and the St. Nicholas Club (Glamorgan). These clubs were mainly intended to act as electoral agencies; see, G. Holmes and W. Speck (Eds), The Divided Society, (1967), pp.30-31; W. Speck, Whig and Tory: The Struggle in the Constituencies, (1970), p.34.

Jacobites were well represented in the club as they were in the Brothers' Club, which met at the Thatched House tavern, and the Board of Brothers' Club sponsored by the Jacobite Duke of Beaufort.<sup>(79)</sup> Swift, who had vainly tried to moderate the demands of some of his fellow members in the October Club, also took a prominent part in the affairs of the Scriblerus Club, founded in 1712 after Swift had vacated Button's Coffee House which, having become the centre of the Addison circle, had taken on too whiggish a hue for the Dean. Other members of the Scriblerus included Pope, Gay and Arbuthnot, and although intended to confine itself to matters literary, the club soon divided into distinct factions. The suspicions aroused in 1715 as to the loyalties of Tory societies caused the club to disband.

The Whigs had a number of associations either directly under their control, or which represented opinions identified with the Whig cause. Best known of their clubs was the Kit Kat which contained a number of Whig members sympathetic to the "Junto."<sup>(80)</sup> Like the Scriblerus, the association had strong affiliations with the literary world; Addison and Vanbrugh, for example, were members. Politicians numbered among its company included the Dukes of Richmond and Devonshire, and Robert Walpole, who was taught by the club the "art of convivial politics."<sup>(81)</sup> The club

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79. G. Paston, Mr. Pope, (1909), Vol. I, pp.89-90; J. Timbs, op.cit., pp.23-24; M. George, England in Johnson's Day, (1928), p.150. The History of the Jacobite Clubs, (1712), claimed that Anti-Revolution Clubs met in taverns in Ludgate Street and Royal Exchange.

80. R. Walcott, "English Party Politics, 1688-1714," in R. Walcott (Ed), Essays in Modern English History, (Cambridge, Mass., 1941), p.120.

81. J. Plumb, Sir Robert Walpole: The Making of a Statesman, (1956), pp.115-16.

was the butt of much Tory satire, scurrilous attacks being made on the morals of its members hinting that they were inebriates, loose livers, and cowards. To the hard pressed and harassed Tory administration of 1710-1714 the club was seen as the moving spirit behind the "No Popery" demonstrations of the London populace for the end the club members "laboured most assiduously to accomplish was the promotion of loyalty, and allegiance to the Protestant succession in the House of Hanover."<sup>(82)</sup> Founded in about 1700, little is known of the club after 1716; its meetings were held at the Fountain Tavern, Strand, and Barn Elms, the country home of the Club's secretary, the publisher Jacob Tonson, while in summer the club would adjourn to the Flask Tavern, Hampstead Heath.<sup>(83)</sup> Less is known of Whig clubs in the provinces. During Anne's reign King's Lynn had an active Whig club, and it is unlikely that this was an isolated example.<sup>(84)</sup>

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82. J. Caulfield, Memoirs of the Celebrated Persons Comprising the Kit-Kat Club, (1821), p.iii; N. Hans, "Political Clubs and Societies of the Eighteenth Century," Adult Education, 8(3), 1936, pp.215-16.
83. Caulfield, op.cit., pp.iii-iv; C. Barrett, The History of Barn Elms and the Kit Kat Club, (1889); Timbs, op.cit., pp.55-60. The club was also distinctive in that every member had a special "toasting glass" inscribed on the rim of which was "a verse or toast on one of the reigning beauties of the time." J. Rodenberg, England, Literary and Social, from a German Point of View, (1875), pp.203-04. G. Papali, Jacob Tonson, Publisher, (Auckland, 1968), pp.92-93.
84. J. Plumb, "Political Man," in J. Clifford (Ed), Man Versus Society in Eighteenth Century Britain, (Cambridge, 1969), p.10.

A less exalted form of whiggery was manifested by the Mug-House clubs. These humble bodies, patronised mainly by the "middling sort", lawyers, and tradesmen, met regularly in large rooms in taverns in the City and its environs.<sup>(85)</sup> Also known as "Loyal Associations", they were thought to be financed by well-disposed young Whig magnates. A central part of their conviviality was the celebration of the glorious memory of that hammer of the catholics, William III, the inevitable toast being drunk in "penny mugs" from which these societies were said to have derived their name.<sup>(86)</sup>

Between 1712-18 these clubs were used to provoke disturbances within the City and to act as rallying points for the protestant cause with the intention thereby of wresting control of the London crowd from the Tories. To the great discomfiture of the Whigs, the Sacheverell riots of 1710 had shown clearly that the sympathies of the London crowd were with the Tories and the High Church. For during the disturbances while the crowd "attacked the houses of the Whigs and pulled

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85. J. Macky, A Journey through England, (1714), Vol. 1, p.296. Macky states that such meetings were seldom attended by less than 100.

86. W. Maitland, The History of London, Vol.1, (1756); J. Entick, A New and Accurate History and Survey of London, Westminster and Southwark, Vol.II, (1766), pp.372-73. The major societies were The Roebuck (Cheapside), St. John's Lane, Harp (Tower Street), the Ship (Covent Garden) and Reads (off Fleet St.), there were also said to be a number of similar societies in Spitalfields established by Huguenot weavers.

down the chapels of the Whig's dissenting allies," the houses of the Tories were left in peace.<sup>(87)</sup> To the Whigs this posed a threat to their power, which in turn they presented as a challenge to the sanctity of the Protestant succession, of which they saw themselves as guardians. They attempted to counter the Tories new alliance by reviving the tradition of pope-burning in 1711. Planned for the traditional November 17th, the pageant was to include the burning of an effigy of Sacheverell and an effigy of Harley, presented as the Devil. This excursion into the politics of street theatre was thwarted by the Tories who prohibited the procession.<sup>(88)</sup>

With the death of Anne the anticipated succession crisis arrived. The ensuing bitterness and controversies which surrounded the offer of the crown to the Elector of Hanover can only be understood by relating them to the strong fears which the cause of the Pretender and Jacobitism continued to arouse among a substantial section of the population.<sup>(89)</sup>

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87. A. McInnes, "The Revolution and the People," in G. Holmes (Ed), Britain after the Glorious Revolution, (1969), p.85; Bishop Burnet, op.cit., Vol.V, pp.430-31. The Tory allegiances of a substantial section of the London population was a marked shift in loyalties for during both the Exclusion Crisis and the Glorious Revolution, the sympathies of the London crowd had been staunchly Whig. See, W. Sachse, "The Mob and the Revolution of 1688," Journal of British Studies, 5(1), 1964. For a full account of the Sacheverell riots, see, G. Holmes, "The Sacheverell Riots," Past and Present, No. 72, August 1976. Some sections of the menu peuple remained loyal to the Protestant cause. Weavers, for example, who had rioted in 1675, opposed the Sacheverell rioters; see, R. Dunn, "London Weavers' Riots of 1675," Guildhall Studies in London History, Vol.I(1), 1973, and C. Hill, "Dissent and Republicanism after the Restoration," New Left Review, No. 9, June 1961.

88. W. Speck, Whig and Tory, p.93.

89. C. Abbey and J. Overton, The English Church in the Eighteenth Century, (1878), Vol.1, p.64.

Behind the disturbances which accompanied the accession of George I and subsequent elections the Whigs discerned the hand of jacobite Toryism flirting with open rebellion.<sup>(90)</sup> From Bristol came the news in October 1714, that on the very coronation day itself the mob were running about the city "crying out down with the Roundheads, God Bless Dr. Sacheverell." Similar reports came from Taunton, Gloucester and Bridgewater while at Norwich the coronation celebrations were "interrupted by a Jacobite mob, who arm'd with Guns, Pistols, and Clubs ... assaulted and abused the Justices."<sup>(91)</sup> At night in the capital:

Tory mobs ... lit up bonfires, danced round them to rebel airs, and while some of the celebrants shouted for Sacheverell, others uttered blasphemy and ill-wishes against King George. (92)

It was to prevent further mischief by the Jacobites that members of the Mug Houses upon hearing of any tumults in the street would take up stout "ashen cudgels" and thus armed would go forth to engage the protesters in the street.<sup>(93)</sup> Mug-houses, too, were

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90. For measures taken to curb Jacobitism during the elections see, W. Morgan, "Some Sidelights Upon the General Election of 1715," in R. Walcott (Ed), op.cit., pp.141-42.
91. An Account of the Riots, Tumults and Other Treasonable Practices since His Majesty's Accession to the Throne, (1715), pp. 4,6, & 7; See also, A Full Account of the Mischiefs of the Mob, (1716); A Letter to the Mob of Great Britain, (1715).
92. Dr. Doran, London in the Jacobite Times, (1877), Vol.1, p.22. The Examiner was presented before the Middlesex Grand Jury because it was alleged that it was "spread in the coffee-houses ... to poison the minds of people with seditious stories, traitorous insinuations ... reflecting on the pious memory of the late Queen, and the wise and just administration of his majesty," quoted from Post Boy, No. 3057 by W. Morgan, op.cit., p.142.
93. T. Allen, The History and Antiquities of London, (1828), Vol.2, p.11; J. Oldmixon, The History of England During the Reigns of King William, Queen Anne, and King George I, (1735), pp.621-23. Whigs seemed to have an affection for stout staffs for members of the Green Ribbon Club had been renowned for carrying them during their engagement, see R. North, Examen, p.572.

attacked by crowds incensed by the loyalist toasting and by other provocative actions, such as that of the Roebuck which in 1715 burnt an effigy of the Pretender.<sup>(94)</sup> These disturbances, which were a regular occurrence of London life from 1714, were the direct cause of the passing of the Riot Act of 1715, a major piece of public order legislation.<sup>(95)</sup> Legislation restored a certain, fragile, peace, though the mug-houses continued to meet to drink to the confusion of papists, and to toast the health of the new king whose "praise we will sing." Others championed by the houses included Newcastle and Walpole, hailed as "Noble Guardians of Liberty."<sup>(96)</sup> Opponents railed against them for keeping alive the dark spirit of faction, for pitting brother against brother, and for giving comfort and counsel to "Rank fanaticks and dissenters."<sup>(97)</sup> By 1718, however, their activities

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94. Timbs, op.cit., pp.49-50.

95. For the passing of the Act and the riots in general see, J. Fitts, "The Right to Riot: Aspects of the London High Church Riots, 1710-23," (Ph.D, Univ. California, Los Angeles, 1970); Notes and Queries, 5th Series, Vol.12(43), 24 October 1874, p.333; 9th Series, Vol.2(275), 4 April, 1903, pp.277-78; Timbs, op.cit., pp. 50-54; N. Rogers, "Popular Protest in Early Hanoverian London," Past and Present, No. 79, May 1978, pp.78-83.

96. Taken from Mughouse Diversion: Or, a Collection of Loyal Prologues and Songs, Spoke and Sung at the Mug-Houses, (1717), p. 2 & 23; See also, the examples of loyalist song and prose given in A Collection of State Songs, Poems, &c. . . . Sung in the Several Mug-Houses in the Cities of London and Westminster, (1716).

97. Sir H [umphrey] M [ackworth], Down with the Mug: Or, Reasons for Supressing the Mug-Houses, (1717), pp. 3-6.

Had fallen into abeyance, although they continued to make themselves a nuisance until 1722.<sup>(98)</sup>

Controversy continues to exist as to whether one other extreme club had any real existence. This was the Calves Head Club, brought to public notice by a pamphlet published in 1703, The Calves Head Club Unmask'd, attributed to the notorious Grub Street hack, Ned Ward.<sup>(99)</sup> The anonymous author told of the existence of a club of young republicans who dined together on 30th January, the date of the execution of Charles I, and to celebrate that event drunk copious healths to the pious hand that struck the blow as well as toasting generally the death of kings. The significance of the name of the club derived from the high point of the dinner which was a calf's head:

The calf's head served at the table was in derisive memory of the decollated head of the sovereign, and the meaning of the liquor drunk was in joyous celebration of those who brought about the monarch's death. (100)

The pamphlet was an immediate success, and by 1705 the club was taken to be an established fact. Every year thereafter the tract was re-published, growing fatter each time with the addition of new material, so that by the 1720's what had begun as a five page tract had grown to a substantial volume of over 200 pages. No

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98. N. Rogers, op.cit., p.89.

99. Ward's biographer doubts the accuracy of this often asserted attribution. See, H. Troyer, Ned Ward of Grub Street, (Cambridge, Mass., 1946), Chap. VI, "Pious Regicides," passim.

100. Dr. Doran, op.cit., Vol.11, p.62. Doran doubts the authenticity of this club. See also, The Patrician, 1847, pp. 340-41. Allen, however, op.cit., pp. 57-67 believes the club to have been a real one lasting over fifty years.



firm evidence has ever been presented to confirm the existence of such a club, although contemporary newspapers occasionally reported dinners of young bloods held on or around 30th January which might have provided the author with inspiration. Real or mythical, the intention of the piece was to discredit and ridicule those sympathetic to, if wisely silent regarding the republican cause—some whigs, dissenters, and "levellers" generally. The publishing success which attended this squib showed that many were ready to believe in the existence of such republican dining societies. (101)

By 1720 the political club had established itself. Some might lament its existence as sustaining a spirit of faction and division in the nation at a time when unity should have been the prime concern of all who aspired to the name of statesman. (102)

The use of the club for political ends, together with less formal types of association, the establishment of personal coteries sustained by the life-blood of patronage and place, and the development of new forms of political propaganda, helped to support and extend the party as an instrument of political life.

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101. The discovery of such a club in London in 1734 was the occasion of a minor disturbance; see, Leucifer's Grand Emissary's found out: Or, The Calves Head discov'd, (1734); The True Effigies of Calves Heads Met on the 30th January 1734 at the Golden Eagle in Suffolk Street, (1734), Gentleman's Magazine, February 1735; W. Hone, Everyday Book, (1831 edition), Vol.3, 30 January.

102. W. Temple, Miscellanea, (1701), Part III gives a strong criticism of factionalism and its dangers.

In the creation of a relatively stable two party contest for political dominance the club played an important role. (103)

Clubs and coffee houses remained popular places of political resort during the years of Walpole's ascendancy especially for the opposition. (104) The tradition of political dissent and radicalism kept alive by meetings in numerous city taverns and club gatherings provided an organisational framework for the revival of radicalism in the 1760's begun by the Wilkesite disturbances. (105)

Whigs seemed to be greater club men than their Tory rivals. They formed more clubs and the clubs so established were more politically active. Allen attributed this greater political activism on the one hand to the urban basis of whiggism contrasted with the still predominantly rural cast of the Tories. This meant that many Tories were unknown to each other as well as being absent from London for substantial parts of the year. On the other hand the Tories' philosophy was of a predominantly anti-popular character such that they "took no pains to propitiate

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103. On the Idea of "party" and its institutional evolution in this period, see, C. Robbins, "Discordant Parties; A Study of the Acceptance of Party by Englishmen," Political Science Quarterly, Vol.63(4), 1958; G. Holmes, Age of Anne; J. Plumb, The Growth of Political Stability in England, (1967). For a succinct re-statement of the namierite position see, R. Walcott, English Politics in the Early Eighteenth Century, (Oxford, 1956).

104. See M. Hessler, The Literary Opposition to Walpole, (Chicago, 1936); B. Golgar, Walpole and the Wits, (Illinois, 1976).

105. J. Brewer, Party Ideology and Popular Politics at the Accession of George III, (Cambridge, 1976); A. Steinberg, "The City of Westminster and the British Radical Reform Movement of the Late Eighteenth Century," (Ph.D Thesis, New York Univ., St. Johns, 1976), pp.87-88.

the increasingly important upper middle classes of London ... The political and social aloofness of the Tories explains in part the fact that they were less clubbable than the whigs.<sup>(106)</sup> Abraham Tucker in a tract of 1761 warned against joining political clubs. For the Englishman, normally a sensible and jovial creature, became another sort of person, acquiring a "narrowness and ferocity" that was contrary to his nature. Such clubs and cabals were set on foot by wily self-seeking men eager to profit by sowing seeds of discord.<sup>(107)</sup>

Young men were also cautioned against joining the tavern or coffee house club, for it took men away from their families encouraging them to become toppers and debauchees.<sup>(108)</sup> In the club morality was at a discount. The proliferation of clubs and the exotic character of the groups and individuals who habitually frequented them were also the object of gentle satires. Clubs of widows and mechanicks were lampooned in the Spectator and the Tatler while Ward devoted a pamphlet describing assemblies such as the "No Nosed Club," the "Misers' Club," and the "Farting Club,"

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106. Allen, op.cit., p.74.

107. [Abraham Tucker], The Country Gentleman's Advice to His Son on His Coming of Age with regard to His Political Conduct Shewing ... The Folly and Pernicious Consequences of All Party Clubs, (1761). The same theme of corrupt statesmen using the club as a cover for their intrigues to weaken the nation is present in E. Ward, A Compleat [sic] and Humourous Account of All the Remarkable Clubs and Societies in the Cities of London and Westminster, (1756 edition), p.4.

108. J. Puckle, The Club; Or, A Dialogue between Father and Son, (1711). See also the epilogue to Description of a Drunken Club: A Poem, (1680): Think of that Abused Wealth/Due to Your Families, or the Poor/Think how you swallow in each Drunken Health/The Widow's Tears, and Starved Orphan's Goar.

the creation of which he attributed to a parcel of empty sparks about thirty years ago at a publick house in Cripplegate Parish."<sup>(109)</sup> Such clubs had their existence only in the imagination of the author.

In addition to those clubs established on the basis of mutual political sympathies, and clubs which were the meeting place of secret societies, the demands of fashionable life also exercised an influence over club formation.<sup>(110)</sup> Some of these clubs were the product of the passion for gaming which was a pronounced feature of the social life of the majority of the upper ten thousand throughout much of the eighteenth century, while others gave institutional expression to the conviviality of the various manifestations of "rake" subcultures.

Jones, in the only serious study of these latter organisations has argued that the "clubs of the rakes were characterised by a total lack of inhibition and condoning of complete licence."<sup>(111)</sup> They were London clubs formed to provide amusement which comprised eating and excessive drinking, for young, dissolute, but independently wealthy men whose night-time hooliganism and japes added to the disorder of the streets.<sup>(112)</sup> The earliest eighteenth

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109. See, Spectator, No. 9, 10 March 1711 and No. 561, 30 June, 1715 and Tatler, No. 1, April 1709; E. Ward, The Second Part of the History of the London Clubs, (1710?); Troyer, op.cit.
110. On secret societies see, F. Levander, "The Jerusalem Sols and Some Other Societies of the Eighteenth Century," Ars Quatuor Coronatorum, Vol.25, 1912.
111. L. Jones, The Clubs of the Georgian Rakes, (New York, 1942), p.4.
112. The tradition of upper-class delinquency and debauchery was laid down during the Restoration by such groups as the "Hectors." See, The Character of a Town Gallant, (1680), which stated that the young men of fashion had but two preoccupations - fashion and whoring. On the nature of buck society see, T. Graves, "Some Pre-Mohock Clansmen," Studies in Philology, 20(4), 1923; R. Jordan, "The Extravagant Rake in Restoration Comedy," in H. Love (Ed), Restoration Literature: Critical Approaches, (1972), pp. 78-86.

century form of "buck society" had been the marauding bands which had drunkenly staggered forth from city taverns late at night thence to terrorise and annoy the respectable citizenry. Between 1710-1712 these "Mohocks" or "Mohawks" made a thorough nuisance of themselves. Rewards were offered for information which would lead to the arrest of the leaders. No information was laid.<sup>(113)</sup> Only the strengthening of the watch seemed to produce an abatement of the deprivations.<sup>(114)</sup> The "Mohocks" were the best-known but least organised of the rake fraternities. More formal shape was given to rake life by clubs such as the Hell-Fire and the Beef-Steak. Of the Hell Fire Club little need be said. It numbered several prominent politicians among its members and held its meetings, which it was rumoured featured all forms of sexual licence spiced with occultism, at Medmenham Abbey, Buckinghamshire. It was not an isolated instance for a number of other impious clubs were said to have been founded at the same time. It was the existence, real or imagined, of such societies which prompted the King to issue a Proclamation on 18th April 1721 calling for their suppression. He had been informed that throughout the metropolis blasphemous societies had come into existence which ridiculed "the most sacred principles of our Holy Religion, affronting Almighty God himself, and corrupting the minds and morals of one another."<sup>(115)</sup>

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113. Jones, op.cit., pp. 21-22. For their activities, see, The Town Rakes or the Frolicks of the Mohocks and Hawkubites, (1712).

114. N. Pearson, Society Sketches in the Eighteenth Century, (1911), Chap. 1; W. Lecky, op.cit., Vol.II, p.105;

115. J. Malcolm, Anecdotes of the Manners and Customs of London During the Eighteenth Century, (1808), p.151.

A better known and more seemly society was the Sublime Society of Beef-Steaks whose members included Wilkes, Churchill and Doddington. It was one of a number of "beef-steak" clubs, such as the "Rump Steak and Liberty Club" formed sometime in 1733, organised by opponents of Walpole.<sup>(116)</sup> Established by John Rich in 1735 the Beef-Steak Club set-down elaborate rituals by which its meetings were to be conducted. Its membership was limited to 24 and originally they were required to wear a uniform of:

blue coat and buff waistcoat with brass buttons  
impressed with the grid iron and the motto "Beef  
and Liberty." (117)

The reasons for its establishment and title were disarmingly simple:

"All through the eighteenth century, English writers deplored the debilitating influence of the effete French on the rugged Britishers and their institutions. They saw Gallic inroads being made upon their language, theatre, dress, manners and food. There was thus a kind of aggressive patriotism inherent in the emphasis the Sublime Society placed upon their English beef." (118)

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116. Timbs, op.cit., pp. 158-59. H. Wheatley, Round About Piccadilly and Pall Mall, (1870), p.326.

117. W. Arnold, The Life and Death of the Sublime Society of Beef Steaks, (1871), p.4. The original membership list is given on pp. xi-xii. H. Wheatley, London: Past and Present, (1891), Vol.1, pp.150-52. For Boswell's account of his meal and the company present at the club see, Boswell's London Journal (F. Pottle, editor; Harmondsworth, 1966), p.78. Membership was increased to 25 in 1785 in order that the Prince of Wales could be admitted to membership. See, Annual Register, 1785; W. Hextall, "Some Old Time Clubs and Societies," Ars Quatuor Coronatorum, Vol.28, (1914), p.56.

118. Jones, op.cit., p.148.

It was, said Thomas Foley during his speech admitting him as a member of the club:

A Society, as renowned for Ye Excellency of its Constitution, the Purity of its Manners, and the Sociality of its Members, as for the Sublimity of its situation:- No Member, Here Sells his Conscience: No Brother lies in wait for the future of his friend. (119)

It met in premises in Covent Garden until 1808 when it was forced to move because of the destruction of its meeting place by fire. After changing residence a number a times it finally obtained its own suite of rooms in the Lyceum Tavern (Strand). Each member paid 5/- for his Saturday night dinner of steak, and a further 10/- if he brought a guest, but the entrance fee, until 1849, was £26.5/-, besides two annual "whips" of £5. Singing formed an additional pleasure of the members. The gastronomic loyalism represented by eating beef attracted a highly influential membership. Until 1839 at least one member of the Royal Family was a member, as well as a good sprinkling of cabinet ministers.<sup>(120)</sup> Sadly, from the 1840's the club went into mortal decline, closing in 1869. Like other creations of the rake milieu, the club was too robust, too hedonistic to survive the great ethical revolution which accompanied the accession of Victoria. As Jones has argued, "middle class

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119. P. Sawyer, "Admission Speeches at the Sublime Society of Beefsteaks," Notes and Queries, New Series, Vol. 22(11), November 1975, p.502. Foley was admitted on 28 April 1770.

120. Arnold, op.cit., pp.5-33. The second part of the book is a collection of songs, and inevitably, toasts, popular at the club. The Song of the Day, had the chorus - "A Joyful theme for Britons Free/ Happy in Beef and Liberty."

morality" killed these clubs. (121)

The love of gaming, which was a defining feature of aristocratic life before the triumph of Evangelicalism, brought a number of enduring and most important clubs into existence, clubs which have since come to embody and epitomise the ethos of clubability in English aristatic life. (122.)

In 1693 Francis White, an Italian emigre, opened a chocolate house on the east side of St. James Street. Chocolate houses were greatly favoured by the young gentlemen of quality being "something more esteem'd than the coffee house." (123) White capitalised on this fashionability by charging an admission of 6d

121. Jones, op.cit., pp. 10 and 155. The Clubs moral code was illustrated by the treatment meted out to two of its members for moral offences. Churchill was forced to resign for his desertion of his wife. Wilkes, on the other hand, was made an Honorary Member when he was forced to flee to France to avoid prosecution for his pornographic Essay on Woman, a copy of which he presented to the club, but which was returned to him. He was given his honour because of his "wit, spirit and humour, which had so long delighted the table." Marsh, op.cit., Vol.11, p.18 and 22.

122. On gaming see, J. Ashton, The History of Gambling in England, (1898), pp. 90-97; Lecky, op.cit., pp. 156-57; The gaming passion was also put at the service of the state when in 1709 the state lottery was established. It was abolished in 1828. One of the more unusual features of eighteenth century gaming was that cheating, far from being the behaviour of a bounder, was seen as an integral part of the Skill of gambling; see, M. McDonell, "A Cursory View of Cheating at Whist in the Eighteenth Century," Harvard Library Bulletin, Vol.22(2), 1974. All classes of society seemed to have enjoyed play. Archenholtz was saddened to report that the pensioners of the Royal Hospital at Chelsea "being unable to indulge themselves in either horse or ass racing have been known to wager on the speed of vermin." M. D. Archenholtz, A Picture of England, (1789), Vol.1, pp. 184-85.

123. Muralt, op.cit., p.33.



to the house. The following year he moved across the street. Over the years the premises were enlarged and the control of the house passed from White to his assistant manager John Arthur, then to Arthur's wife, Elizabeth, and finally their son Robert. The house had the enviable reputation for being the most fashionable gaming house in London, a reputation consolidated under Elizabeth's stewardship when the house became the centre for high (and ruinous) play.<sup>(124)</sup> Elizabeth also shrewdly extended the power of the house by making it the centre of distribution of tickets for admission to all the most modish and exclusive entertainments of London society. Success had its penalties. In White's case the problem was that its reputation for gambling and fashion attracted to it an unsavoury collection of adventurers, sharpers, fortune-hunters, and other urban ne'er do wells.<sup>(125)</sup> Undesirables were not only a nuisance to the players. Their toleration would eventually drive rich custom to rival houses. Shortly before Robert came into his inheritance in 1736 the house decided to limit entry to those who had formally been admitted to membership.<sup>(126)</sup>

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124. Elizabeth's period of management began about 1711 and lasted until ca.1729.

125. Timbs, op.cit., Vol.11, pp. 42-47. For a description of the criminal elements attracted by the prospect of victims in the coffee house, see, A London Magistrate, A Description of London and Westminster, (1776).

126. The house had been substantially rebuilt and re-furnished after fire in 1733.

White's club, usually regarded as the oldest English club, had come into being.<sup>(127)</sup> By restricting entry it had made the fact of admission "to a particular society no purely conventional honour, but a social credential of definite significance and practical importance."<sup>(128)</sup>

The club was the heart of fashionable London.<sup>(129)</sup> Its membership was limited to 80 members, and as the records show these gentlemen were in no hurry to expand their numbers without full consideration. By 1743 the number of members was still well below 100. Those who frequented the chocolate house anxious to show they were fit for admission and to secure membership found themselves barred by an almost unbreakable concern for exclusiveness. To remedy this, a group of aspirant members formed themselves into a "Young Club at White's" to pass their leisure until called into senior society. As with most things English, innovation quickly became tradition; by the 1750's no member could join White's until he had been elected and served in the junior society. This lasted until 1781, when the two clubs merged. This did not mean any relaxation in membership policy. The number and

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127. On White's the most detailed reference is W. Boulton, The History of White's, (1892), Vol.II of which reproduces the famous betting book, 1743-1878, and gives a list of members from 1736 until 1892. See also, E. Mumford, A Letter to the Club at White's, (1750); P. Colson, White's, 1693-1951, (1951); W. Irving, John Gay's London, (Cambridge, Mass., 1948), p.264; M. George, "London and the Life of the Town," A. Tuberville (Ed), Johnson's England, (Oxford, 1933), Vol.I, p.178.

128. Escott, op.cit., p.108.

129. The Club probably inspired the portrait of the gambling saloon given in Hogarth's "Rake's Progress," Plate IV.

quality of those admitted to membership was strictly watched. After much discussion, in 1791 the membership was increased to 450, and by 1813 it had crept to 500. (130)

It was gaming that brought White's into existence and gaming which gave it notoriety. Members were said to bet on any and everything. Lord Lincoln, for example, wagered Lord Winchelsea that the Dowager Duchess of Marlborough would not survive the Dowager Duchess of Cleveland. (131) In the 1760's, whether as a consequence of the slightly stricter morals of the court of George III or from a belated recognition of the ravages that the taste for gaming was wreaking upon the fortunes of England's nobility, the level of gambling diminished at the club. Games of chance were still played, but these were the much more innocuous pastimes of whist and piquet. Men who wished to beggar themselves at Hazard and faro now moved to the clubs at Brooks and Almacks.

Almacks combined both club and assembly rooms. Like Whites it was highly exclusive and very expensive. It was founded in 1764 by one Macall and its members included Charles James Fox. (132) Besides its attractions for gamblers it was also the centre of (133) resort for a group of young and extravagant fops, the "Macaronis."

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130. W. Boulton, op.cit., Vol.1, pp.64-69, 167, 204; H. Shelley, The Inns and Taverns of Old London, (1909), Section III.
131. W. Boulton, op.cit., Vol.II, p.1. The bet was made on 5 October 1743. It does not record who won.
132. Timbs, op.cit., pp. 86-89.
133. The term "macaroni" soon lost its class connotations and became a general term for fast men or women. See, N. Pearson, op.cit., p.244-67. Because of its popularity with men of fashion the club was also known as the "Macaroni Club." Jones sees the emergence of this club and its fashionable clientele as marking a transition in rake society from concern with riot and revel to preoccupation with "clothes, manners, and superior graces." This group "encouraged dalliance with sin rather than embracing it as their fathers and elder brothers had done." Jones, op.cit., p.9.

The Assembly Rooms were run by a committee of leading society hostesses who organised select balls. The dances at Almack's became a central part of the London season and made an inestimable contribution to the operations of the elite marriage market. Despite objections and imputations of immorality from the bench of bishops, Almack's Rooms became an essential rendezvous for those seeking entry into the company of the powerful. Admission was a closely and jealously guarded privilege. (134)

Brooks was established in 1764. Predominantly a club for Whigs, it was also the haunt of any politician who "jaded with parliamentary labours" sought relaxation "in the excitement of gambling." (135) Founded by the money-lender and wine-merchant from which it took its name it moved from Pall Mall to St. James. Unlike other entrepreneurs who made their fortune by founding clubs, Brooks lost money on the rent and died in poverty. (136) During its early years it was dominated by Fox who had an unrivalled ability (and stamina) to combine gaming and politics. (137)

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134. A. Chambre, Recollections of West-End Life, with Sketches of Society in Paris and India, (1858), Vol.II, pp559-65. V. Hugo, By Order of the King, (1870), Vol.1, Chap.IV, "The Leader of Fashion." See also the three decker novel M. Spencer-Hudson, Almack's (1826). Captain Gronow, Reminiscences of Captain Gronow being Anecdotes of the Camp, the Court, and the Clubs, (1862) Vol.1, pp. 42-47.
135. E. Chancellor, Memorials of St. James Street, together with the Annals of Almack's, (1922) p.142; Memorials of Brooks, (1907). G. Trevelyan, Early History of Charles James Fox, (1899), pp.82-84.
136. J. Hatton, Club Land: London and Provincial, (1890), pp.15-16.
137. "Political Clubs," Edinburgh Review, Vol.167, January, 1888, p.113. Other members included Burke, Hume and Gibbon.

Originally restricted to 150, the list expanded to 300 (1776) and by 1857 had reached 600.<sup>(138)</sup>

Two years before the opening of Brooks, Boodles had been established and quickly became a popular resort for country gentlemen.<sup>(139)</sup> Later it was to gain fame for the extravagant masques it organised for its members and their wives.<sup>(140)</sup>

Fashionable clubland in the capital in the late 1760's was quite extensive. In addition to those already mentioned, others included Arthur's, another elite gaming club, founded in 1756.<sup>(141)</sup> For those of slightly more intellectual persuasion there was the Dilettanti Club, created in 1734, the qualifications for membership of which were said to be "drunkenness and a visit to Italy."<sup>(142)</sup> There was also the Order of the Bucks, a convivial society which moved its meetings to the environs of Pall Mall in the 1760's in order to be close to the Court from which most of its membership was recruited.<sup>(143)</sup>

The stress on fashion and gambling did not mean that political considerations and loyalties were entirely neglected. Most of these clubs retained some links, however tenuous, with one of the two political parties. Brooks was mainly Whig; White's tried to

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138. Memorials of Brooks, p.xii.

139. Griffiths, op.cit., p.71.

140. R. Fulford, Boodles, (1962), pp.22-23. The club was also known as the Savoir Vivre.

141. Timbs, op.cit., pp.107-08.

142. Quoted by L. Stephen, op.cit., p.122. The saying is attributed to Horace Walpole. For a more serious view of the club, see, L. Cust, The History of the Dilettanti, (1898).

143. Tavern Anecdotes, (1825), p.109; Notes and Queries, 9th Series, Vol.4(95), 21 October 1899.

present itself as neutral after a period of being associated with the Tory cause. Its neutrality, nonetheless, was shattered when Pitt was elected to membership whereupon Fox and his allies removed themselves, adjourning to the more amenable surroundings of Brooks.<sup>(144)</sup> The increasingly embittered relations between Pitt and the Foxites from the late 1780's were said to be responsible for the growing politicization and polarization of club land at the end of the century. The Society of Beefsteaks was Whig and were vocal in their support for the cause of Wilkes.<sup>(145)</sup> Those desirous of combining gaming with the equally hazardous pastime of Jacobitism could find this need met at the Cocoa Tree Club. It had been a noted chocolate house in the reign of Queen Anne becoming a club around 1746.<sup>(146)</sup> It was said to be the headquarters of a faction "who have ever aimed to distress liberty and destroy the blessing of this free constitution, and who have ever caluminated the friends of the Revolution and the Hanoverian Succession."<sup>(147)</sup> More objective research has suggested that it did provide the Tory party with its headquarters in the mid part of the century, having over 90 M.P.s in its membership by 1754.<sup>(148)</sup> Opposition to Bute

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144. Boulton, Amusements, Vol.11, pp.210-13.

145. Jones, op.cit., pp.143-44.

146. Timbs, Vol.1, p.81.

147. A Letter from Arthur's to the Cocoa Tree, (1766); See also (Dr. Butler), An Address to the Cocoa Tree from a Whig, (1762); A Derbyshire Gentleman's Answer to the Letter from the Cocoa Tree, (1762).

148. L. Colley, "The Loyal Brotherhood and the Cocoa Tree: The London Organisation of the Tory Party, 1727-61, Historical Journal, 20(1), 1977, pp.86-88. H. Phillips, Mid-Georgian London, (1964), pp.59-60 calls the club a "centre of Jacobite plotters."

amongst young Whigs prompted the formation of a club at Wildman's Coffee House Bedford Street, Strand.<sup>(149)</sup> The club came into existence to press forward the case of Wilkes and express opposition to the use of general warrants. As that issue receded so support for the club weakened. Nevertheless it had performed a valuable service in promoting the unity of the Whig party in the mid-60's.<sup>(150)</sup>

Deepening political conflicts and divisions in the reign of George III provided a continuous stimulus to the formation of clubs. Some of the clubs pressed into service on behalf of Wilkes have already been noted. In 1769 the Wilkesite cause was taken up by a highly select assembly with the formation of The Society of the Supporters of the Bill of Rights.<sup>(151)</sup> Philosophy and politics of a progressive kind were the main fare of the Club of Honest Whigs which Benjamin Franklin joined during his first visit to England in 1757. Other members of this academy included Priestley and Price.<sup>(152)</sup>

Whigs proved energetic and redoubtable club founders. Various political clubs were established from the mid 1780's in London and the provinces to keep alive the Whig cause and to provide valuable organisational skills during elections.<sup>(153)</sup>

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149. Wheatley, op.cit., Vol.111, pp.515-6.

150. D. Watson, "The Rise of the Opposition at Wildman's Club," Bulletin: Institute for Historical Research, Vol.44 (No.109), 1971. It was described in one broadsheet as a "kind of Robin Hood society at the court end of town," "A Letter to a Noble Member of the Club in Albemarle Street from J. Wilkes, at Paris, (1764), p.7.

151. I. Christie, Myth and Reality in Late Eighteenth Century British Politics, (1970), p.111.

152. V. Crane, "The Club of Honest Whigs," William and Mary Quarterly, 3rd Series, Vol.23(2), 1966.

153. D. McAdams, "Electioneering Techniques in Populous Constituencies, 1784-96," Studies in Burke and His Time, Vol.14(1), 1970, pp.27-30; D. Ginter (Ed), Whig Organisation in the General Election of 1790, (Berkeley, 1967), p.xxi.

To aid Fox in the Westminster election and to propagate the principles of the Glorious Revolution in the capital a Whig Club was set-up in May 1784. The club linked the Whig hierarchy with the wider agitation for parliamentary reform.<sup>(154)</sup> Predominantly aristocratic, it did contain a good sprinkling of more middle class membership.<sup>(155)</sup> The club made substantial provision for the conviviality of its members holding regular dinners, accompanied by the drinking of copious toasts of which the club had nine standard ones which had to be drunk at every dinner. These included:

The Glorious and Immortal Memory of William III  
The Rights of the People  
The Friends of Freedom. (156)

After Fox's death a grand dinner was always held to commemorate his birthday, January 24th.<sup>(157)</sup> Along with Brooks, at which Fox dispensed political patronage and favours, the club became the central rendezvous for the Foxite faction, remaining loyal to him throughout the dark days of the revolutionary wars and state repression.<sup>(158)</sup> The club did much to "spread the spirit

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154. R. Fulford, Samuel Whitbread, (1967), p.157.

155. The Whig Club, (1786), includes a complete membership list. Its enemies charged that it was comprised mainly of drunken cuckolds; The Whig Club: Or. Sketches of Modern Patriotism, (1794).

156. Taken from Fulford, op.cit., pp.56-57.

157. A. Foord, His Majesty's Opposition, 1714-80, (Oxford, 1964), p.406; L. Reid, Charles James Fox, (1969), pp.372-73; N. Penny, "The Whig Cult of Fox in Early Nineteenth Century Sculpture," Past and Present, No.70, February 1976, pp.94-95; 105.

158. L. Mitchell, C.J. Fox and the Disintegration of the Whig Party, 1782-94, (Oxford, 1971), pp.103, 256.



of whiggism and opposition throughout the country.<sup>(159)</sup> It also showed that Charles James Fox deserves a place alongside Dr. Johnson as a great clubman, for in addition to the clubs already mentioned he was also a member of the independent and politically radical masonic club, the Jerusalem Sols, established in 1783.<sup>(160)</sup>

By the last quarter of the century the major spatial and topographical characteristics of London club land were being laid down. All the most fashionable and important clubs were clustered in the central and western parts of the capital, areas which had come to dominance as the seats of fine living as the fashionable regions of the city moved westwards. The greatest concentration of clubs was to be found in the environs of Pall Mall and St. James, which until the middle decades of the century had simply been fashionable promenades. Both streets were in easy reach of the Court of St. James, the homes of the great in the newly built squares of central London and the piazzas of Covent Garden then an important area for amusement.<sup>(161)</sup> As clubs left their rooms in coffee houses and taverns, so the number of clubs in this area increased. Moreover the growth of such exclusive centres of conviviality was in marked contrast to the pattern of class relations at amusements in general where at the fair, the cock-fight, the pugilistic encounter, the theatre, and in the pleasure gardens there was a blurring of social distinction and

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159. Foord, op.cit., p.407.

160. Levander, op.cit.; N. Hans, op.cit., p.220.

161. On the changing topography of fashionable London see, Lecky, op.cit., pp.212-13; J. Beattie, The English Court In the Reign of George I, (Cambridge, 1967), pp.206-08; A. Parreaux, Smollett's London, (Paris, 1965), pp.39, 189. There is an interesting taxonomy of London districts in J. Murray, The World of London, (1843), Vol.1, Chap.6.

where class relations were most fluid.<sup>(162)</sup> In England, so Muralt was driven to remark, "Greatness ... is no hindrance to Amusements, but likewise that it does not consist in the Contempt of the Populace, or keep them at a distance, as 'tis in other nations."<sup>(163)</sup>

The expansion of London's economy and its role as the centre of fashionable life which required the expansion of numerous trades and crafts to cater for its insatiable appetite for luxury and novelty, and its role as the political and administrative capital, allowed it to support a burgeoning number of clubs.<sup>(164)</sup> But it must not be supposed that all clubs concerned themselves with trivial matters, things of little consequence nor that the idea of the club was alien to those who lived outside the Bills of Mortality.

Some clubs did provide their members with more intellectually satisfying fare than dice and cards. Members of the Royal Society had their dining clubs, while various persons interested in "mechanical philosophy" gathered together to perform experiments as well as enjoy the pleasures of each others' company at a

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162. D. Marshall, English People in the Eighteenth Century, (1956); p.129, J. Pennant, Some Account of London, (4th edition, 1805), p.104; Travels of Von Uffenbach, pp.51-53; 88-91; 105-09; C. Graham, "On the Savage Diversion of a Cock-Fight," Miscellaneous Pieces, (Liverpool, 1793), pp.171-73.

163. Muralt, op.cit., p.39.

164. F. Fisher, "London as a Centre of Conspicuous Consumption" Transactions, Royal Historical Society, 4th series, Vol.30, (1948), Chap.1, passim; E. Wrigley, "A Simple Model of London's Importance in Changing English Society and Economy, 1650-1750," Past and Present, No.37 July 1967. For a listing and discussion of numerous London clubs, many with an ephemeral existence see, W. Hextall, op.cit., p.62 and Dr. J. Doran, "On Some Clubs and Their Ends," In and About Drury Lane, (1881), Vol.11.

substantial dinner.<sup>(165)</sup> Even the provincial Literary and Philosophical Societies with their serious aim of adding to the stock of useful knowledge and fostering invention, found room to hold social meetings where the claims of science or culture might be subordinated to those of conviviality.<sup>(166)</sup> One authority on clubs, however, thought such provision misplaced for he regarded learned societies to be "most oppressive: they have little or no admixture of the natural and characteristic humours of men."<sup>(167)</sup>

Of the life in provincial clubs in this period, nothing like as much is known as exists for their metropolitan counterparts. There can be no doubt, nonetheless, that in the expanding, commercial cities, with their assembly rooms and debating societies, fashionable spas such as Bath, Tunbridge Wells and Harrogate, provincial capitals and ecclesiastical cities existed an active club life.<sup>(168)</sup>

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165. A. Geikie, Annals of the Royal Society Club, (1917); R. Allibone, The Royal Society and Its Dining Clubs, (Oxford, 1976); B. Slichter, Science in a Tavern, (Wisconsin, 1937); Chap.1 passim; J. Cohen et al, "Natural History of Learned and Scientific Societies," Nature, Vol.173 (No.4399), 20 February 1954.
166. M. Schofield, "Chemists' Clubs," Chemistry in Britain, 6(12), 1970.
167. Marsh, op.cit., p.133. The belief in the incompatibility of the club idea with serious pursuits was the hallmark of the blue-stocking coterie led by Hannah More who wanted conversation in the salon to be serious, not given to light-hearted or frivolous topics. See, M. Hopkins, Hannah More and Her Circle, (1947), pp.104-06; C. Tinker, The Salon and English Letters, (New York, 1915).
168. R. Wiles, "Provincial Culture in Georgian England," in P.Fritz and D. Williams (Eds), The Triumph of Culture: Eighteenth Century Perspectives, (Toronto, 1972); P. Kaufman, "English Book Clubs and Their Role in Social History," Libri, 14(1), 1964.

Liverpool had a number of political clubs by the late eighteenth century. By 1768 it had a flourishing Conversation Club which met weekly to debate political questions.<sup>(169)</sup> By the early nineteenth century the city had seven specifically political clubs.<sup>(170)</sup> Unitarians were especially active in the formation of literary clubs in Liverpool as well as helping to form clubs in Leicester, Manchester and Nottingham, although many of them were forced out of existence as a consequence of state action in the 1790's.<sup>(171)</sup> Liverpool also had a bachelor dining society, the Ugly Face Clubb, which met from 1749 until 1753.<sup>(172)</sup> Manchester had a Mathematical Society from 1718.<sup>(173)</sup> At Newcastle a number of clubs were formed to press forward the cause of Wilkes and in 1774 radical political opinions provided the basis for membership in either the Independent Club or the Sydney Club.<sup>(174)</sup> Detailed study of Birmingham and the West Midlands had demonstrated widely diffused sociability carried on in taverns, coffee houses, lodges and clubs, which supplied the means for political education and debate in equal measure with

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169. J. Plumb, England in the Eighteenth Century, (Harmondsworth, 1974), p.119; Arkle, op.cit., pp.6-7.
170. Jones, "Liverpool's Political Clubs," Transactions, Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire, Vol.III, (1959).
171. A. Rushton, "The Non-Con Club and Some Other Unitarian Clubs, 1783-1914," Transactions, Unitarian Historical Society, Vol.14(2) 1969, pp.149-50.
172. E. Howell, (Ed), Ye Ugly Face Clubb, Liverpool, (Liverpool, 1912).
173. J. Plumb, "Reason and Unreason," op.cit., pp.13-14.
174. For Wilkesite Clubs, see Brewer, op.cit., pp.150, 178; on the latter clubs see, Christie, op.cit., p.257.

good fellowship. Moreover, such societies and associations were not solely the preserve of the rich and powerful. Artisans and tradesmen had their own clubs which were crucial to the creation of political articulacy and action in the area. The formation of such clubs was given a powerful boost by the Wilkesite agitation and the cause of the colonists during the American Revolutionary Wars.<sup>(175)</sup> What has been shown for this area, could probably be reproduced in other cities such as York, Norwich and Bristol.

North of the border, clubs have been seen as major arteries through which the ideas and values of the Scottish Enlightenment were passed to the interested literati.<sup>(176)</sup> Edinburgh had an extensive network of gentlemen's societies and clubs, although some of them in the earlier part of the century were thought to be the haunt of various disaffected and politically doubtful personages.<sup>(177)</sup> In 1716 the Rankeian Club was established to provide, in the words of one of its members, George Wallace,<sup>(178)</sup> "mutual improvement by liberal conversation and rational inquiry." To this club can be added the names of the Easy Club (1712), the

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175. J. Money, Experience and Identity, (Manchester, 1977), Chap.5, passim; Idem, "Taverns, Coffee-Houses and Clubs: Local Politics and Popular Articulation in The Birmingham Area in the Age of the American Revolution," Historical Journal, 14(1), 1971.

176. D. McElroy, Scotland's Age of Improvement: Literary Clubs and Societies, (Pullman, 1969); A. Chitnis, The Scottish Enlightenment: A Social History, (1976), pp.196-204.

177. J. Clive, "Scottish Renaissance," in R. Mitchison and N. Phillipson (Eds), Scotland in the Age of Improvement, (Edinburgh, 1970).

178. Cited by N. Phillipson, "Culture and Society in the Eighteenth Century Province; The Case of Edinburgh, and The Scottish Enlightenment," in L. Stone (Ed), The University in Society, (1975), Vol.II, p.433.

Wise Club, established in Aberdeen in 1758, and the Hodge Podge Club, Glasgow, inaugurated to discuss literary matters but which soon succumbed to the greater attractions of whist and brandy. (179)

Although many of these clubs were involved in the dissemination and elaboration of serious, intellectual discourses, there were clubs which had lighter and more mundane objectives. The Wagering Club may be cited as an instance here. It was a peripatetic club which met to dine and converse. Small wagers were made between members, but no money changed hands. Instead the bets were recorded in a ledger and the losers paid 1/- into a common fund.

After meeting the expenses of the club each year, the residue of the monies left in the fund was distributed to local charities. (180)

Like their southern bretheren Scottish clubmen also took a keen interest in political matters, many of the clubs being identified with specific tendencies. After 1750 most clubs were, at the very least, sympathetic to the whig cause, and this whiggish tone grew more pronounced towards the end of the century. This was indicated by Cockburn's survey of social clubs in Edinburgh in the first decade of the nineteenth century which discussed such clubs as the Friday so named because of the day on which it met and of which Lord Brougham was a founding member. (181) The

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179. See, J. Valentine, "A Society of Aberdeen Philosophers A Hundred Years Ago," MacMillan's Magazine, Vol.8, October, 1863; E. King, "A Eighteenth Century 'Philosophical' Club," Dalhousie Review, Vol.50(2), 1979; R. Emerson, "Enlightenment and Social Structures," In P. Fritz and D. Williams (Eds), City and Society in the Eighteenth Century, (Toronto, 1973), p.111.

180. J. Sutherland, "An Eighteenth Century Survival: The Wagering Club, 1775," Book of the Old Edinburgh Club, Vol.2, 1909, pp.154-56.

181. H. Cockburn, "An Account of the Friday Club Written by Lord Cockburn, Together with Notes on Certain Other Social Clubs in Edinburgh," Book of the Old Edinburgh Club, Vol.3, 1910; J. Clive, The Scotch Reviewers, 1802-1815, (1957), p.20.

Edinburgh Poker Club, a political discussion club of the 1760's and 1770's controlled a powerful parliamentary interest and its membership, mainly of lawyers and academics, "articulated a provincial viewpoint shared by most enlightened Scots."<sup>(182)</sup> No doubt the pronounced propensity of Hibernians to band themselves together in clubs influenced Ferguson to stress the sociable and co-operative nature of man in his discourse upon social development.<sup>(183)</sup>

The club model also proved a durable export. The English model of sociability was specifically cited in providing the rationale for the creation of a Monday Club in Berlin in 1749. Composed mainly of literary figures, its best known member was Lessing.<sup>(184)</sup> But the club model took deepest root in those regions which most closely resembled the social and cultural structure which had fostered the original model. Clubs thus flourished in the American colonies. In most of the leading cities of New England, rich merchants, tradesmen and artisans were busy developing an indigenous tradition of clubbability. Some of these bodies were sternly utilitarian taking for their object the mutual improvement of the membership and the discussion of projects to enhance the well-being of the commonwealth.<sup>(185)</sup> Others, on the other hand, combined political or moral objectives

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182. Emerson, op.cit., p.111.

183. A. Ferguson, Essay Upon Civil Society, (1767), Section III.

184. M. Von Boehn, Modes and Manners, (1935), Vol.IV, p.286.

185. C. Bridenbaugh, "Philosophy Put to Use: Voluntary Associations for Propagating the Enlightenment in Philadelphia, 1727-1776," Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography, Vol.101(1), 1977; R. Bates, "Scientific Societies in the Eighteenth Century," Scientific Societies in the United States, (3rd edition, Oxford, 1965).

with the pursuit of good fellowship. Such associations included the Tuesday Club of Annapolis, or the Literary and Philosophical Society of Newport. (186)

So far most of the clubs examined or mentioned have been the preserve of the mighty or at least men of some substance. This did not mean, however, that those in humbler stations in life lacked their own forms of club life and attendant sociability. Less is known of these organisations and their development but from various sources some idea of the club-life of the middling sort and labouring sections of the population can be gleaned. Both instituted their own network of clubs and analogous associations. Like their counterparts in elite circles some of these bodies were simply for conviviality, others had more improving objectives. There was also one major distinction in that some of these societies were established for the mutual protection and care of the membership and to ensure the furtherance of the particular interests of the membership which composed the club. The formation of such clubs was not simply the result of cultural diffusion or of the imitation of the organisations of social superiors. They also have to be seen as the development of the social and cultural

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186. J. Clive and B. Bailyn, "England's Cultural Provinces: Scotland and America," William and Mary Quarterly, 3rd series, Vol.11(2), 1954, pp.202-04; E. Breslaw, "Wit, Whimsey and Politics: The Uses of Satire by the Tuesday Club of Annapolis, 1744-1756," William and Mary Quarterly, 3rd series, Vol.32(2), 1975; For clubs in Georgia, see H. Davis, The Fledgling Province: Society and Culture in Colonial Georgia, (Chapel Hill, 1976), pp.170-73. In the 1790's a series of Republican societies were established which provided for the self-improvement and political education of their members. See, E. Link, Democratic Republican Societies, 1790-1800, (New York, 1942). For the development and role of the elite club in Jacksonian New York, see, E. Pessen, "Philip Hone's Set: Social World of the New York City Elite in the 'Age of Egalitarianism,'" New York Historical Society Quarterly, 56(4), 1972.



relations of these subaltern orders.<sup>(187)</sup> For the eighteenth century artisan the major social institution was the trade club which met regularly, usually in a tavern, to discuss the social and economic affairs of the trade and which combined conviviality with mutual aid and support. In short it was club, friendly society and proto-trade union.<sup>(188)</sup> Such clubs were a recognised feature of eighteenth century city life, although more is known of their existence and workings in the latter part of the century.

Lower class club life was also centred on the coffee house and the tavern. London contained 'over 5,000 alehouses by 1730.'<sup>(189)</sup> In these numerous rendezvous assembled the varied membership of the clubs. "There was scarcely any public house in any respectable neighbourhood of the capital," argued Sydney, "which had not its friends' club, its lottery club, its smoking club, its charitable club ... where the neighbouring shopkeepers regularly

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187. The diffusion model is used by J. Ross, An Assembly of Good Fellows: Voluntary Associations in History, (Westport, Conn., 1976), pp.153-54 and 248-49. It is also used by Epstein, Thesis, op.cit., who sees lower class clubs as involving the "mimicking of the more exalted clubs." (p.180). Kropotkin vigorously attacked such ideas. The masses had been given little credit for their contributions to sociability, he observed. For it was usually thought that "all progress made in this direction was due to the intellectual, political and military leaders of the inert masses." P. Kropotkin, Mutual Aid, (1972 edition), p.14.
188. W. Ashley, "Journeyman's Clubs," Political Science Quarterly, Vol.12(1), 1897; R. Leeson, Travelling Brothers, (1979), pp.83, 84, 88 and 92. On trade clubs and their activities, see, S. Bamford, Passages in the Life of a Radical, (Manchester, 1843), Vol.1, pp.23-24; S. Shipley, "Metropolitan Friendly Societies in the 1820's," (M.A. Thesis, Univ. Warwick, 1975), Chap.1. Plumb, in Clifford, op.cit., p.17.
189. Epstein, op.cit., pp.170-74. P. de Castro, London Taverns, (nd. Mss, Guildhall Library).

spent their evenings."<sup>(190)</sup> Mechanics and artisans were said to have established a Two Penny Club in London, its name being taken from the charge made for admission. It had a number of unusual Rules including:

- IV If any member swears, his neighbour may give him a kick upon the shins.
- IX If any member calls another cuckold, he shall be turned out of the club.

But the obvious humorous intent of these rules makes it most likely that the club was a satirical fiction.<sup>(191)</sup> Any study of the club land of the lower orders must take note of those most clubbable of young men, the London apprentices. These fractious and unruly juveniles had numerous clubs held at London taverns. Staunch and vocal supporters of the Protestant cause the 'prentices had been active in the Pope burning ceremonies during the London disturbances which marked the end of Anne's reign. More jocularly many apprentices patronised the "Spouting Clubs" which became very popular in the 1770's, at which young men would gather to act and to declaim.<sup>(192)</sup> One club which seems to have been the particular resort of tradesmen and their confreres was the Robin Hood Society, which met at a London tavern to discuss and debate the political issues of the day.<sup>(193)</sup> Boswell, for one, took delight in paying

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190. Sydney, op.cit., Vol.1, p.218.

191. For the club see, Spectator, No.9, March 10, 1711; Tavern Anecdotes, (1825), p.135.

192. J. Thieme, "Spouting, Spouting Clubs and Spouting Companions," Theatre Notebook, Vol.29(1), 1975. For the apprentices, see S. Smith, "The London Apprentices as Seventeenth Century Adolescents," Past and Present, No.61, November 1973, especially, pp.157-59.

193. An Apology for the Robin Hood Society, (1751). There is a satirical account in T. Scrubb, Genuine and Authentik Memoirs of the State Speakers of the Robin Hood Society, (1751). Such plebian debating societies were poorly caricatured by Fielding in Covent Garden Journal, No.8, 28 January and No.9, 1 February 1752. See also the description of the operation of such societies given in Grusley, op.cit., pp.147-49.

the club an occasional visit and displaying his erudition and his oratory to the discomfiture of those speaking for the other side.<sup>(194)</sup>

Artisans and shopkeepers in Edinburgh could adjourn to the Pantheon Society, which like the Robin Hood, debated political and literary questions.<sup>(195)</sup> It was even claimed that clubs for women existed where political topics formed the major interest.<sup>(196)</sup>

Place's autobiography gives extensive details of the clubs frequented by his father and himself. While an apprentice he was a member of a cutter club formed by apprentices who raced rowing boats on the Thames. He also occasionally took himself to Cock and Hen Clubs, patronised in the main by young men and young women. "The amusements were drinking-smoking [sic] swearing-and singing flash songs."<sup>(197)</sup> Such low and debasing pastimes were rebuked by Mr. Cooper who pressed the middle and working class to establish clubs:

not for riot or revelling ... but for reading and conversation: that they may gradually become informed what are the rights and what are the duties of a Citizen. <sup>(198)</sup>

Similarly Brasbridge recalled his experiences in various clubs to show that few of them had much to commend them to a young man

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194. J. Boswell, London Journal, P.347. He participated in a debate on the Excise in which he spoke against. For a description of a visit to a debating society in Cheapside, see D'Archenholtz, op.cit., Vol.1, p.187.
195. Emerson, op.cit., p.120.
196. Grosley, op.cit., Vol.1, p.150.
197. M. Thrale (Ed), The Autobiography of Francis Place, 1771-1854, (Cambridge, 1972), p.77. See also, pp.38, 80, and 78; W. Sydney, op.cit., Vol.1, p.218.
198. T. Cooper, A Reply to Mr. Burke's Invective Against Mr. Cooper, (Manchester, 1792), quoted in A. Goodwin, The Friends of Liberty, (1978), p.491.

wishing to remain sober, chaste and solvent. He had been a member of all manner of clubs—the High-Flyer Club, the Crown Rolls card club, the Free-and-Easy held at the Queen's Arms, St. Paul's churchyard, and the debating club which gathered at the Cider Cellar, Maiden Lane. But he published his story not to inform the public of the range of lower-class clubbability, but, like Place, because he wanted to warn his readers, of the dangers to morality and to financial probity of becoming involved in such associations. (199) The moral to be drawn from his sad tale was a simple and direct one. If a young man was to make his way in the world then the fast company and loose women who haunted such assemblies had to be avoided. Home life was preferable to club life, Brasbridge insisted. Respectability required that club life be eschewed. Brasbridge clearly would not have approved of a club such as the Partiality which Renton Nicholson joined at fifteen. The club, held at the Blue Anchor tavern in East Smithfield was the rendezvous of the lesser members of the capital's "swell mob." (200)

No obvious watershed accompanied the transition from the eighteenth and nineteenth century so far as the elite club was concerned. Club land had been marked by slightly greater political partisanship, but the popularity of the institution was undiminished. However, there were wider changes in class structure and class relations which were to have an important effect upon high-class club life.

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199. J. Brasbridge, The Fruits of Experience, (1824); see also D. George, London Life in the Eighteenth Century, Harmondsworth, 1966), pp.266-67.

200. R. Nicholson, The Lord Chief Baron Nicholson: An Autobiography, (1860), pp.28-29.

For the artisan club man the possibility of maintaining patterns of association, especially those which touched upon political matters in any way, became more difficult and more dangerous. The popular societies which had come into existence to press the cause of parliamentary reform and to celebrate the constitutional changes taking place across the Channel alarmed the authorities. In 1792 the most famous of the popular artisan associations, the London Corresponding Society was established.<sup>(201)</sup> It was part of a national network of societies and clubs pledged to defend the liberties of Englishmen and to campaign for political freedom and justice. Similar societies flourished in Sheffield, Leicester, and Norwich.<sup>(202)</sup> In the latter city for example, dissenters had joined with more plebian allies to establish various radical clubs in the city and its environs.<sup>(203)</sup> But the fear of men of property for these "infidel societies" and the Government alarm at the Jacobin sympathies of the lower orders were transformed under the bitterness of war into harsh and bloody repression.<sup>(204)</sup> One victim of state suppression was the very notion of association itself. For notwithstanding the observations of a Ferguson or

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201. For the L.C.S. and its antecedents, see, H. Collins, "The London Corresponding Society," in J. Saville (Ed), Democracy and the Labour Movement, (1954); E.P. Thompson, The Making of the English Working Class, (Harmondsworth, 1968), Chap.1, passim. Hans, op.cit., pp.223-24, hints at masonic influences in the establishment of the L.C.S.

202. On Leicester, see A. Paterson, Radical Leicester, (Leicester, 1975), Chap.4; F. Donnelly and J. Baxter, "Sheffield and the English Revolutionary Tradition," International Review of Social History, Vol.20(3), 1975.

203. Goodwin, op.cit., p.151; B. Jewison, Jacobin City, (1975).

204. On the nature and consequences of repression, see, Thompson, op.cit., pp.197-99, 262-64; G. Williams, Artisans and Sans-Culottes, (1968), pp.76-80; 103-111.

Johnson on the "naturalness" of association or the endless rhetoric which proclaimed England's uniqueness in allowing all manner of persons to meet together freely, safe from the prying actions of state servants, the government's action showed that it considered association, except among the most privileged, to be a dangerous tendency, one inimical to the well-being of established government and authority. . Combination became the tainted term for the government's war against its subjects. (205) Only those associations and clubs formed for the defence of existing social relationships and the maintenance of property rights were to be tolerated under the new dispensation. One of these fortunate bodies was John Reeve's Association for the Protection of Property against Republicans and Levellers, which exerted much pressure on magistrates to ensure that innkeepers refused premises to radical clubs and societies. (206) Another product of this orchestrated "loyalism" and anti-gallicanism was the Pitt club, which first came to the notice of the public in London, 1793. Its membership was open to all who opposed the French Revolution. Its first President was the Duke of Richmond and the main point of its social calendar was the celebration of Pitt's birthday, 28 May. In the opening years of the nineteenth century the London example was taken up in other provincial cities with the creation of

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205. The degree of success of suppression, however, should not be over-stressed. There was some continuity in popular association and organisation, for example, the Whig Club continued its operations. See, J. Hone, "Radicalism in London, 1796-1802," in J. Stevenson (Ed), London in the Age of Reform, (Oxford, 1977).

206. Goodwin, op.cit., p.261. A. Mitchell, "The Association Movement of 1792-93," Historical Journal, 4(1), 1961, p.66. For a case study of such action see M. Smith, "Conflict and Society in Late Eighteenth-century Birmingham." (Ph.D Thesis, Cambridge Univ., 1977), pp.66-78. The Association of True Blues, for example, formed in late 1792 was said by March 1792 to have persuaded ca. 120 innkeepers to outlaw the meeting of democratic clubs on their premises.

further Pitt Clubs in Bolton in 1810 and Birmingham in 1814, for example. Other cities made similar provision for such popular expressions of loyalism. At Bristol scourges of English sans-culotterie could resort to either the "Steadfast Society" or the "Loyal Constitutional Club."<sup>(207)</sup>

For the majority of elite clubmen no such concern with the perils of combination disturbed or marred their enjoyment of good company. Yet changes were taking place in the ideology of the aristocracy which would affect the club. Most important was the growing, unshakeable hold of militant evangelicalism over important sections of the upper class. Seeing in the revolutionary chaos in France the intervention of the divine hand visiting a terrible but just pestilence upon a people for deserting God, and for dabbling with and tolerating all manner of impious philosophies and condoning all manner of sexual dalliance, the Evangelicals called for the British nation to repent and to return to the Church.<sup>(208)</sup> To avoid a similar retribution the nation had to throw itself upon divine mercy. To carry out this act required new standards of morality and public decency, the spurning of that love of luxury and profligacy which had characterised the manners of eighteenth century society.<sup>(209)</sup> Attacks on the vices of the poor had been initiated with the creation of the Societies

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207. "Pitt Clubs of Great Britain," New Monthly Magazine, Vol.5 (29), June 1816. Leeds Pitt Club, (Leeds 1817) contains the loyal toasts drunk at birthday dinners.

208. R. Solway, "Reform or Ruin," Review of Politics, Vol.25 (1), 1963.

209. R. Bell, "Social Amusements," op.cit., Vol.3, October, 1865, p.475; W. Massey, A History of England during the Reign of George III, Vol.11, (1858), pp.79-87; C. Abbey and J. Overton, op.cit., Vol.11, p.44, and Chap.III, Part iii.

for the Reformation of Manners consequent upon the Glorious Revolution of 1688. But although such societies denounced laxness of morals, drunkenness, gambling, and desecration of the Sabbath present in all levels of society, their action was taken overwhelmingly against those of little social standing.<sup>(210)</sup> The aristocratic roué, while his dereliction of religious duties might be adversely commented upon or his love of worldly finery attacked from the pulpit, apart from censorious tracts, could expect little by way of overt sanctions. Fielding denounced the love of luxury to which he attributed the great increase in crime in the middle of the century and the love of luxury in noble life which set the life of idleness and worldliness as models before their social inferiors.<sup>(211)</sup> In the mid-century too there had been a renewal of criticism of the vices and excesses which were openly and boldly displayed in aristocratic life.<sup>(212)</sup> The club was one institution over-ripe for moral reform for in no other body "did bacchanal self indulgence find greater and more deplorable scope ... Roués came there to boast of their conquests, to waste their substance in riotous living, to drink to the deepest excesses. To be overcome in liquor called for no shocked comment."<sup>(213)</sup>

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210. D. Bahlman, The Moral Revolution of 1688, (New Haven, 1957); S. and B. Webb, The History of Liquor Licensing in England, (1903), Appendix, "The Movement for the Reformation of Manners," T. Curtis and W. Speck, "The Societies for the Reformation of Manners: A Case Study in the Theory and Practice of Moral Reform," Literature and History, No.3, March 1976.

211. Dudden, op.cit., Vol.II, pp.771-72; G. Jensen, "Fashionable Society in Fielding's Time," Publications of the Modern Language Society of America, New Series, Vol.24(1), 1916. On the "luxury debate" see J. Sekora, Luxury: The Concept in Western Thought, (1978), Chap.2.

212. J. Brown, Estimate of the Manners of the Time, (1757): The Real Character of the Age, (1757). G. Brauer, The Education of a Gentleman, (New York, 1959), pp.17-18.

213. Griffiths, op.cit., pp.179-80.



Evangelicalism as manifested by Hannah More and William Wilberforce, however, placed the responsibility for the moral regeneration necessary for individual and national salvation upon those in the higher positions in life. The problem was succinctly expressed by Arthur Young. The upper classes, he scornfully observed;

by their Sunday parties, excursions, amusements and vanities; by their neglect of public worship, and of their families, show that they feel not themselves, what perhaps they talk of, or recommend for the poor. It is a revolting contradiction to hear men rail at Jacobinism on a Saturday, and pass their Sunday anywhere but at a church. (214)

The upper class had to adopt new standards of behaviour based upon Christian tenets and to involve themselves in good works to reform and redeem the poor. Failure to recognise that in French jacobinism a warning was being given to the English nation would, inevitably, bring forth the same bloody retribution upon the English aristocracy. In 1787 as a result of pressure from Wilberforce the King issued a Proclamation against Vice and Immorality. Soon after Wilberforce, together with More and aided by the new Bishop of London, Porteous, established the Proclamation Society to press forward the moral reformation. To show what had to be accomplished More issued her tract Thoughts on the Importance of the Manners of the Great to General Society in 1788 roundly denouncing the corrupt and lax morals tolerated, even encouraged, in upper class circles. All manner of fashionable amusements, the neglect of family life and the general abuse of the Lord's Day were attacked by More. The nobility were debasing Christian standards weakening thereby the

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214. A. Young, An Enquiry into the State of Public Mind Amongst the Lower Classes ... in a Letter to William Wilberforce, (1798), p.25. J. Bowles, Reflections on the Political and Moral State of Society at the Close of the Eighteenth Century, (1801), pp.129-30.

moral strength of the nation. Behaviour must change, and the change must begin with those whom Divine providence had charged with the duty of superintending the souls of those in lowlier stations in life:

Reformation must begin with the GREAT, or it will never be effectual. Their example is the fountain from whence the vulgar draw their habits, actions, and characters. To expect to reform the poor while the opulent are corrupt, is to throw odours into the stream while the springs are poisoned. (215)

Such appeals had been made before. William was no less the model of a pious king than George III, but the Evangelical message was now taken up. No doubt the noise of tumbrils in the French capital helped to concentrate the aristocratic mind wonderfully on the nature of divine purpose. Thus as the old century faded into the new a moral reformation was taking place among elite society. (216)

Before the triumph of earnestness, the laxer members of the aristocracy enjoyed one last tawdry moment of hedonistic delight in the phenomenon of "dandyism." Dandies were the lineal, in some cases literally, descendants of the bucks already discussed. They took an exaggerated interest in fashion and matters pertaining to their appearance. London was the centre of the dandy milieu, and at White's club the dandies made their headquarters. It was there that Brummell held court, and where he and his fellow

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215. H. More, Thoughts on the Importance of the Manners of the Great ... (4th edition, 1788), p.116. Wilberforce wrote in similar vein, see A Practical View of the Prevailing Religious System of Professed Christians, in the Higher and Middle Classes in This Country, Contrasted with Real Christianity, (1797; by 1805 it had reached its 8th edition).

216. On the Evangelical Revolution, see F. Brown, Fathers of the Victorians: The Age of Wilberforce, (Cambridge, 1961), Especially Part III; M. Jaeger, Before Victoria: Changing Standards of Behaviour, 1787-1837, (Harmondsworth, 1967); I. Bradley, The Call to Seriousness: The Evangelical Impact on the Victorians, (1976).

"exquisites" would display themselves "at proper intervals in its front windows."<sup>(217)</sup> From the club the dandies would sally forth to undertake the highly ritualised round of social duties and appearances which constituted the structure of the dandy's day.<sup>(218)</sup> Mr. Raggett, shrewd manager of the club, took advantage of this heightened interest in the affairs of the gaming table to open a club in Brighton, the Roxburgh, open only to members of White's or Brooks.<sup>(219)</sup> The dandy world did not last long. Destroyed partly by its own excesses which forced Brummell to flee the country leaving his gaming debts unpaid and other members ruined by excessive drinking and other pleasures of the flesh, and partly by the changing mores of the upper class which found them an obnoxious, not to say dangerous, group of pampered idlers, the dandies were a spent force by the 1820's.<sup>(220)</sup> A few ageing intimates of Brummell such as Viscount Allen continued to show themselves in White's bay window. But the excess, the indulgence in sensual luxury and the misuse of time and inheritance represented by the dandy were a liability and a threat to an aristocracy anxious to show that it was fitted to continue its national leadership and which was willing to concede something to the middle class. Dandies

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217. Boulton, Whites, Vol.1, pp.178-79; J. Ashton, Social England Under the Regency, (1899), Chap.33; G. Paston, Social Caricature in the Eighteenth Century, (1905), "The Beau Monde."

218. T. Smith, "Aestheticism and Social Structure: Style and Social Network in the Dandy Life," American Sociological Review, 39(4), 1974, pp.728-33.

219. Boulton, op.cit., pp.191-92.

220. See, J. Laver, The Dandies, (1969).

showed the aristocracy to have "a callousness of feeling."<sup>(221)</sup>  
 Their derogatory references to the manufacturing and trading  
 classes made them an anachronism. Significantly, the decline  
 of dandyism accompanied the passing of the first Reform Bill.  
 Henceforth, under the new dispensation of class rule, the model  
 aristocrat would be the Christian gentleman, not the bibulous  
 libertine.<sup>(222)</sup>

The new order did not immediately expunge the taste for high  
 play in upper class circles. Though gaming clubs continued to  
 flourish hastening the bankruptcy of many young gentlemen, the old  
 clubs were no longer the centre of play.<sup>(223)</sup> Between 1807-1819  
 the fashionable gamester found his pleasures at Watiers, amongst  
 whose patrons were numbered Brummell and the Prince Regent. The  
 club failed because:

the pace was too quick to last, and many of  
 its leading members were ruined utterly.  
 It then passed into the hands of a set of black-  
 legs, who ran it as a common gaming house.. <sup>(224)</sup>

Gambling was the subject of continual vocal criticism. A group  
 of concerned gentlemen communicated with the Home Secretary in 1825  
 calling for the exposure and exemplary punishment of noble gamesters

221. Almacks, No.9, 30 January 1828. See also, B. Rubin, "Anti-Husbandry' and Self Creation," "A Comparison of Restoration Rake and Baudelaire's Dandy," Texas Studies in Language and Literature, Vol.14(4), 1973, pp.590-92.
222. S. Morton, "The Idea of the Gentleman in Modern England," (Ph.D. Rochester, 1971), pp.155-60. Disraeli and Young England showed that the dandy idea was still attractive to some sections of the well-to-do.
223. On gaming in elite circles see, T. Duncombe (Ed), The Life and Correspondence of Thomas Slingsby Duncombe, (1868), Vol.1, Chap.III.
224. Griffiths, op.cit., p.67.

in order to extirpate the habit among the lower classes. (225)

After the closure of Watiers fashionable money moved to the most famous of all the gaming houses, Crockfords which opened in St. James in 1827. (226) It operated as a select gaming house until the Gaming Act of 1844 made gambling illegal, when it ceased business, Crockford himself having wisely retired with a considerable fortune in 1840. (227)

Changes in aristocratic life and the gradual demise of gambling did not entail the end or diminution of the importance of the club. On the contrary new social, political, and economic forces abroad in England in the decades before and after the accession of Victoria produced a substantial expansion of clubs and an increase in the comforts and services which they offered.

The bohemian circle of writers and artists around Jerrold took up the club idea with great enthusiasm. A series of clubs were set on foot by this lively group including the Mulberry, near Covent Garden, the Shakespeare, which included Dicketns amongst its membership, the Museum Club and the "Hooks and Eyes." For the expanding lower middle class of the capital this group helped to establish the Whittington Club as a centre for elevated clerkdom. (228)

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225. Gambling House Expositor, No.1, 23 July 1825.
226. A. Humphrey, Crockford's, 1828-1844, (1933); Captain Gronow, op.cit., Vol.1, pp.102-08 gives an excellent description of the club; The Great Metropolis, (1837), Vol.1, Chapter 4; Griffiths, op.cit., p.67.
227. A. Steinmetz, The Gaming Tables: Its Votaries and Victims, (1870) Vol.11, Chapter 6; Timbs, op.cit., pp.281 86; S.C. on Gaming, P.P. 1844 vi. On the passion for gambling at low gaming houses see, R. Nicholson, op.cit., pp.62-76; "Gaming Houses," Westminster Review, Vol.80, July 1863.
228. C. Kent, "The Whittington Club: A Bohemian Experiment in Social Reform," Victorian Studies, 18(1), 1974; Griffiths, op.cit., pp.132-33.

Positivists had a great clubman in Frederic Harrison, who was a member of the Reform, the Cobden and the Athenaeum, besides a number of smaller clubs. (229)

Party difference was the key to the establishment of two of the most famous of nineteenth century clubs, The Carlton, headquarters of the Conservatives, "a sort of electoral labour exchange," was established in 1831. (230) Five years later the Reform, the social heart of the Whigs, was opened. (231) By 1900 the metropolis had eight Tory clubs with a combined membership of over 28,000 while the Liberals could claim six clubs with a membership of some 10,000. (232) Escott attributed this superior clubbability of the modern Tory, a reverse of seemingly well-established patterns, to the changed character of modern Toryism:

Modern Conservatism is successful precisely in proportion as it is an alliance between the aristocratic and democratic elements. The attitude of mind and bearing favourable for the perpetuation of this alliance has long been cultivated among the Conservatives to a degree that was scarcely possible among the Liberals. The typical Tory has been a

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229. F. Harrison, Autobiographic Memoirs, (1911), Vol.11, Chapter XXV; C. Kent, Brains and Numbers: Comtism and Democracy in Mid-Victorian England, (Toronto, 1978), p.88.
230. C. Petrie, The Carlton Club, (1951). The description comes from M. Ostrogorski, Democracy and the Organisation of Political Parties, (1902), Vol.1, p.145. See also, A. Aspinall (Ed), The Correspondence of Charles Arbuthnot, (1941), especially Letters 156, 162, 207 and 223.
231. L. Fagan, The Reform Club: Its Founders and Architect, (1887); W. Rae, "Political Clubs and Party Organisation," Nineteenth Century, Vol.3, May 1878, pp.921-30. For a discussion of the establishment of these two clubs see, N. Cash, Politics in the Age of Peel, (1953); E. Roscoe, "Political Clubs," Edinburgh Review, Vol.167, January, 1868.
232. Hatton, op.cit., p.35; W. Fisher, "Liberal Clubs and the Liberal Party," Monthly Review, Vol.17, December 1904, pp.127-28.

large landowner, and if not master of fox-hounds, a tolerably assiduous votary of the hunting-field. Circumstances have made it his part to ingratiate himself with his inferiors, and unconsciously he has learned to study and exhibit in his own person that air of well-bred condescension, of frank, unsupercilious patronage, which answers so well with Englishmen in the bulk. There could be no better kind of hereditary preparation for the mixed regime of club life than this; there could be no better opportunity of cheaply, yet effectively, satisfying the social aspirations of political followers than the Conservative club. The manner to which he has been born; the genial, hearty address, which seems to mean so much and really means so little; the bluff English courtesy which has been picked up or inherited from ancestors who picked it up, at the covert-side and in daily conversations with farmers and labourers, serves its turn admirably when it is reproduced, with the necessary modifications, in Pall Mall. (233)

The Carlton and the Reform were part of a sudden burst of club formations in the 1830's and 40's, the products of increased wealth and leisure among both the aristocracy and the upper middle class as well as political differences. (234) The Athenaeum was opened in 1824. (235) This club was distinctive in possessing a first-class library which was no doubt, one of the many attractions which drew a large number of the intelligentsia into membership. It was a favourite with Frederick Harrison who prized it for its

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233. T. Escott, England: Its People, Polity and Pursuits, (Revised edition, 1885), p.345. Hatton attributed the greater Conservative presence to the fact that "as a rule, they belong to the more settled class of the community, embracing a large number of men whose moneys are invested in lands, household property, and public funds; have more leisure than their rivals; and are not disturbed by the faction friction within their camps that agitates the Liberal Party." Hatton, op.cit., p.35.
234. W. Besant, London in the Nineteenth Century, (1909), p.260.
235. For the club see, Club Gazette, Vol.1(1), September 1928; F. Cowell, The Athenaeum: Club and Society Life in London, 1824-1974, (1975); H. Tedder, The Athenaeum, (1924); T. Ward, History of the Athenaeum, 1824-1925, (1926).

calm order:

Its rigid inhospitality to strangers ... secures peace and retirement, so that before luncheon and after the dinner hour the Club is a haven of literary seclusion. The long wait before the ballot of candidates is reached makes it eminently the club of the elderly: for hardly any candidate can pass until beyond middle age. All this is delightfully soothing. In the whirl of the London season, or even in a political crisis or a hot election, the Athenaeum remains a neutral and peaceful refuge where bustle and excitement alike remain unknown. (236)

A Free Trade Club was set on foot by Cobden, Bright, and members of the Anti-Corn Law League in the 1830's in Regent Street. It never proved very popular and was soon extinct. More enduring were the Conservative Club (1840), New University (1863), Thatched House (1865), and the Devonshire (1875). These were just four of the seventy odd clubs set-up between 1811-1878. Other famous names established in this period included the Army and Navy, Oxford and Cambridge and the Garrick, popular with lawyers and actors, founded in 1831. (237) In the 1850's a number of clubs, including the Turf Club and Marylebone Cricket Club, were established. These joined the long established Jockey Club as resorts for those interested in sport. (238) The pattern of London elite club establishment is shown by the following table:

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236. F. Harrison, op.cit., p.82. Harrison was elected to the club in 1878.

237. The London Club: Their Anecdotes, and History, Private Rules and Regulations, (1853), p.62. See P. Fitzgerald, The Garrick Club, (1904); G. Boas, The Garrick Club, (1948).

238. Hatton, op.cit., p.49. W. Vamplew, The Turf, (1976), Chapter 6.



TABLE 1. Frequency of club establishment in London, at 1879.

| DATE:    | No. of clubs established. |
|----------|---------------------------|
| Pre 1800 | 5                         |
| 1800-10  | -                         |
| 1811-20  | 4                         |
| 1821-30  | 6                         |
| 1831-40  | 8                         |
| 1841-50  | 4                         |
| 1851-60  | 3                         |
| 1861-65  | 5                         |
| 1866-70  | 14                        |
| 1871-75  | 12                        |
| 1876-78  | 10                        |
| TOTAL:   | 71                        |

SOURCE: Taken from details of clubs given in G. Ivey, The Club Directory: A General Guide to the London and Country Clubs, (1879).

Besides the clubs for the rich and the powerful there was a long list of clubs catering for more specialist interest such as the Travellers' or the Alpine club in addition to the unknown number of clubs which sprang up in the 1860's supplying the need for clubbability among middle class suburbanites. (239) Fittingly a Johnson club was established on the centenary of his death in December 1884. (240) New additions to elite club land were expensive ventures. Modern club men would no longer rest content with a cosy room, but required palatial edifices. The Athenaeum

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239. For a listing of various clubs see, Ivey, op.cit., "List of Clubs and Their Secretaries," Bachelor's Guide to Life in London, (1857); A. Soames, "The London Club House of the Last Century," Architectural Association Journal, Vol.21, No.232, June 1906; "Club Life in London," Working Man's Friend and Family Instructor, New Series, Vol.2, No.35, 29 May 1852.

240. G. Whale, Forty Years of the Johnson Club, (1924); R. Chapman, The Johnson Club, 1884-1934, (Oxford, 1938).

cost £34,000 to build, the Army and Navy £54,000 and even the more humble Travellers' cost over £23,000. (241)

Provincial England did not lag far behind the example of the capital. Officers stationed at Aldershot set up their own club in 1855. (242) By the middle of the century most major cities and towns had their political clubs, usually named after their London counterparts, various convivial societies, together with various small clubs catering for a local, specialist or professional clientele, such as solicitors or shipping merchants. At Ashton-under-Lyne, the Conservative Club was opened in 1861, but the Liberals were without a similar party headquarters until 1873. (243) This position was reversed in Liverpool where the Reform club was inaugurated in 1877 and the Conservative Club in 1880. (244) At Birmingham both the Liberal and the Conservative Clubs were in operation by the late 70's. (245) Political clubs providing for their members' political education as well as good companionship were formed in Salford and its environs from the mid 70's. (246) Although Liberal and Conservative seemed equally keen to join a club identified with their respective political

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241. Figures given in Soames, op.cit., p.24.

242. A. Chambre, op.cit., Vol.11, p.247-49.

243. F. Bealey et al, Constituency Politics: A Study of Newcastle-under-Lyne, (1965), p.58.

244. Hatton, op.cit., pp.68-72. For descriptions of club life in Manchester and Glasgow see, Escott, op.cit., pp.87-88 and W. Strang, Glasgow and Its Clubs, (Glasgow, 1857).

245. Hatton, pp.60-64.

246. J. Garrard, "Parties, Members and Voters after 1867: A Local Study," Historical Journal, Vol.20(1), 1977.

cause, Fisher suggested that the advance of liberalism in many cities may have been checked because of serious objections to the sale of intoxicants in Liberal clubs by teetotalers.<sup>(247)</sup> In the early 1870's there were two Liberal Clubs in Sheffield. The official one, of which Leader was President, and one established by H. J. Wilson to express his disapproval at the policies adopted by sections of the local party.<sup>(248)</sup>

Accompanying this numerical expansion was a revolution in club organisation, namely the adoption of the principal of co-operation by members of the club, a rare instance of diffusion from lower class to higher! The co-operative principle meant that those clubs where the members could purchase the freehold or obtain control of the club were run as a trust. A manager was hired and a club committee to oversee the running of the establishment and to act as an arbitrator in any disputes between members was elected. Any profits made on the operation of the club were to be distributed in order to benefit the membership as a whole. Such trading surpluses might accrue from the bar, from membership subscriptions, or from the restaurant. The rise of the joint-stock club entailed the curtailment of the individual proprietor who established and ran a club for his personal profit. By 1850 most of the important clubs were members' clubs, and the overwhelming majority of those established thereafter were of the co-operative type. There were, however, a number of eminent clubs which remained proprietary ventures. Of these the most important were White's, Brooks and

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247. Fisher, op.cit.

248. W. Armytage, A. J. Mundella, The Liberal Background to the Labour Movement, (1951), p.159.

Boodles, the latter remaining a proprietary venture until 1897.<sup>(249)</sup>  
 Thus clubland was divided into proprietary clubs and members' clubs, a fact of much importance when considering the vexed issue of the legality of the supply of intoxicants in working men's clubs.<sup>(250)</sup>

The most visible characteristic of the elite club, as it had developed, was its exclusivity. Not everybody could gain admission, and only a fraction of those who possessed the necessary social and financial qualifications necessary for membership could gain acceptance. Although individual clubs varied as to the degree of exclusion maintained and although the social characteristics necessary for successful entry changed during the century, all the major clubs were highly select societies. "A Certain degree of wealth, and a certain status in society, seem to be the indispensable conditions of admission."<sup>(251)</sup> Disagreement existed regarding the social consequences of exclusion. One club writer thought that such clubs while ministering to exclusivism nonetheless had "softened the asperities of caste."<sup>(252)</sup> On the other hand several writers, especially those anxious to draw a firm line between the home and the club, thought that club life had rendered the upper class male more egotistical.<sup>(253)</sup>

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249. Fulford, op.cit., p.2. Proprietary clubs were thought to be "lounges for people of little occupation," "Club Life," Chambers' Edinburgh Journal, No.94, 18 October 1845.

250. See Chapter 4, below.

251. Patrician, 4(19), 1847. Original emphasis.

252. The London Clubs, p.29.

253. Junius, "Clubs of the West-End Considered in Relation to their Moral and Intellectual Results," People's Journal, Vol.1 (10), 7 March 1845, p.164.

All clubs had strict procedures for entry into membership. Nominees had to be proposed and seconded by existing members, and, in some clubs nominations were posted in the main hall so that members could lodge objections before the ballot. Nominations were supposed to be suggested to the fortunate person as a mark of respect or a reward for some achievement; under no circumstances were individuals supposed to solicit their nomination to a particular club, although doubtless all forms of discreet lobbying took place to ensure that certain men were successful in their bids to gain entry. Such behaviour was criticised by Nevill. "People who ought to know better," he commented, "sometimes exhibit the most lax conduct in lending their aid to the candidature of disagreeable individuals, whom for some reason or other it may suit them to please."<sup>(254)</sup> After nomination how the election was decided varied from club to club, some having quite elaborate procedures, others a simple vote. At the Carlton and Boodles for example, the ballot was held by the Committee, while at Brooks and the Reform a general ballot was the order of the day. What the prospective member had to know, however, and what he might have to dread, were the procedures operating for the exclusion of a potential member, that is blackballing. This practice, which derived from the earliest days of the fashionable clubs, allowed members opposed to a particular candidate to oppose his election by placing a black, as opposed to a white, ball in the election box. For some clubs, one blackball was enough to exclude. This was the case at Whites and Brooks.<sup>(255)</sup> At the Whig Club it required three black balls

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254. Nevill, op.cit., p.161.

255. Nevill, op.cit., p.103. Any member of Brooks who was discovered to be a member of another club was expelled. The only exception to this rule was membership of White's.

to exclude. During some periods of club history when for a variety of reasons the incumbent membership have been alarmed at the quality of those standing for admission blackballing became a common practice. Keeping members out was not the only objective. Excessive black-balling also indicated to other members or to the committee that the standards for which the club was renowned were being diluted and appropriate remedies had to be sought. To be blackballed could clearly affect a man's standing in society once it became generally known that he had been rejected. For the reason of not losing face it was important that candidature for a club be approached with much caution for rebuff from some clubs would involve considerable loss of caste. It was not a matter to be shrugged off lightly, for it involved the honour and standing of the person so rejected. Few could afford to treat the matter with the humour of one fictional club candidate, who described the tension attendant on election thus:

To be blackballed would be unendurable—certain I should do something desparate—hang myself or emigrate for the rest of my life to Worthing, where one could be in no danger of meeting an acquaintance.

Happily, the man was elected but resolved, upon reading the Rules to press for amendments to Rules concerning admission. He wanted the Rule whereby one blackball in ten was necessary to exclude changed to one in fifty because now he was a member he desired the assembly to be kept as select as possible. (256) Blackballing was the occasion of a number of serious quarrels even duels in the

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256. "The Advantages of Belonging to a Club: Or, What do I Pay Six Guineas a Year For? Exemplified by Extracts from the Diary of Hector Boreall Esq., a member of the Pangrowleon Club, " Poole's Comic Miscellany, (1845), pp.107, 110.

eighteenth century, and although blackballing did not seem to arouse the same passions in Victoria's reign any rejection would still be cruelly felt.

Whites, the club most concerned with the maintenance of its aristocratic tone, was the scene of much antagonism over blackballing during the years of the dandy ascendancy. Always desirous of maintaining an aloofness from those who sought admission merely on account of the size of their bank balance, the club was limited to 500 members in 1813. The dandies took blackballing to extreme and dangerous lengths in their implacable opposition to the admission of city bankers, merchants, and the sons of entrepreneurs, "my tradesmen," as Lord Allen disdainfully referred to them.<sup>(257)</sup> Amongst the tradesmen so excluded were Peel and Castlereagh. As it required only one blackball to exclude it took only one member of a small faction to attend each ballot to ensure that while many were called, few were chosen. This war continued until 1833 when after a general meeting a special committee was set up to deal with club vacancies. Over one hundred members were added in its first year of work. The rule on blackballing was relaxed so that two blackballs were now required, while election matters generally began to pass to a committee.<sup>(258)</sup> A similar situation was reported from Brooks and Boodles, a consequence of "territorial exclusiveness and aristocratic prejudice."<sup>(259)</sup> Later in the century the situation reoccurred. In the 1870's and 80's there

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257. Griffiths, op.cit., p.62; Boulton, Whites, pp.193-96; Capt. Gronow, op.cit., Vol.1, pp.75-76.

258. Boulton, Whites, pp.209-11.

259. Escott, op.cit., p.135

was an undercurrent of hostility, tinged with antisemitism, to the plutocrats and friends of the Prince of Wales seeking the social cachet of club membership. It was taken to be indicative "of the hold which the City has obtained over West End life" that many men were elected to membership in the 70's who forty years earlier would have been vigorously excluded. (260)

Power to elect, however, was thought to carry with it grave responsibilities. Dandy contempt, though understandable, was to be censured because it treated a serious matter with disdain. Blackballing was thought to be "the most disagreeable and questionable power that a gentleman can be called upon to exercise." (261) If the hyperbole be forgiven, it is an accurate statement of how many members must have seen their duty when called upon to say yea or nay to the candidate standing at the door. Yet another white man's burden!

Having gained admittance, before the new member could feel himself fully part of the corporate life there was the delicate matter of money to be settled. In 1879 the subscriptions of a number of leading London clubs were as follows:-

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260. Nevill, op.cit., pp.158; 139-40; G. Phillips, The Die-Hards, (1979), pp.19-20. J. Camplin, The Rise of the Plutocrats, (1978), pp.178-79, 244-45.

261. "Club Secretaries," Saturday Review, 24 March 1860; T. Girton, Abominable Clubmen, (1964), Chap.2, passim; A. Shand, "A Ramble in Clubland," Monthly Review, Vol.13, December 1903, pp.167-68.



TABLE 2: Subscriptions, Entrance Fees, and Size of Membership at Selected London Clubs, 1879.

| NAME OF CLUB  | ENTRANCE FEE | SUBSCRIPTION<br>p.a. | SIZE OF<br>MEMBERSHIP |
|---------------|--------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| Army and Navy | £40          | £10.10               | 2342                  |
| Arthurs       | £20          | £10.10               | 600                   |
| Athenaeum     | £30          | £ 8.8                | 1300                  |
| Carlton       | £20          | £10.10               | 1633                  |
| Cocoa Tree    | £ 5.5        | £ 3.3                | 350                   |
| Devonshire    | £30          | £10.10               | 1250                  |
| Garrick       | £20          | £ 8.8                | 650                   |
| Reform        | £30.30       | £10.10               | 1400                  |

Source: Ivey, op.cit.

The expense of the club was clearly increased for those who belonged to more than one. Munday, in his recollections, stated that he belonged to 46 clubs, most of them modest such as the City Glee Club, or the Hyde Park Club, but all requiring the maintenance of subscriptions.<sup>(262)</sup> To many the expense of entry was a trifling matter, for once a member the individual would find that his day to day living expenses could be substantially reduced by dining at his club, besides which there was the value of sociability on which no price could be placed, but which brought many tangible advantages.

Having gained entry and paid the requisite fees, the new member would have to make the acquaintance and gain the confidence of the various club servants, of which the hall porter was the most crucial.<sup>(263)</sup> Such men were important for it was their duty to see that the member had everything he desired for his comfort and to ensure that he was left undisturbed, especially from importunities from

262. L. Munday, A Chronicle of Friendships, (1915), pp.112-13.

263. Hatton, op.cit., pp.4-5; "A Club Secretary on Clubs," Nineteenth Century and After, Vol.86, July 1919, pp.149-50..

the outside. Unless he gave express instructions to the contrary, no hall porter would ever admit to an inquirer whether or not a certain member was on club premises. (264)

From the mid part of the century it became the custom to dine and to entertain male guests at one's club, a habit encouraged both by the quality of the food found there and the fact that at the club the choicest viands, the best of vintage wine, and the freshest of vegetables could be had for a fraction of the price it would cost elsewhere. Not only cheap, thanks to the co-operative principle, but often of first rate quality for one little mentioned feature of many of the best London clubs was the presence in their kitchens of world famous chefs led by the Reform where the great French chef, Alexis Soyer, "of immortal fame in the annals of gastronomy," presided. (265) His bodily wants satisfied, a club also provided for higher needs with extensive libraries, as well as writing rooms well-stocked with club writing paper, supplied gratis. (266) By the end of the century a number of clubs even

264. The inviolability of the club member once on club premises gave rise to one often told anecdote concerning an eminent lady who sought out her spouse at the club. She met with a blank silence from the porter whereupon she demanded to see the member informing the servant that he was her husband. Unperturbed the porter told her that members of the club did not have wives.
265. Rodenberg, op.cit., p.247. Soyer took a keen interest in social questions. He obtained leave from the club to visit Ireland during the famine in order to organise soup kitchens for the starving peasantry as well as publishing in 1845 a useful recipe book, Shilling Cookery for the People. See, J. Grigson, English Food, (Harmondsworth, 1977), p.5.
266. For a description of club facilities see "Club Crotchets and Comforts," Jerrold's Shilling Magazine, Vol.6, July-October, 1847. Hector Boreall, however, thought his 6 gns. subscription scandalous, believing both the food and wine to be poor and over-priced, Poole's Comic Miscellany.

supplied beds for out of town members so the club literally took on the aspect of an hotel. (267) The combination of such luxury with such economy provoked wonder in the observers:

Do you know that a man may drink wines at his club, such as, were he to order them at an hotel, the head waiter would hold up his hands at the extravagance of the order, or else imagine that he had Rothschild or Mr. Roupell dining in No.4 box ... You shall smoke such cigars as would make Senor Cabana himself wonder where they were purchased. Everything is of the best and everything is cheap ... A man may, if he be so minded, make his club his home; living and lounging luxuriously, and gazing to his heart's content on the abundant club-house literature, and enjoying the conversation of club friends. Soap and towels, combs and hair-brushes are provided in the lavatories; and there are even some clubs that have bed-rooms in their upper storeys, for the use of members. In those that are deficient in such sleeping accomodation, it is only necessary to have a tooth-brush and an attic in an adjacent street; all the rest can be provided at the club. (268)

Some older members looked upon this new attention to creature comforts with mixed feelings. For in the place of the member who came to the club for the pleasure of conversation and companionship, the new stress on the pleasures of gourmandising, of lounging and sleeping might attract into membership men who thought of the club as a superior, but cheap, type of hotel; a rendezvous to transact business, and a place to take guests in order to impress them with one's social standing. (269) Towards the end of the century

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267. Soames, op.cit., p.122. Some clubs made quite extensive provision. At the Constitutional, for example, 108 beds were installed.
268. G. Sala, Twice Around the Clock, (1859), pp.210-11. For descriptions of the clubs, their architecture, and art treasures, see, S. Ramsey, "London Clubs," Royal Institute of British Architects Journal, 3rd Series, Vol.29(14), 20 May 1922; F. Sheppard (ed), Survey of London, Vols.XXIX-XXX (1960).
269. Nevill, op.cit., pp.136-37.

habitues sadly dilated upon the demise of the single member whose whole social life was bound up with the well-being of his club. A critic of the new club bemoaned that "you can't have a club room without mahogany tables, and mahogany tables without magazines." The genesis of the modern club he argued is "out of the Housewife by Respectability."<sup>(270)</sup> There was also the complaint, later to be heard in criticism of the working men's club, that in clubs established to promote political causes it was difficult to stir the interest of members in anything but the quality of menus, the composition of smoking concerts, or the billiards tournament.<sup>(271)</sup> Furthermore, many older clubmen thought that the increasing size of the club would mean a loss of intimacy.<sup>(272)</sup> Members of clubs which numbered some twelve hundred could not know each other personally as was the case when admission was severely restricted and those given entry also tended to know each other socially. To preserve the atmosphere of cosy intimacy in the club one architect suggested that in the design of clubs there should be substantial provision "of nooks and recesses where little coteries can assemble."<sup>(273)</sup> As clubs grew larger it was alleged that the traditions and rituals of the clubs fell into abeyance and that members took little interest in the management of their club preferring to see that left to committees established for that purpose.<sup>(274)</sup> The "cosy gatherings of congenial spirits" which was the image of the club

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270. J. Farthing, "Paternoster Row in the Early Nineteenth Century," Manchester Review, Vol.11, Spring/Summer, 1968, p.183.

271. Fisher, op.cit., p.136.

272. "Clubs," Temple Bar, Vol.51, October, 1877, p.190.

273. Soams, op.cit., p.123.

274. Griffiths, op.cit., p.199; Arnold saw this contempt for ritual as a contributory cause to the demise of the Beef-Steak; Arnold, op.cit., pp.33-36.

life of the past was compared with the hotel-like ambience of the modern club to the latter's disadvantage. (275)

The new sobriety and seriousness present in the best circles from the late 1830's had profound effects on the behaviour and mores tolerated inside the club. Gaming had fallen from favour but the most profound revolution in manners concerned attitudes to excessive drinking. The days when endless toasting was the fashion and a gentleman was judged by his ability to quaff innumerable "bumpers" of port or claret had ended. Any tendency towards excess was severely frowned upon:

a decided stigma .., attaches to anyone even suspected of intemperance, whilst any open demonstration of inebriety would certainly call forth demands for drastic measures being applied to the member indulging in such a breach of unwritten club law. (276)

Topping, like all sensual indulgence, was now seen as "tainted." A man who flaunted the new, strict conventions would not be welcome in polite circles, and would be asked to resign from his club. Such insistence upon sobriety and convention was directly attributed to the spread of the clubs. (277) So from being the resort of the dissolute and the profligate, clubs now became pillars of bourgeois order and respectability. Only minor eccentricities, such as quirkiness of dress were tolerated inside it's walls, and

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275. "Curious Clubs," All Year Round, New Series, 26 November, 1887, p.466.

276. Nevill, op.cit., p.193.

277. "Club House Sobriety," Cornhill, Vol.9, April, 1864, pp. 181-83; "Club Life of the Past," Chambers' Edinburgh Journal, No.96, 1 November 1845; E. Walford, Old and New London, (1865), Vol.IV, p.152; At the end of the century the luxuriousness of the appointments at the club was thought to induce extravagance and intemperance especially among the younger, and hence more impressionable members; See, T. Girton, Abominable Clubmen, (1964), pp.118-19.

even unconventional dress, such as wearing one's boots in the club, were thought to indicate lapses from the standards of sartorial excellence and dignity expected from club members, (278) Deviance, however, was not good form. To ensure conformity to expected patterns of conduct rules and regulations proliferated, a consequence both of the loss of intimacy which required such explicit guides to appropriate behaviour, and the admission of the bourgeoisie to membership who were known to "adore regulating somebody or something." (279)

By the 1840's if any man wished to be accepted into society he had to have a club, and the club which admitted him to membership would say much about the manner of man he was. No aspiring politician could afford to stand aloof from the club. Early in 1840 Gladstone was elected a member of Grillon's Club, a society established in 1813 which recruited mainly from political circles. He wrote in his diary of the honour bestowed upon him: "that it was a thing quite alien to my temperament ... but the rules of society oblige me to submit." (280) For the self-made man, despite the threat of blackballing club life provided "one of the best ways of entry into the ruling class." (281) Elite clubs were an important institution for socialising men into the values of ruling

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278. "A Lounger at the Clubs," The Gentleman's Art of Dressing with Economy, (1876), p.9.

279. Nevill, op.cit., p.167

280. M. Foot and H. Matthew (Eds), The Gladstone Diaries, (Oxford, 1974), Vol.111, p.6. Entry dated 31 January 1840. On Grillon's see S. Walpole, "The Dining Societies of London," in Essays Political and Biographical, (1908) pp.242-44; P. Egerton, Grillons, (1880); Grillons Club: A Chronicle, (Oxford, 1914).

281. C. Brinton, "Clubs," Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences, (New York, 1930).

class culture:

clubs could assimilate those who had the potential to become gentlemen and community leaders. As the administrators of conventions, gentlemen transmitted values to each other so that clubs played an important role in preserving the image and life of the gentleman. (282)

In developing notions of gentlemanly behaviour and in establishing the criteria of manliness the elite club was as important as the public school with which it also shared in common the provision of a social space where sections of the aristocracy and the upper middle class could join together. (283)

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282. B. Howe, "Clubs, Culture, and Charity: Anglo-American Upper-Class Activities in the Late Nineteenth Century City," (Ph.D. Thesis, Temple Univ., 1976), p.31. R. Anderson, Traditional Europe: A Study in Anthropology and History, (Belmont, Calif., 1976), pp.79, 104.
283. For the public school see, R. Wilkinson, "The Public School and the Maintenance of a Gentleman Elite," Sociology of Education, Vol.37(1), 1963; N. Vance, "The Ideal of Manliness," in B. Simon and I. Bradley (Eds), The Victorian Public School, (Dublin, 1976). A number of sociologists have examined the inter-relationships and networks of membership amongst elite clubs, see, for example, T. Lupton and B. Wilson, "The Social Background and Social Connections of Top Decision Makers," Manchester School, Vol.25(1), 1957. W. Domhoff, "Social Clubs, Policy Planning Groups and Corporations: A Network Study of Rural Class Cohesiveness." Insurgent Sociologist, 5(3), 1975. The most recent surveys of the Victorian aristocracy both ignore the club. See, W. Arnstein, "The Survival of the Victorian Aristocracy," in F. Jaher (Ed), The Rich, The Well-Born and the Powerful, (Urbana, 1976) and D. Cannindine, "The Theory and Practice of the English Leisure Classes," Historical Journal, Vol.21 (2), 1978. See also the list of clubs patronised by the leading landowners given in Appendix IV, J. Bateman, The Great Landowners of Great Britain and Ireland, (1883)

High-minded reformers who alighted on the club as a way of offering the working man rational recreation in combination with the means of social elevation gave little or no thought to the meaning of the term club, save that it had seemed to be responsible for a marked improvement in the conduct and values of the upper classes. Their schemes did not imply the simple transposition of the model of the west-end club to the conditions of Whitechapel or Bermondsey for, as already noted, the lower orders possessed already long traditions of clubbability. Nor did they ever desire to promote clubs for working men in order that the sons of the proletariat might imitate the behaviour of the habitues of Whites in its early years. For philanthropists the central and dominant feature of the club was that it was an agency of co-operation, co-operation between men to initiate them, co-operation among members to maintain them, and the cheapness and comforts deriving from the application of the co-operative principle to its internal economy. Clubs, wrote Bulwer:

contain the germ of a mighty improvement in the condition of the humbler classes. I foresee that those classes will, sooner or later, adopt institutions so peculiarly favourable to the poor. By this species of co-operation, the man of £200 a year can, at present, command the nobler luxuries of a man of £500 ... If the experiment were made by the middle and lower classes in a provincial town, it could not fail of success; and, among its advantages would be the check to early and imprudent marriages, and the growth of that sense of moral dignity which is ever produced by a perception of the higher comforts of life. (284)

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284. E. Lytton Bulwer, England and the English, (Reprint, 1970), p.93. See also speech of J. Hare at the opening of the Bristol Working Men's Club in January 1864; Social Science Review, New Series, Vol.1,(2) February 1864; Chambers' Edinburgh Journal, No.95, 25 October 1845, p.268.



The same points were emphasised by a writer in Chambers' Edinburgh Journal:

The system [of clubs] having been found so beneficial amongst the highest circles of society, it might safely be recommended for imitation among the lower grades in which economy-the chief advantage of the club principle-is so much needed. We see no reason why the middle and operative classes could not have their domestic clubs, as well as the nobility and gentry. (285)

Besides co-operation and attendant economy other meanings attached to the term clubbability. Sociability, rather than calculative co-operation, that is the desire to seek out and enjoy the company of one's fellows has been seen as the cardinal club value. (286)

Without the gregarious, companionable nature of man no club or association would have ever entered into existence. (287) The naturalness of man's social nature was held to contradict those who saw men as isolated individuals and society emerging simply as a constraint upon the bellicose and self-seeking nature of man described by Hobbes.

For a number of writers in the tradition of Dr. Johnson, conversation has been seen as the prime impetus to sociability. (288)

"The discussion of discourses were the life-blood of the society" recalled one member of the Aberdeen Philosophical Society. (289)

The importance of sociability was also adverted to by Simmel in

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285. "Club Life," Chambers' Edinburgh Journal, No.96, 25 October, 1845.

286. L. Hartson, "The Psychology of the Club," Pedagogical Seminary, Vol.18(3), 1911, p.411.

287. Kropotkin, op.cit., pp.30-31, 245-46.

288. J. Clifford and D. Greene (Eds), Samuel Johnson, (Minneapolis, 1970), p.9; Rothblatt, op.cit., Chap.7.

289. Quoted in King, op.cit., p.205.

the only serious sociological account of the subject. He also argued that the essence of such intercourse was the subversion or deriding of seriousness. Thus sociability had to be linked with an idea of conviviality.<sup>(290)</sup> The acceptance of Simmel's observation would entail denying the term "club" to any form of salon or similar assembly which took as its object the promotion of useful knowledge and which sought to found its deliberations upon due regard for serious and enlightening discourses. Hannah More and the Blue Stocking coterie thus are not clubbable women. If wit and conversation are taken to be the distinguishing features of the Johnsonian clubman, then it has to be observed that in the new, palatial club of the nineteenth century, indiscriminate and voluble talk was taken to be a great vice, a form of vulgar behaviour not befitting those who aspired to the title of gentleman. What the member valued was silence. Thus by the late nineteenth century conversational brilliance was counted "an offence against the habitual reserve which is the Englishman's standard of good taste."<sup>(291)</sup> Consequently the new member did not find warm intimacy prevailing at the club. On the contrary the central feature could be said to be isolation.<sup>(292)</sup> While conversation as the prime representation of sociability may have

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290. G. Simmel, "Sociability," in P. Lawrence (Ed), George Simmel, (1976), pp.89, 92-93. There is a useful discussion of sociability in M. Agulhon, La Cercle dans la Bourgeoisie, (Paris, 1978), pp.8-11; but Agulhon concentrates most of his attention on formal voluntary organisations and omits consideration of more informal assemblies.

291. E. Drew, "Clubland Two Hundred Years Ago," Nineteenth Century and After, Vol.75, December 1914, p.377

292. Escott, op.cit., p.343. See also the comments in Sennett, op.cit., p.84.

brought the club into existence, very different forces sustained its growth in the nineteenth century.

Two other points regarding sociability can be noted. Firstly the importance of political partisanship. A history of the clubs written solely from the perspective of jolly fellows meeting together for a drink and a chat over a pipe neglects or minimises the crucial role which political division and factionalism have played in the formation of clubs.<sup>(293)</sup> Indeed it might be suggested that political considerations have been the prime causal factors until the middle of the last century. Secondly, the alleged British or Anglo-American propensity to sociability has often been remarked upon. Fordyce, as early as 1745, observed that Englishmen were "the most forward to run into clubs, parties, and societies, which, by the by, is no ill proof of the sociable turn of our temper."<sup>(294)</sup> His thesis on the tendency for Englishmen to form associations has been subject to much discussion since. Tocqueville found the club a puzzle and a contradiction yet an institution which illuminated most clearly the peculiarities of the English temperament. For in the club were combined the spirit of association and the spirit of exclusion. Only by apprehending both aspects of the institution simultaneously could the personality of the Englishman be understood.<sup>(295)</sup>

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293. Ross, op.cit., is an instructive example of how to approach the club by ignoring politics altogether.

294. D. Fordyce, Dialogues Concerning Education, (1745), pp.61-62.

295. A. De Tocqueville, Journeys to England and Ireland, (J. Mayer, editor; 1958), pp.87-88; S. Drescher, Tocqueville and England, (Cambridge, Mass., 1964), pp.89-90.

For other writers the Briton's freedom to associate was not a function of national character but the consequence of the particular evolution of constitutional liberty since the seventeenth century. The freedom from Royal despotism, the parliamentary surveillance upon the growth of a potentially over-mighty state, concern for individual liberties, and the development of political and religious toleration promoted the articulation of a powerful civil society in which associations of every sort could flourish.<sup>(296)</sup> Moreover the tradition of association has provided an informal though powerful means of political and civic training. Voluntary associations have been said to stimulate "the kind of activity in self government that the members and leaders needed to attain a full critical, self-motivated moral adulthood."<sup>(297)</sup> Political association, Black has argued "educated the public, both enfranchised and unenfranchised in questions of moment and was the natural concomitant of growing public participation in the life of the nation."<sup>(298)</sup> The strength of civil society in Britain is one indicator of the triumph of bourgeois civilization, a point

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296. M. Robinson, The Spirit of Association, (1913), pp.65-66. Bridenbaugh, op.cit., p.73, sees the original source of voluntary association in the activities of the Royal Society. Bahlman, op.cit., pp.107-08 argues a not very convincing case for seeing in the activities of the narrow-minded and authoritarian Reformation Societies the promotion of the liberal tradition and believes such societies have played an important part in extending freedom.
297. D. Robbins, "A Radical Alternative to Paternalism: Voluntary Associations and Popular Enlightenment in England and France, 1800-1840," (Ph.D. Thesis, Yale Univ., 1974), p.87. See also, N. Hunt, Two Early Political Associations, (Oxford, 1961), p.181.
298. E. Black, The Association: A Study in Extra Parliamentary Organisations, (Cambridge, Mass., 1963), pp.279. See also, T. Parssinen, "Association, Convention, and Anti-Parliament in British Radical Politics, 1771-1848," English Historical Review, Vol.88, July 1973, p.533.

curiously overlooked by Nairn and Anderson in their provocative excursions into British history.<sup>(299)</sup> Clubs, therefore can be considered as one manifestation of the powerful and durable voluntary tradition and have to be given their due in discussions of the nature of pluralist democracy.<sup>(300)</sup> They are central to pluralism because of the political education and socialisation they provide. Their training in self-management is important in sustaining the tradition of activism and participation which is essential to the functioning of democracy. It does not matter that particular clubs may foster a spirit of exclusion or narrowness of party vision; for their structure as voluntary organisations remains unchanged. It is their form not their specific ideological tone which is their contribution to voluntarism.

The importance of freedom of association can be seen by a brief comparison with the French experience where the potential evolution of the club was strongly circumscribed by numerous and varied laws on association which have been passed since 1815. Legal restrictions have made it extremely difficult for clubs to develop except where they have been proposed by some agency which has offered guarantees for the good behaviour of the membership, like the Catholic church, for example, which formed a number of social clubs after the Commune of 1871.<sup>(301)</sup> These legal

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299. See P. Anderson, "The Origins of the Present Crisis," in Idem (Ed), Towards Socialism, (1964).

300. "Clubs, Societies and Democracy," P.E.P. Broadsheet, No.263, 21 March 1947; W. Beveridge, Voluntary Action, (1948), p.10; Ross, op.cit., Chap. 4.

301. On legal regulation and repression, see P. Amann, "The Paris Club Movement in 1848," in R. Price (Ed), Revolution and Reaction: 1848 and the Second French Republic, (1975); J. Merriman, The Agony of the Republic, (1978); M. Agulhon, "Vess une Histoire d'Association," Espirit, No.6, 1978. Association of Conservative Clubs, Monthly Circular, No.6, September 1895.

differences help to explain the contrast between the popularity of the cafe in French society with the growth of the club in Britain. One merit of such explanations is that they move away from analyses couched in terms of national psychology and character to a consideration of the various social factors which may account for the marked difference in patterns of leisure and sociability. There was some form of club life in France, such as the cercles which combined education, particularly of a political kind, with the entertainment of members, as well as the better known clubs of the Revolutionary period which shared little in common with their similarly named counterparts across the Channel.<sup>(302)</sup> However, the favoured resort of the Frenchman remained the cafe. One French visitor thought that cafe life would hold few attractions for the upper-class Englishman. He would find such resorts, "gaudy, and the animations and allurements of feminine society" would be a poor exchange for the quiet and comfort of his club.<sup>(303)</sup>

The mention of the female presence in the cafe brings out a further feature of club life, namely that it has been overwhelmingly a male form of sociability. This is not to say that clubs for women have not existed. A number were set up from the mid-nineteenth century such as the Empress and the Ladies Army and Navy. By 1889 there were six such clubs in the metropolis.<sup>(304)</sup>

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302. For the male centred cercles see, M. Agulhon, Le Cercle; T. Judt, Socialism in Provence, (Cambridge, 1979), pp.163-66.

303. F. Wey, A Frenchman Sees the English in the 50's, (1935), p.63; R. Sadoun et al, Drinking in French Culture, (New Brunswick, 1965), pp.7-16.

304. Englishwoman's Yearbook, 1889; the clubs were the Albemarle, the Alexandra, New Somerville, Denison, University and Victoria. See also, C. Gloyn, "Women in Clubland," Humanitarian, Vol.4(3), 1894; M. Dukerell, "Women's Clubs," Ibid, 12(5), 1898; "Women's Clubs," International Congress of Women, (1900), B. Howe, Thesis, op.cit., Chap.5, passim; At the end of the century the dominant tone of London clubland was misogynist, and the clubs were "undoubtedly central to the whole anti-suffrage movement," B. Harrison, Separate Spheres, (1978), p.99.

Respectability was crucial to gain entry to such clubs. Candidates had to have "high tone and unblemished character," and often "the condition for eligibility was presentation at court" which had become a well established form of ritual entry into elite circles by the middle of the century.<sup>(305)</sup> There were even a small number of mixed clubs as the Grosvenor and New Almack's.<sup>(306)</sup>

Mr. Taylor, M.P. opening such a club for professional people in Brighton commended the example and wished other clubs would admit women for he was of the opinion that:

When men and women meet together the results had been extremely good, for the refinement of women spread to the men rather than the comparative coarseness of the men to the women (307)

Many club men were of the opinion that any club which admitted women was sure to close soon after.<sup>(308)</sup> Few of these clubs were set-up simply to provide for rational recreation. The majority had more serious purposes, and it was suggested that, unlike the man's, a woman's club to be truly useful should combine companionship with philanthropic and charitable work. A club could, serve as a meeting place for benevolent organisations as well as acting as a training school for domestic staff and a rendezvous where ladies bountiful could meet and exchange ideas.<sup>(309)</sup>

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305. Griffiths, op.cit., pp.135 and 153. On the development and importance of Court presentation see, L. Davidoff, The Best Circles: Society, Etiquette and the Season, (1973), p.25.
306. E. Anstruther, "Ladies Clubs," Nineteenth Century, Vol.45, April 1899. J. Hawkesley, "The Women's Club," Westminster Review, Vol.153, April 1900.
307. Englishwoman's Review, No.70, February 1879.
308. Hatton, op.cit., p.18.
309. F. Scott, "The Need for the Better Organisation of Benevolent Effort in Manchester and Salford," Transactions, Manchester Statistical Society, 1884-85, pp.154-55.

The idea of clubs for women was met in some quarters with derision. Women, like Frenchmen, were said to lack the character to be sociable.<sup>(310)</sup> Their dependence upon men, difficulties of independent access to money, political powerlessness, and ideological constraints upon collective activity were not considered as the real, structural barriers to the establishment of clubbability amongst women.

It was also argued that women were not clubbable because their role was in the home. The family was their chosen sphere of life and if they were to minister to their charges then the angels in the house could not be out lounging at the club when they were supposed to be supervising servants, organising the household, and caring for their menfolk. The supposed dichotomy and rivalry between home and club generated an extensive literature considering the pros and cons of the question. Every club, whether designed for nobleman or workingman, has been seen as an affront to domestic economy and security. The idea that home and club were locked in mortal combat for the affections of the man was one which gained the widest currency in the Victorian era, although examples could be found earlier. It was during Victoria's reign that a highly coherent and forceful ideology of domesticity was articulated and elaborated.<sup>(311)</sup> The central theme in this

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310. "Club Homes," Tinsley's Magazine, Vol.14, June 1874, pp.656-63. Anstruther, op.cit., p.611, agreed that at present many women lacked a sociable nature, but the sex was in a state of transition and was evolving to a character consistent with clubbability.

311. W. Houghton, The Victorian Frame of Mind, (New Haven, 1964); C. Hall, "The Early Formation of Victorian Domestic Ideology," in S. Burman (Ed), Fit Work for Women, (1979); B. Howe, op.cit., pp.42-50; L. Davidoff et al, "Landscape with Figures: Home and Community in English Society," in J. Mitchell and A. Oakley (Eds), The Rights and Wrongs of Women, (Harmondsworth, 1976), pp.155-56.



ideology was the unity of the wife/home couple and any institution which failed to recognise this unity or which implicitly challenged its dominance was a threat not only to the home but by implication to the social order itself. The home, as Josephine Butler saw it was "the nursery of all virtue, the fountain head of all true affection, and the main source of the strength of our nation."<sup>(312)</sup>

Clubs by their very existence were said to strike "a blow at domestic society."<sup>(313)</sup> Their comfort, cheapness, and the standard of service common there, as well as the freedom of behaviour was seen to make home life dull and constricting.<sup>(314)</sup> The blandishments of the club were said to have drawn many a husband and father from the family hearth thus depriving the group of the "presiding and salutary influence of the father." The consequences of such dereliction were quickly and deeply felt. Without the restraint of her companion the wife would become financially careless, bills would be left unpaid debts contracted, but, most importantly, to console her in her loneliness the wife would find transient comfort "in the arms of the seducer."<sup>(315)</sup> For these

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312. J. Butler, Introduction in Idem, (Ed), Woman's Work and Woman's Culture, (1869), p.xxv. "The Domestic Character of Englishmen," Evangelical Magazine, No.118, October 1868; J. Brown, Home Life: In the Light of Its Divine Idea, (1866).

313. W. Howitt, "Observations on the Proposed Whittington Club," People's Journal, Vol.2(41), 10 October 1846, p.236.

314. "London Clubs," Tinsley's Magazine, Vol.8, June 1891, p.569. C. Fairfield, The Clubs of New York, (New York, 1873), p.26. There was considerable hostility to the establishment of Jewish Clubs in the United States as it was feared that club life would supplant home life; see R. Glanz, "The Rise of the Jewish Club in America," Jewish Social Studies, 31(2), 1969, pp.93-94. F. Tristan thought clubs made men more selfish, see, Promenades dans Londres, (Second edition, Paris 1840), p.390.

315. Junius, "The Clubs of the West End Considered in relation to Their Moral and Intellectual Results," People's Journal, Vol.1 (10), 7 March 1845, p.164.

reasons, Thackeray impishly remarked that he had seldom seen "even the most gentle and placable of women speak without a little bitterness of feeling against these social institutions, these palaces swaggering in St. James, which are open to the men,"<sup>(316)</sup> Lemon too humourously chided the female opposition to the club. His play, The Ladies' Club satirized the efforts of a group of well-to-do ladies to found a club in order to take their revenge on their husbands for neglecting their homes and forsaking feminine company. The idea was put to the gathering by Mrs. Fitz Smyth:

Mrs.F:... there are numerous clubs in this metropolis whose attractions are calculated to produce the estrangement of husbands--the keeping up of servants--and to supply excuses for every delinquency ... I say the time has arrived when we should bestir ourselves, and endeavour by every means in our power to put an end to these inroads upon our domestic comforts. (317)

Other writers, in more serious vein, wondered if the attractions of clubs would "render celibacy so desirable, that matrimony instead of being the natural ambition of men" would come to be seen "in the light of a sacrifice."<sup>(318)</sup> No married man should have the right to belong to a club for it was especially important for

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316. W. Thackeray, "Club Snobs," in The Book of Snobs, (1849 edition), p.289.

317. M. Lemon, The Ladies Club, (1851), Act II, Scene III, p.29. See also the satirical account of a wife's attack upon the club in Comic Annual, (1838).

318. Temple Bar, op.cit.; Thackeray suggested that bachelors should be prohibited from belonging to clubs, op.cit., pp.290-92. See also, Sala, op.cit., p.213. Davidoff, op.cit., p.24, suggests that clubs were one cause of the later age of marriage in the Victorian period. The diminishing opportunities for marriage, the result of young men finding their social needs catered for at the clubs, was held to explain why many females were seeking solace in "parochial work, in novel reading and novel writing, in the assertion of their 'rights' or in any other outlet for their pent-up energies," "Clubs," Temple Bar, Vol.51, October 1877, pp.195-96.

men to be brought into association with female society for by such civilizing contact the man loses "the ruggedness, arrogance, licentiousness, coarseness of his nature" becoming thereby "softened, courteous and refined,"<sup>(319)</sup>

There was some reassurance available, however, for wives anxious as to the effects of club membership upon their spouses. Authorities on clubs were eager to assure ladies that the club, far from undermining the home, was an aid to domestic harmony and order for the decorum which had to be observed in the club impressed itself upon the member who would thus be a better husband than one who lacked such discipline. Membership was said to induce habits of economy, temperance, refinement, regularity and good order."<sup>(320)</sup> Contrary to many hostile critics Walford claimed that the general tendency of clubs was:

to encourage marriage by creating habits in accord with those of the married state, they are a preparation not a substitute for domestic life ... there cannot be better security for the good behaviour of the husband than that he should have been trained in one of these institutions. (321)

Wives were also reminded that clubs were British institutions, thus were not intended to set home life aside.<sup>(322)</sup> If husbands found the cooking of a club more attractive than that given at home, moreover, that was not a criticism of the club but a comment on the poor quality of food offered him at home.<sup>(323)</sup> Finally one

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319. "Clubs," Eliza Cook's Journal, No.3, 19 May 1849.

320. Timbs, op.cit., Vol.1, p.248; Bulwer, op.cit., p.93; "Club Life," Chambers' Edinburgh Journal, No.94, 18 December 1845.

321. E. Walford, Old and New London, (1865), Vol.IV, p.141; T. Walker, The Original, No.17, 9 September, 1835.

322. Tinsley's Magazine, Vol.8, June 1891.

323. B. Frankle, "The Genteel Family: High Victorian Conception of Domesticity and Good Behaviour," (Ph.D. Thesis, Wisconsin Univ., 1969), p.195.

woman recommended the club to her sisters for if married the club could offer her several advantages. They could

act as conductors of the storms usually hovering in the air. The man forced to remain at home and vent his crossness on his wife and child, is a much worse animal to bear with than the man who grumbles his way to Pall Mall, and not daring to swear at the club servants or knock about the club furniture becomes socialised into decency.(324)

For those most deeply involved in developing the idea that the home was the centre of a man's life, that his family represented his major interest, such defences were spurious in the extreme. And they were even more horrified when it was suggested that a club life analogous to that common among the upper class should be promoted for the enjoyment of the working man. This class stood most in need of the order and sobriety that family life would bring. To argue that the working man would be reformed by giving him clubs was like suggesting that a confirmed drunkard could be cured by making him manager of a distillery.

Sustained invective against the club was rare. Clubbability though sexist and exclusive was held in great esteem, a virtue of which Englishmen, if not all Englishwomen, could be proud. Clubs were not just buildings. They were held to be the embodiments of ideals--sociability, companionship, and fellowship--which were nurtured and sustained by the peculiarly English notions of individual freedom. It was also an institution which had arisen from specific class relations. How that institution would change and how notions of sociability and conviviality would be transformed when located in the world of the working class are the concerns of the remainder of this study.

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324. Mrs. Gore, quoted in "Clubs," Fraser's Magazine, Vol.73, March 1866. See also "Clubs and Their Characteristics," United Kingdom Magazine: The Journal of the Literary and Scientific Institutions of Great Britain, No.2, June 1848, pp.172-73.

CHAPTER 2: THE CLUB MOVEMENT: GROWTH AND PATERNALISM,  
1862-1882.

These Institutions are not political organisations, fraught with dangers to Government and property, as they are apt to become under the despotisms of the Continent. Neither are they debating societies, in which heated rhetoric spouts a blasphemous infidelism. They are healthy and manly efforts on the part of the working classes to place themselves within the sphere of those civilizing influences which are enjoyed in the higher circles, and are, in the main, as well conducted as the Clubs at the West End. (1)

The Great Leisure Problem is almost as great an issue as the Labour Problem itself. (2)

The Working Men's Club and Institute Union (CIU) was inaugurated at a meeting in the rooms of the Law Amendment Society, Waterloo Place. Lord Brougham who had assisted with the organisation of the meeting accepted the position of President. Among those present was the Rev. Henry Solly, a Unitarian minister then residing in Lancaster. He had long been convinced that properly conducted clubs would confer a great boon upon the working man. A few weeks after this meeting Solly was offered the post of Organising Secretary, a position which required its occupant to stump around the country evangelising on behalf of the club cause in addition to offering sound practical advice on how best to set about establishing a club in a given district. The job had first been offered to the Rev. Rylance of Lambeth who selflessly suggested that Solly should be approached. He resigned his living and was in post by August. The working men's club movement thus entered into formal existence. In this chapter the origins of the Union are

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1. Lecturers' Gazette, August 1877.
  2. Labour Annual, 1896.

examined with particular stress upon the discovery of the leisure problem in the late 1840's as providing the context in which the first attempts at promoting working men's clubs have to be seen. The work and achievements of some of the Union's antecedents are then examined. This is followed by an analysis of the structure of the Union and a consideration of some of the personalities involved in its pioneering work. In the remainder of the chapter the patterns and problems in the two decades after the Union's foundation are set out.

The Union did not invent the working man's club. Its understanding of this institution and what it might accomplish for the reform of the working man was the product of over a decade of philanthropic and religious activity and ideology. To supply the working man with a cheery resort in which to pass his limited leisure hours, free from the inducements to vice and excess present in the beershop, was the task taken up by Viscount Ingestre. To fulfill this objective he opened the Colonnade Club, Clare Market, in 1852.<sup>(3)</sup> The idea for such a place came from S.G. Osborne's suggestion that in order to fight successfully against the tap room it was necessary to give the working man a building where he could find the comfort and companionship normally found only at the drinking shop. Osborne proposed the creation of village clubs where labourers could go in the evenings. If desired the club

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3. H. Solly, Working Men's Clubs and Social Institutes, (1867), p.11; Conservative Clubs Gazette, September 1907; There is a description of the club and its work as part of the Clare Market mission in The Dial, 10 January 1862. By this date clubs for boys and a club for women had also been started.

could also open for a few hours on the Sabbath.<sup>(4)</sup> This idea was one of the more practical suggestions made to solve the leisure question. For by the mid 1840's popular leisure and amusement had come to be considered as important social problems, the solution of which would do much to improve the conditions of working class life as well as enhance good feeling between the classes. The varied motives which prompted an assortment of clergymen and philanthropists to set up clubs and institutes for the elevation of the working man can best be understood against a general background of uneasiness regarding the lack of proper facilities for healthy recreation. Popular culture had to be reformed if good order and decency were to be maintained.

Industrialization was accompanied by a major transformation in the organization of and ideological meanings attached to the notion of work.. New methods of work, the increased pace and regularity of labour present in the factories, and the ceaseless insistence upon the values of hard, sustained work as the only sure guarantee of social peace and individual salvation produced a slow but irreversible shift in the patterns and relations of work and leisure. The traditional pre-industrial styles of labouring life, which did not operate according to a fixed temporal separation of

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4. S. Osborne, "The Beer-shop Evil," in Viscount Ingestre (Ed) Meliora: Or, Better Times to Come, (Second edition, revised, 1852), Vol.2, pp.5-7; See also Viscount Ingestre, Social Evils: Their Causes and Cures, (Wolverhampton, 1853), p.19, where he specifically commends Osborne's idea as a way of improving working class amusements. For Osborne's own experience of pastoral care see, A. Hosford, "S.G. Osborne," Proceedings, Dorset Natural History and Archaeological Society, Volume 98, (1976), pp.15-24.



the realms of work and the realms of play, were undermined and attacked.<sup>(5)</sup> Economic change was reinforced by the new disciplines of order contained within methodism and evangelicalism which began long campaigns to extirpate popular recreations and pastimes. moral and economic sanctions, outright repression, and legislative enactment were also used to support the onslaught on popular leisure.<sup>(6)</sup> Capitalist social relations entailed the habituation of labour to the new forms and rhythms of work organisation exemplified by the textile manufacturers.<sup>(7)</sup> Such a revolution in social relationships was not accomplished suddenly, nor was its triumph inevitable. Sections of the labour force were able, for a variety of reasons, to resist or ameliorate the impact of the new controls. Artizans, for example, were able to use their market position to maintain their custom of taking "St. Monday." In some trades the practice continued well into the 1860's.<sup>(8)</sup> Even in Lancashire the taking of certain customary holidays was retained.<sup>(9)</sup> But these were

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5. For a review of the work/leisure relation and its transformation see, S. Jameson, The Decline of Merry England, (1930), pp.249-61; K. Thomas et al, "Work and Leisure in Pre-Industrial Societies," Past and Present, No.29 (1964) and No.30 (1965); R.Malcolmson, Popular Recreations in English Society, (Cambridge, 1973). See also, A. Briggs, "Samuel Smiles and the Gospel of Work," in Victorian People, (Harmondsworth, 1965).
  6. For a case study of the impact of the new discipline, see B. Trinder, The Industrial Revolution in Shropshire, (Chichester, 1973), Chapter XIX, passim.
  7. H. Braverman, Labour and Monopoly Capital, (1974), Chapter 2; W. Lazonick, "The Subjugation of Labor to Capital: The Rise of the Capitalist System," Review of Radical Political Economics, Vol.10(1), 1978.
  8. F. Reid, "The Decline of St. Monday," Past and Present, No.71, (1976).
  9. J. Walton, "Holidays and the Discipline of Industrial Labour," in M. Smith (Ed), Leisure and Urban Society, (1978), p.18/3.

exceptions. Broadly speaking the classic period of the industrial revolution can be characterised as a time of struggle over work discipline in which the interests of manufacture were victorious.<sup>(10)</sup>

In this new world the meaning of free time had not only been transformed it had all but been erased. Traditional leisure pursuits were denigrated and attacked. The world of work became the primary feature of human existence; its concerns, issues and struggles came to dominate communities in a totally novel way. Even Marx, otherwise a scathing and perceptive critic of the expropriation which had accompanied machine production, stressed the point of production as the crucial locus of social relations and social conflict. And he insisted that such relations be given priority in understanding the nature of the capitalist order. Only under socialism could the fetishisation of work be abolished.<sup>(11)</sup>

Movements for social reform as well as radical ideologies forced a re-examination of the primacy given to work discipline as a way of understanding social life. Campaigns to shorten the working day, the Ten Hours agitation, and the revulsion at the excessive hours and conditions of toil in the factories and mines produced a critique of the values placed upon work. Radical movements, especially Chartism, presented an attack upon the

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10. P. Anthony, The Ideology of Work, (1977), Chapter 3; E. Thompson, "Time, Work Discipline, and Industrial Capitalism," Past and Present, No.37, December 1967; S. Pollard, The Genesis of Modern Management, (Harmondsworth, 1969); G. Brown, Sabotage: A Study in Industrial Conflict, (Nottingham, 1977), Chapter 4. For a general discussion see, J. Myerscough, "The Recent History of the Use of Leisure Time," in I. Appleton (Ed), Leisure Research and Policy, (Edinburgh, 1974).

11. For a review of Marx on work see, A. Clayre, Work and Play, (1974), Chapter 5. See also, U. Harva, "Marxist Conception of Leisure," Adult Education in Finland, Vol.14(2) 1977, pp.6-8.

established order not only in terms of the existence of poverty in the midst of plenty, but in terms of the animal existence to which the juggernaut of industrialism was condemning generations as yet unborn while a privileged few enjoyed greater leisure than ever before. A new order had to be created, one which recognised the dignity and humanity of labour, and one which gave all its citizens the necessary free time in which to develop those faculties which were the mark of civilization. The need for and the use of free time were political issues.<sup>(12)</sup>

From the late 1840's the question of work discipline was complemented by concern for the leisure problem. How was free time to be used? What facilities ought to be established to allow the labouring class to use that time wisely and usefully? For the socially concerned Victorian these became troubling questions. From the time of the Commonwealth godly magistrates had given much thought and expended much energy in putting an end to a variety of popular amusements and cultural pursuits. What the puritan had not succeeded in outlawing or prohibiting, the impersonal requirements of machine production finished off. Yet apart from extolling the quiet simplicity of the home as the natural and God-given resort in which free time ought to be passed, little or no thought had been given to providing facilities for the leisure hours of the working class. There were, of course, those who still considered the working class to be an item of economic calculation for whom leisure

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12. See, J.L. & B. Hammond, The Age of the Chartists: A Study in Discontent, (1930), especially Chapter XVIII. J. Hammond argued that the Chartist movement was "a revolt against a bleak view of life," and stressed the class character of the leisure question. See, J. Hammond, The Growth of Common Enjoyment, (1933), p.10.

was not necessary. But others though recognising that the working man had some right to free time were sorely troubled by the uses to which they saw it being put. The bestial and vicious side of popular culture was easy to berate - the blood sports (except where they involved "the hunt"), the drunkenness and the ribaldry. Such pastimes were denounced by respectable radical as well as zealous evangelical. For the improving artizan the advance of the people could only be assured by shunning the waste, extravagance, and degradation present in all too many popular amusements. Yet to elaborate a positive programme for the enhancement of popular leisure was a formidable problem. No longer could leisure be seen as some residual feature of social life, to be tackled or discussed only when fundamental questions of the role and nature of work had been resolved. Leisure was integral to culture and hence civilization. A society which turned away from questions concerning how best to provide for the growing free time of its people forfeited the right to be considered a Christian nation. Moreover to neglect the free time of the people was to force them to turn to less enlightening channels for solace and amusements. As Samuel Smiles argued it was the right of the working class to enjoy innocent amusements. If they were not able to obtain them then they should not be denounced for seeking more vicious pursuits.<sup>(13)</sup> This did not mean that work ceased to be a major social concern. On the contrary, discussion of the meaning and role of work was enhanced by the development of the leisure problem. Indeed work

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13. S. Smiles, "Public Amusements," People's Journal, Vol.2(27), 4 July 1846.

experience was held to be an important constituent in many instances of the problems which reformers had to deal with. For example, it was argued that the labourer's attraction to sensual and degrading amusements was a direct consequence of the monotonous and unhealthy character of much industrial toil. Long hours spent in such foetid conditions caused men to seek a quick release for their pent-up natural energies. Therefore improved working conditions would soften the animality of the working man's character, while rational amusements would help to make him a more reliable factor of production. Furthermore, the leisure problem was not a once and for all question but a recurrent one. Whenever there was concern about the general conditions and level of social life enjoyed by the working class then the leisure problem would claim attention. In the 1870's and 80's it was channelled through the settlement movement. In the first decades of the twentieth century it became part of the general discussion of adolescent life and labour, while in the inter-war years there was much examination of how education could be shaped to fit the nation's citizens for the best use of leisure. (14)

As it took shape in the 1840's and 50's the main theme of the leisure question became a concern to list and provide facilities

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14. See, inter-alia, W. Picht, Toynbee Hall and the English Settlement Movement, (1914), pp.119-20; J. Hammond, "The Problem of Leisure," Industrial Welfare, September 1939; E. Wood, "The Problem of Leisure," Parents' Review, June 1937; A. Barratt-Brown, "The Leisure Problem," Hibbert Journal, Vol.28(4), 1930; E. Barker, "The Uses of Leisure," Journal of Adult Education, Vol.1(1), 1926.

for rational or elevating amusement.<sup>(15)</sup> It was not enough to trust to the actions of invisible hands or utilitarian calculus to supply such facilities under the impetus of private gain. Profit was no guarantee of the moral worth of the service being offered. Every town and city gave shelter to predatory interests eager to cater for excitement after the constraints of work. If a better class of amusements were not provided for the working class, J. Hyde warned reformers, then "vicious and unscrupulous men would supply the deficiency for them."<sup>(16)</sup> Drink, whether represented by the beer-shop, the gin-palace, or the publican's singing saloon, was the most visible and obvious of those impediments to the right use of leisure. Temperance by its call to forsake old habits of conviviality could not avoid taking an interest in the provision of counter-attractions to the public house. The importance of counter-attractions had been recognised as early as 1833 and 1834 when parliamentary inquiries into public walks and drunkenness heard evidence from men such as Place and Chadwick which stressed the need to supply innocent forms of

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15. "Amusement and Instruction," Apprentice, New Series, July 1845; "Popular Innocent Amusements," Leisure Hour, Vol.5(217), February 1856; "The British Workman," Church of England Quarterly Review, April, 1858, pp.322-24; "The Philosophy of Amusement," Meliora, No.23, 1864. In Popular Innocent Amusements, (Glasgow, 1856), Rev. Thomas Guthrie wrote, "Good people have too often attempted to frown upon amusements, when they ought to have fostered such as were innocent, and so have prevented those of a hurtful kind from springing up." (p.6). For recent surveys of the rational leisure issue see, H. Meller, Leisure and the Changing City, (1976); P. Bailey, Leisure and Class in Victorian England, (1978); R. Storch, "The Problem of Working Class Leisure: Some Roots of Middle Class Moral Reform," 1825-50," A. Donajrodzki (Ed), Social Control in Nineteenth Century Britain, (1977).
16. "Amusements of the Working Classes," Transactions, N.A.P.S.S., (1863), p.816.

recreation for the working class if they were to be won from the snares of strong drink. Pledge signing and experience meetings provided a very limited, and often dull, form of social life for the new convert to teetotalism. What was needed was some institution or facility which would provide for leisure to be passed in a sober but companionable manner.<sup>(17)</sup> The counter-attractionist case was succinctly expressed by William Pink, reforming mayor of Portsmouth:-

My experience is that working men will have amusement and excitement of some kind, and if we can provide that for them with clubs and harmless amusements we shall keep them away from public-houses, but unless we do that, they will assemble together and probably get drunk. (18)

Flexibility and openness to new ideas had to be the watchwords of those who took up the cause of popular leisure for those who profited from working class excess would not stand idly by and watch their custom be taken away. To the challenge of the counter-attractionist the publican swiftly responded. W. Barry reported that by the early 1850's in Leeds and its environs it had become a common practice to draw in custom to -

exhibit museums, pictures, &c., in connection with houses for the sale of strong drink. Music in particular, forms a fashionable means of attraction. On Sabbath evenings, these exhibitions of revelry are thronged with persons of both sexes indiscriminately, and scenes, not unlike the bacchanalia of Ancient Greece present themselves to shock the eye of soberness and modesty. (19)

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17. The counter-attractionist cause is most fully discussed by B. Harrison, see, Drink and the Victorians, (1971), pp.297-98.
18. Evidence to S.C. House of Lord on Intemperance, Second Report, P.P. 1877 xi, p.106.
19. W. Barry, An Essay on the Most Desirable Plan for Supplying Innocent and Elevating Recreation for the Working Classes, (Leeds, 1853), p.14. See also, J. Beggs, Three Lectures on the Moral Elevation of the People, (1847), pp.68-69.

The anonymity of urban life, the rootlessness of the new populations growing up in the cities had rendered traditional means of control and surveillance obsolete. The "golden thread of charity" which had held together the social orders of old England in a network of reciprocal obligations and rights had been dissolved. New measures and new men were needed. The disturbances of the 1840's gave a sense of urgency to these deliberations. For a solution or series of solutions to the leisure problem would not only supply working men and their families with healthy and decent facilities in which to pass their hours after work, it would also help to assure social stability and promote better feeling between the classes.<sup>(20)</sup> "To make a people contented, the first requisite is to supply them with food,"<sup>(21)</sup> said one reformer, "but the next is to furnish them with amusement."<sup>(21)</sup> By developing the proper habits of amusement, training for the life of improvement would be given.<sup>(22)</sup>

Not all reformers were agreed that the solution to the leisure question lay mainly in the establishment of new institutions of rational amusement. Some reformers stressed the need to develop athletics and sports. A healthy body for a healthy mind. The development of sports and games was a key feature of the new initiative in leisure associated particularly, though not exclusively, with Kingsley's notion of muscular Christianity.<sup>(23)</sup>

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20. "The British Workman," Meliora, No.5, April 1859.

21. Jerrold's Shilling Magazine, Vol.7(37), January 1848.

22. J. Austin, Golden Steps to Respectability, Usefulness, and Happiness, (1852), Lecture IV.

23. B. Haley, The Healthy Body in Victorian Culture, (1978), Chapter 10; Bailey, op.cit., Chapter 6



For some clergymen and philanthropists right habits depended on right reading. So societies to promote pure literature were founded and to ensure that pure literature found its way into tenement and cottage the Church of England set up a book-hawking society paying the colporteurs, who had previously carried ballads and chapbooks containing all manner of inflammatory material, to hawk the moral tract. There was also a strong body of reforming opinion which strongly urged that the family hearth be considered the natural milieu in which free time should be spent. Order and christian decency required leisure to be spent quietly at home in the company of the family circle.<sup>(24)</sup> Clubs and the like were thought to have a baneful influence on family life. It was thought especially important that men should learn to enjoy chaste female company for in such circles "the lord of creation losing his ruggedness, arrogance, and licentious coarseness of his nature becomes softened, courteous and refined."<sup>(25)</sup> Such reasoning was to be found in both nonconformist and Anglican evangelical literature. From such reformers was later to come a vociferous hostility to working men's clubs for such bodies were held to take men away from the discharge of their domestic duties. Attractive clubs would make men discontented with the humbleness of home life. If club life prospered then it would be directly at the expense of the family.

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24. See, for example, evidence of J. Weylland of the London City Mission and Rev. I. Baylee of the Lord's Day Observance Society to the S.C. on Public Houses, P.P.1854 xiv.Qs.50-51 and 215, 235.

25. "Clubs," Eliza Cook's Journal, No.3, 19 May 1849.

Music and art were also pressed into the cause of reforming leisure. Galleries should be open to the working class and they should be encouraged to visit them often for by so doing they would "become accustomed to the sight of beautiful objects, and in the course of time they will learn to understand them; their tastes will be educated and their respect for genius excited."<sup>(26)</sup>

One form of rational leisure was popular education. To acquaint the improving working man with the world of science and technology was the intention of the mechanics' institutes. Experience impressed upon many of those who served or studied in these plebian academies that the formal, dry education they offered attracted but few sober artisans. Whatever the reason for the failure of individual institutes to retain the loyalty of the working man, most came to see the need to expand the range of facilities offered to potential members. Technical instruction or the promise of social advancement were insufficient incentives to hold a mass membership. To remedy such shortcomings institutes began to advertise galas, soirees, excursions and concerts to draw in new members as well as prevent established ones from drifting away. Barnett Blake in a manual which surveyed what amusements might legitimately be offered by an institute wrote, "If people chose amusement rather than instruction it is much better that they should do so under the supervision of the Institution than be left altogether to themselves."<sup>(27)</sup> Moreover in the early 1830's some

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26. "Amusement," Eliza Cook's Journal, No.25, 20 October 1849.

27. B. Blake, Popular Recreations at Mechanics' Institutes, (Leeds, 1863), p.21. For a sample of the extensive programme of amusements offered by the Yorkshire Union, see Yorkshire Union, Annual Report, No.5, (Leeds, 1842), Table 4 and No.8 (Leeds, 1845), p.33. See also, K. Farrar, "The Mechanic's Saturnalia," in D. Cardwell (Ed), Artisan to Graduate, (Manchester, 1974).

institutions rescinded those prohibitions on the purchase of light literature for the library or repealed those edicts which prohibited discussions on political topics.<sup>(28)</sup> In short there was felt to be the need for mechanics' institutes to take on the features of the club, including giving the ordinary membership a greater say in the management of the organisation.<sup>(29)</sup> This tendency to diversify was uneven. Not every institute thought such reforms necessary or was successful in carrying them through. In some institutes it was strongly argued that recreation would stifle serious work and that far from attracting membership it would have the result of driving men away.<sup>(30)</sup> Evangelicals at Dudley Mechanics' Institute in 1871 eventually succeeded in their campaign to close the social room which had been set aside to provide the members with a place to play cards and billiards.<sup>(31)</sup> However, sometimes even those sceptical of the role of amusements welcomed them insofar as they promoted class mixing for which the normal run of activities did not provide.<sup>(32)</sup>

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28. S. Green, The Working Class of Great Britain: Their Present Condition and the Means of Elevation and Improvement, (1850), p.79.
29. "Mechanics' and Literary Institutions," National Sunday League Record, No.15, July 1857. See also the comments in J. Harrison, "Social and Religious Influences in Adult Education in Yorkshire, 1830-1870," (Ph.D. Thesis, Univ. Leeds, 1955), pp.440-41.
30. J. Hudson, The History of Adult Education, (1851), p.xii; B. Yeaxlee, Spiritual Values in Adult Education, (1925), Vol.1, p.184.
31. J. & J. Rowley, "The Promotion of Adult Education in Wolverhampton, 1827-69," West Midland Studies, Vol.8, Winter 1975, p.6.
32. R. Dawes, Mechanics' Institutes and Popular Education, (1856).

A more conscious scheme to unite improvement with amusement was provided by the Lyceums which were established in Lancashire and Yorkshire. Beginning in Manchester in 1838 lyceums were far more open and democratic bodies than mechanics' institutes. Subscriptions were lower, the degree of self-government greater and there was much stress upon recreational facilities as part of everyday amenities. They flourished for a few years. In Manchester, for example, the lyceum held regular tea parties and conversaciones. It also opened its reading room to women.<sup>(33)</sup> By the mid 40's the innovation was seen to have failed. For many working men the educational requirements and objectives were still too pronounced to make them feel comfortable in joining. Their existence had done little to diminish the attractions of the public house to working men as the natural setting for leisure time pursuits. Finally the economic and political tensions of the "hungry forties" did not provide suitable circumstances for an experiment of this kind.<sup>(34)</sup> A few years after the demise of the lyceums came the "Two-Penny Polys" which also aimed at mixing recreation with instruction.<sup>(35)</sup> These too soon faded away.

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33. K. Allen, "The Recreations and Amusements of the Industrial Working Class in the Second Quarter of the Nineteenth Century, with special reference to Lancashire," (M.A. Thesis, Manchester Univ., 1947), pp.142-44.

34. On Lyceums, see, M. Tylecote, The Mechanics' Institutes of Lancashire and Yorkshire Before 1851, (Manchester, 1957), pp.78-80; D. Davies, Public Libraries as Cultural and Social Centers: The Origins of the Concept, (New Jersey, 1974), pp.97-101.

35. Public Good, No.5, May 1850.

Radical movements of the same period also offered their supporters opportunities for conviviality. In Owenite and Chartist social institutes and halls of science, dances, musical entertainments, and readings were held in which all the family participated. For those seeking mental improvement there was a varied programme of talks and discussions upon social, historical, religious, political and scientific topics,<sup>(36)</sup> An example of the kind of interests which prompted the establishment of these people's institutes is given by the formation of the Workmen's Hall in Longton sometime around 1838. Hawley recalled its inception thus:

It was the first club of its kind at this period. Its first object was to help the members acquire a little education by mutual help. They met often, and the better informed who could do a little reading or writing became the recognised leaders. The second object was to provide some rational amusement ... Lecturers were obtained to discourse on temperance and social subjects. A debating society was formed, and this was a source of much amusement ... An amateur dramatic society was also founded and this was the means of bringing instruction to hundreds of working men and their wives. So successful was the club that these working men erected a club-house. (37)

In June 1836 O'Connor in uneasy alliance with the major figures of London radicalism tried to establish a "Universal Suffrage Club" whose objects would include facilities for moral improvement and

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36. Translator's note in L. Faucher, Manchester in 1844: Its Present Condition and Future Prospects, (Manchester, 1844), p.25; E. Yeo, "Robert Owen and Radical Culture," in S. Pollard and J. Salt (Eds), Robert Owen: Prophet of the Poor, (1971).
37. T. Hawley, Pottery Life and Character Sixty Years Ago, (Hanley), p.13 quoted in R. Lowe, "Mutual Improvement in the Potteries," North Staffordshire Journal of Field Studies, No.12, (1972), p.76.

conviviality. However antagonisms and rivalries within the group meant that the initiative failed to gain support.<sup>(38)</sup> It was, however, one more example of that generally buoyant sub-culture of coffee shops where for the price of a cup of coffee a person could read and debate a variety of tracts and newspapers provided by the proprietor.<sup>(39)</sup> A number of radicals kept such houses including Doherty in Manchester and Cleave in Snowhill, London.<sup>(40)</sup> In the 1830's William Viall aided by Place set up a small coffee and reading room where respectable artisans could relax away from the snares of the public-house.<sup>(41)</sup> There was even the proposal that radicals should establish working men's clubs. During a debate on the failure of mechanics' institutes and what radicals might learn from the experience, one anonymous mechanic suggested that:

Working men should form themselves into local clubs, somewhat similar to those of the aristocratic idlers, where every just means might be used to improve the circumstances, enlightening the minds, and elevating the morals of the members.

The facilities offered by such a club ought to include:

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38. J. Epstein, "Feargus O'Connor and the English Working Class Radical Movement, 1832-1841: A Study in National Chartist Leadership," (Ph.D. Thesis, Univ. of Birmingham, 1977), p.52.
39. On coffee-houses see evidence by Mr. Letchford to S.C. on Import Duties, P.P. 1840 v, pp.211-13; Evidence of William Lovett to S.C. Public Libraries, P.P. 1849 xvii, p.177.
40. R. Kirby and A. Musson, Voice of the People: John Doherty 1798-1854, (Manchester, 1975), pp.309-41. For Cleave see advert in Poor Man's Guardian, 2 June 1832.
41. I. Prothero, Artisans and Politics: The Life and Times of John Gast, (Folkestone, 1979), p.229.

the function of a house of call and place of refreshment, so that the public-house or the gin shop need no more be resorted to ... [and provide] a ready and constant means of political communication and united action, which the aristocratic clubs so completely accomplish for the enemies of the public good. (42)

This nameless correspondent anticipated almost exactly the scheme which Solly and his associates were to take up nearly thirty years later.

With the passing of populist radicalism the facilities for social intercourse diminished sharply. A working man had little choice as to where he might pass his leisure time. The attractiveness of the mechanics' institute was limited, and membership often beyond many working men's means. If a member of the local friendly society he would be able to enjoy the club night held in the local public-house or beer-shop. These facilities for conviviality, far removed from the control and reproachful eye of parson or philanthropist, were one of the great attractions of these democratic insurance companies. It was a practice roundly denounced by clergy and actuaries, especially if the publican was in the habit of charging "wet rents" for the use of his room, that is requiring members to take a certain amount of beer during the evening. (43) Some artisans too were troubled by what they saw as the incongruity of provident societies meeting on premises which encouraged wasteful expenditures. Mr. Dann, a plumber, had little

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42. Poor Man's Guardian, 6 June 1835. The author was insistent that such a club should be open on the Sabbath. For other letters in the debate see, Ibid, 2 May 1835 and 9 May 1835.

43. W. Shimmin, Town Life, (1858), Chapter XVI; P. Gosden, The Friendly Societies in England, 1815-1875, (Manchester, 1961), pp.116-19, 127.

sympathy for those who adjourned to the public-house friendly society. "The man who commences as a careful depositor in the sick fund," he observed, "often ends a drivelling, unmanageable, improvident inebriate,"<sup>(44)</sup> Severe judgement upon such traditions also came from the pen of the "journeyman engineer," :

I have frequently heard and read that married ladies in the upper ranks of society look with disfavour on their husbands' clubs; but these ladies have, I fancy, much less cause to be opposed to club proceedings than the wives of many working men [who belong to benefit societies]... it is no unusual thing to see a number of poorly-clad, anxious looking women waiting outside a club house on lodge night, in order to try to catch their husbands coming out, so as to induce them to come home. (45)

Such opposition, however, must not obscure the fact that the amenities available on the irregular club nights were relatively modest. A few songs, business proceedings, a chat and perhaps some board games constituted the facilities of club life.

For most working men the pub still provided the most easily accessible, cheap and acceptable place to visit after work. Clearly for those who had joined the local temperance movement even the pleasures of the tap room were denied, although there might be a local hall or meeting place where the teetotaler could go. Until the 1860's these facilities too were likely to be fairly rudimentary as the predominant rationale of the cause was the making of converts. Apart from rallies and experience meetings there was little specific provision for free time.

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44. "Temperate and Provident Habits," J. Cassell (Ed), Social Science, (1861), p.230.

45. "The Journeyman Engineer," [T. Wright,] Some Habits and Customs of the Working Classes, (1867), p.74. See also, C. Balfour, Club Night: A Village Record, (1863).



These general remarks provide the context in which philanthropic thinking on the leisure question in the late 40's and 50's was taking place. They also indicate some of the features which reformers placed great weight upon when evaluating the potential of the club for reforming working class leisure. Clubs were intended to offer both amusement and improvement for their members. In this respect lyceums were an important anticipation of the club idea and deserve recognition as an important indirect influence upon the movement. Another strand in the early club movement stressed the amenities which clubs could offer friendly and benefit societies in providing them with comfortable halls free from the compulsion to buy intoxicating liquors. Clubs could also act as powerful allies of the temperance movement by providing a real counter-attraction to the pull of the public-house. As an institution the club would be relatively easy to promote for unlike so many other reforms which were at variance with working class experience and traditions, it was an institutional form already known and familiar to them. There was no need to explain what it was for generations of artisans had enjoyed a club life whether provided by the coffee-shop or the public-house. Working men had to be shown what the club might become. The crucial problem was to win their support for a new form of club and to involve those clubs in an organised movement.

Prior to the foundation of the Colonnade Club a number of clergy and concerned laymen had established "Working Men's Institutes" in their parishes. These offered modest facilities for the pursuit of knowledge, harmless amusements such as chess, and provision for self help, usually in the form of a benefit

society, penny bank, or coal club. In 1849 the Brighton Institution was opened, the result of the work of the Rev. Frederick Robertson. Also in 1849 Henry Solly formed the Cheltenham Institute which marked his first practical involvement with the issue of popular leisure.<sup>(46)</sup> A West Bromwich Association for Working Men was opened in 1856. Sponsored by a group of local industrialists and gentlemen the Association put on lectures and concerts for its members.<sup>(47)</sup> Some idea of the range of work undertaken by these bodies is given by the St. Bartholomew's Working Men's Literary Institute, Gray's Inn Road. Established under the patronage of Lord Calthorpe, it charged 1/6d per quarter for membership. A sample of its programme for August-November 1858 included a members' musical and elocutionary entertainment, a soiree, a lecture from Professor Gardiner on "The Chemistry of the Breakfast Table," and an entertainment from George Grossmith, "Pictures from Pickwick."<sup>(48)</sup> The results of these ventures were mixed. Most, after a short burst of enthusiasm at the opening, soon faded away. Dissension over the admission of "infidel literature" into the reading room at Brighton, for example, soon diluted the attractions of that place for many artizans.<sup>(49)</sup>

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46. H. Solly, op.cit., p.12.

47. Victoria County History: Staffordshire, Vol.XVII, (1978), p.74.

48. St. Bartholomew's Working Men's Literary Institute, Miscellaneous Prospectuses, (1857-58). On general points, see, B. Shaw, "Institutes for Working Men," Quarterly Review, Vol.113, January 1863.

49. F. Robertson, "On the Question of the Introduction of Skeptical Publications into the Library," in Lectures and Address on Social and Literary Topics, (1858), pp.68-9; S. Brooke (Ed), The Life and Letters of Frederick Robertson, (1866), Vol.1, pp.235-43.

Independent of these undertakings a club for labourers was opened on 27th September 1855 at Charlton Marshall, Dorset. It was the gift of a local employer, Mr. Horlock Bastard, who organised a commemorative tea for some 240 villagers to mark the formal opening. Women were allowed into the club which was also allowed to open on the Sabbath, except for 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. when it was closed, thereby allowing members to attend divine worship.<sup>(50)</sup> Village clubs followed at Hertfordshire, and in Kingham and Littlemore, among others, in Oxfordshire.<sup>(51)</sup>

St. Matthias' Club, Salford, was founded in 1858 by the Rev. R. Botelier Chalmer. This was a successful alliance of recreation and instruction. Besides entertainments the club held weekly teas, organised regular lectures and classes, and the savings in its penny bank grew quickly.<sup>(52)</sup> To the hard-pressed but alert clergyman the growing popularity of this club also demonstrated the possible use of the club as part of the apparatus of parish organisation. Already ministers of the established church in industrial districts were holding special services and establishing institutes in order to draw the working class parishioner back to the church.<sup>(53)</sup> Parish

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50. T. Bastard, "on Club Houses for the Labouring Classes," Transactions, N.A.P.S.S., (1863); "The Charlton Club for Labourers," National Sunday League Record, No.10, February 1857; National Temperance Chronicle, New Series, No.49, July 1855.
51. H. Solly, op.cit., pp.11-12. These clubs were overlooked by an 1865 list which covered clubs established prior to the CIU. For the list see Appendix B, Table A.
52. E. B. Chalmer, The Parson, The Parish, and the Working Man: Or, Parochial Work in a Manufacturing District, (1859).
53. S. Carpenter, Church and People, 1789-1889, (1933), Chapter X; K. Inglis, Churches and the Working Class in Victorian England, (1963), Chapter 1; S. Mayor, Churches and the Labour Movement, (1967), pp.28-40; for local examples, see, E. Rose, "Ashton Churches and Chapels," in S. Harrop and E. Rose (Eds), Victorian Ashton, (Ashton-under-Lyne, 1974), p.73.

organisation was being recognised as a major area of clerical activity, as vital to the religious well-being of the flock as traditional practices such as sick visiting. Social provision, if linked to religious purpose, offered the minister a way of showing that the church was anxious to involve itself with the social life of the local people.<sup>(54)</sup> Clubs were thus presented as one of a growing range of works including sick clubs, mothers' meetings, and young men's associations, which it was legitimate for the clergyman to start up.<sup>(55)</sup> Given this new insistence on the importance of pastoral care it is not surprising that sections of the religious establishment were to come to the aid of the fledgling club movement.

By the late 1850's a number of clubs had been established and seemed to be prospering. The transformation of these isolated individual undertakings into an organised and centralised social movement was the result of a number of factors - the growing

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54. T. Chalmers, "The Influence of Parochial Associations for the Moral and Spiritual Good of Mankind," in Works, Vol.IX, (1856); J. Sandford, Church at Home, (1865), pp.53, 57, 184-85; "Home Missionary Work," Church of England Monthly Review, Vol.5(30), December 1858; D. Mole, "Attitudes of Churchmen towards Society in Early Victorian Birmingham," in A. Bryman (Ed), Religion in the Birmingham Area: Essays in the Sociology of Religion, (Birmingham, 1975). B. Heeney, A Different Kind of Gentleman, (Hamden, Connecticut, 1976) considers a variety of these innovations which he explains in terms of the development of a new form of clergy who saw their role in highly professional terms.
55. J. Clabon, A Model Parish, (1870); F. Wynne, The Model Parish, (1865), pp.205-06; C. Anderson, "Ministrations to the Poor," in Rev. C. Anderson (Ed), Church Thought and Church Work, (1874); L. Hunter, A Parson's Job: Aspects of Work in the English Church, (1931), Chapter X; G. Kitson Clark, Churchmen and the Condition of England Question, (1973), Chapter 6; D. Mole, "The Victorian Town Parish: Rural Vision and Urban Mission," in D. Baker (Ed), The Church in Town and Countryside, (Oxford, 1979).

publicity given to the idea of the working man's club, the role of the Early Closing movement, the work of specific reformers in founding societies to minister to the need for popular recreation, the activities of sections of the forces of temperance concerned to set down enduring forms of counter-attractionism, and, finally, the inauguration of the Working Men's College in 1854.

With the exception of Osborne's observations on the club there was little, if any, discussion of the idea prior to the late 1850's. A number of tracts and articles then placed the cause of the clubs before a wider audience. These publications set out the objectives of such an institution as well as indicating ways in which interested reformers might go about launching it. In 1861 the Rev. J. Erskine Clarke published Plain Papers: Or, the Social Economy of the People. Based upon articles which had already appeared in Clarke's Magazine, The Church of England Monthly, in 1857-58, two of the papers presented a summary of arguments on the leisure question and offered a case for the establishment of clubs. In "Recreations of the People," the earnest clergyman wrote of the need to set aside playing fields, to establish fixed holidays, and of the duty of the rich to mix with the toiling masses in order to guide them by example to nobler forms of leisure use. For Clarke recreation was God-given, a chance to renew the spirit after the cares of labour had been set aside. Its denial to the poor was not only short-sighted but a sin against their common humanity. However, leisure given its divine inspiration was certainly not to be abused. Thus Clarke was opposed to excursions which stimulated "undue excitement and feverish unrest." The racecourse, too, was beyond the pale for it existed solely to pander to the love of gambling. Of indoor amusements he was

against the theatre - "the most powerful of our schools of vice" - was unsure about the propriety of dancing (although it might prove beneficial if carefully supervised), yet expressed himself strongly in favour of music. "The people have a deep love of simple music" he noted rather patronisingly. Cheap concerts therefore were a very suitable goal for benevolent endeavour.<sup>(56)</sup> In his second Plain Paper Clarke put forward the case for the club to be considered as a major agency for the promotion of popular and rational recreation. Although he was vague on the type of activities which might be counted as "rational," he suggested that a club could provide a place for the working man to visit after work where, under the gentle and discreet surveillance of the minister, he could relax and refresh himself. Once renewed he would be more than ready to discharge his duty to labour the following day. Refreshment for the mind, refreshment for the body, and refreshment for the soul - all could be found at the club.<sup>(57)</sup>

The need to establish clubs was similarly emphasised by W. Marriott in a pamphlet published in 1860, Some Real Wants and Legitimate Claims of the Working Classes. Marriott, a young barrister, was angered by the complacency and patronage of much of what masqueraded as philanthropy. He concurred in the general belief that drink represented a real impediment to working class

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56. "Recreations of the People," pp.25; 34.

57. "Labourers' Clubs and Refreshment Rooms,"; See also, Rev. J. Clarke, "Working Men's Refreshment Rooms," Transactions, N.A.P.S.S., (1859), p.634. Clarke was taken by Heeney as one of the exemplars of the new activist clergy of mid-Victorian England, see Heeney, op.cit., pp.128-29.

advance, but sharply disagreed that institutions, such as mechanics' institutes, could civilize the working man. If the labourer was to be won from the pub then he had to be offered a resort as cheery, as welcoming, as libertarian. Clubs promised to be the places. Marriott expected little support

from this semi-puritanic, semi-philanthropic class ... no effective scheme of improvement can possibly be expected; therefore those who really wish well to the working classes must dare to face their denunciations and to discard their influence - an influence once terrible, but which, it is to be hoped, is now fast on the wane. (58)

He gave little thought to practical questions such as where these clubs would obtain their financial support or how they would be managed. Any expenses incurred he believed would be more than repaid by the savings which would accompany the new sobriety and respect for authority among the working class. He called upon those debating the wisdom of his strategy to recognise that the masses "are like children: their bodies must be healthy and strong before the intellect within can be highly cultivated."<sup>(59)</sup> These tracts offered a general case for the establishment of working men's clubs as the means by which the artizans could be won for total abstinence and shepherded into the ways of self-help. Chalmer's pamphlet, already noted, gave practical examples of what could be done at the club and the response of the local working population to the venture.

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58. J. Marriott, Some Real Wants....., p.27.

59. Ibid., pp.29-30.

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58. J. Marriott, Some Real Wants..... p.27.

59. Ibid., pp.29-30.



Besides the ideas of Clarke and Marriott there were other practical and ideological contributions to the rational recreation cause. The importance of increasing free-time for the working class and of making provision for its best use was urged by the Saturday half-holiday movement. Founded in the mid-1850's the movement stressed the improvement in morals which would follow from ceasing work at Saturday mid-day and devoting the remainder of the day to healthy recreations. (60) One activist warned employers:

If you will not allow or provide reasonable recreation to men in their worldly state, you will have the outbreak of a worn and gloomy spirit venting itself in foul passions. (61)

At a meeting to promote the case for Saturday closing held at the Exeter Hall on 24th April 1856 the following resolution was passed unanimously:-

That this meeting is of the opinion that Saturday Half-Holidays are among the most beneficial forms in which additional leisure can be granted to the Industrial Classes, inasmuch as they afford the greatest facilities for innocent relaxation, and tend to remove the present temptations to mis-spend the Sunday. (62)

Those sympathetic to these objectives gave some thought to how this expansion of free time might be used. Literature was issued

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60. J. Dennis, The Pioneer of Progress, (1861); Church of England Quarterly Review, New Series No.11, July 1856; W. Smeeton and H. Davis, The Necessity of Early Closing to Self Culture, (Leicester, 1855).
61. J. Fitzgerald, The Duty of Procuring More Rest for the Labouring Classes: The Early Closing of Shops and the Saturday Half-Holiday, (1856), p.22; Early Closing Advocate, No.1, January 1854. See also K. Allen, pp.22-23.
62. Saturday Half-Holidays and the Earlier Payment of Wages, (1856).

giving information on free exhibitions, cheap concerts, and Crystal Palace while some members regularly organised "Penny Readings."<sup>(63)</sup> The foundation of the CIU was an example of the provision for free time which was supported by the Half-Holiday campaigners. They co-operated with the Union in the early years in organising Saturday afternoon trips to places of historic interest and nature rambles. The existence of the Union and analogous bodies prompted the observation that "the fear of leisure being abused has less foundation than ever. The elements of good are far more prevalent now than they were at the outset of the movement."<sup>(64)</sup>

To cater for the increasing free time of his working class parishioners in Derby, Clarke established Saturday evening entertainments in which music, as might be expected, featured prominently. The entertainments were given in a local temperance hall consisting mainly of brass band music interspersed with readings from popular authors. Clarke trusted the management to a group of working men who supervised the proceedings, took the entrance money, and acted as stewards to the audiences. The programme chosen seemed to have an especial attraction for the class of "rough men over whom other humanizing and elevating agencies have passed without avail."<sup>(65)</sup> One measure of the success of these evenings was Clarke's report

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63. H. Walker, The Saturday Half-Holiday Guide, (1857).  
 J. Lilwall, Half-Holiday Question, (1856), pp.44-48; "Half-Holiday Movement," Church of England Monthly Review, Vol.1(2), August 1856.
64. Early Closing Movement, Annual Report, No.21, (1863), p.21.
65. J. Clarke, "The Working Man's Saturday Night," Transactions, N.A.P.S.S., (1860), p.811.

of men "saving 3/- or 4/- a Saturday night, putting it into the Penny Bank, and by and by, purchasing decent clothes in which to attend a place of worship."<sup>(66)</sup> Some ten years before Clarke's experiment a similar programme had been developed by the Leeds Rational Recreation Society which put on cheap concerts as a way of attracting custom from local pubs.<sup>(67)</sup>

Solly too was active in the cause of reforming recreation. He had come to recognise that what working men wanted "was not solely opportunities for acquiring a good education, but also for social intercourse and brotherly fellowship as well as mental improvement."<sup>(68)</sup> His first thought had been for the setting up of a Working Men's College, an idea he broached first at a joint meeting of the Lancaster Mechanics' Institute and the local temperance society in mid 1860 to consider the foundation of a Working Men's Recreation Society. Few working men were present at this meeting, but those that did manage to attend spoke in favour of some room in which to meet to play games, read, drink coffee &c. The Secretary of the temperance society was particularly keen hoping that the room would help keep those who had signed the pledge in the ways of temperance.<sup>(69)</sup> Only a lone working woman

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66. Ibid., p.810. On Clarke's work, see The Dial, 20 December 1861 and Guardian, 24 October 1866. "St. Saturday," Fraser's Magazine, Vol.64, July 1861, pp.121-22.

67. Evidence of J. Balfour, S.C. Public Houses, P.P.1854, xiv, Qs. 1301-02; 1411-14.

68. H. Solly, Working Men's Colleges: A Few Words about Them, (Lancaster, 1860).

69. Lancaster Guardian, 5 May and 12 May 1860.

seemed to oppose the idea believing that it would help break-up the home by drawing men away from the family and ridiculing the idea that men could be content with such infant pastimes as were proposed.<sup>(70)</sup> A further meeting was held at the Oddfellow's Hall in mid May at which Solly was the key speaker. His talk was well received and most of the audience expressed themselves in favour of a recreation room. The only doubter was the Rev. Sugden who alleged that recreation would quickly degenerate into licence.<sup>(71)</sup> One motion passed called for the establishment of a free public library, a suggestion first made (and defeated) in 1858. This motion was considered at the Town Council Meeting of 5th June. Most councillors while sympathetic, spoke of the need to convene a meeting of ratepayers to convince them of the wisdom of the move. One councillor also told his fellows that some working men had been to see him urging him to consider the creation of a public park or other place of recreation rather than a free library.<sup>(72)</sup> Some confirmation of this opinion came from a modest survey of artizan views carried out by Mr. Johnson. He distributed some 400 papers on the question. Of those returned the majority of single men expressed the wish for some form of Reading and Recreation room.<sup>(73)</sup> A group of working men and reformers including Solly, decided to

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70. Ibid., 19 May 1860.

71. Ibid., 19 May. Sugden was particularly opposed to any idea of opening any room on the Lord's day.

72. Ibid., 9 June 1860.

73. Ibid., 9 June 1860.

memorialize the mechanics' institute asking the institute to set aside a room for use. Further meetings were held at which Solly proposed the setting up of a Working Man's Mutual Improvement and Recreation Society. On 29th June it was agreed to take a list of potential members' names and some 60 working men came forward. This move of Solly's fortuitously coincided with the revival of interest in co-operation in the town and the cause of recreation found many allies and much support among those promoting co-operation.<sup>(74)</sup> An offer of a room and the use of the field from the mechanics' institute was accepted by the Recreation Society, the arrangement to last until October. Membership fees were set at 1½d per week for adult men and 1d per week for youths aged 14-18. Both intoxicants and games of chance were banned. Management lay with a committee of thirteen members. The society began well helped no doubt by a spell of exceptionally fine weather which made outdoor sports very popular. By mid July it was said to have some 600 members.<sup>(75)</sup> Early autumn found the institute and the society at loggerheads over the use of the facilities and financial disagreements as the society charged far lower subscriptions than the institute.<sup>(76)</sup> Eventually there was a breach between the two bodies followed by mutual recriminations. Members of the recreation society accused the institute of patronage and class exclusiveness, charging them with being only concerned with the comforts of "tradesmen."<sup>(77)</sup> After the break the Recreation

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74. P. Gooderson, "A Social and Economic History of Lancaster, 1780-1914," (Ph.D. Thesis, Univ. Lancaster, 1975), pp.335-36.

75. Lancaster Guardian, 21 July 1860.

76. Ibid., 8 September, 15 September 1860.

77. Ibid., 29 September, 13 October 1860.

Society rented its own premises and by late October had attracted some 200 members. (78)

Female philanthropists were responsible for the final group of examples of influences on the club movement which have to be considered. In 1854 Catherine Marsh published a record of her salvation work with the gangs of navvies working on the building of the Crystal Palace at Sydenham. The tract, English Hearts and English Hands, proved immensely popular acting as the inspiration for a number of middle class women to emulate Miss Marsh's selfless example. (79) Three women in particular had a bearing on the club movement - Mrs. Julia Wightman, Mrs. Bayly and Miss Adeline Cooper. (80) All used the club idea to promote domestic missionary work and to strengthen the temperance cause. Mrs. Wightman, the wife of a clergyman, wrote an account of her work in the temperance movement in Shrewsbury. The book, Haste to the Rescue: Or, Work While it is Day, (1859), repeated the success of her mentor. With

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78. Lancaster Guardian, 27 October 1860; Working Men's College Magazine, November 1860; H. Solly, These Eighty Years, (1893), Vol.1, pp. 57-65. At the Annual Meeting of the Mechanics' Institute, of which Solly remained a member, he spoke in favour of the motion which called for the amendment of the Rules in order to allow 10 working men to be admitted to the Committee. He opposed the motion which called for the repeal of the rule which prohibited the library from taking works of a political or theological character. The issue had arisen as the Church Institute had offered the Mechanics' Institute its library. Solly was voted down. Lancaster Guardian, 24 November 1860.

79. K. Heasman, Evangelicals in Action, (1962), pp.24-25.

80. A full analysis of the network of those influenced by this book would have to include that band of female workers who engaged in a campaign to reform the soldier and sailor, - Agnes Weston, Sarah Robinson, and Miss. Daniel.

the profits of some £700 she built a Workmen's Hall on the site of the Fox Hotel to provide a social resort for the men reclaimed from drink. The Hall, in which working men shared the management, was a marked success and offered a path for others to follow. (81)

The idea of the Workmen's Hall was also taken up by Mrs. Bayly. Her hall, in Portland Road, Notting Hill, the heart of the notorious Kensington "Potteries," was opened by the Bishop of London in March 1861. (82) The money to establish the hall, some £1,100 was advanced by Samuel Guerney. One unusual feature of the hall was Mrs. Bayly's use of a network of district visitors to go out and seek members for the club. (83) Initially a charge of 2d per week was made for admission to the hall but this was dropped soon after opening. Among others inspired by Mrs. Bayly's work were Miss Daniel in her army reform work in Aldershot, the Rev. J. Jeakes, who founded a Working Men's Hall in Harrow in July 1862, and the Shaftesbury Hall, again in Notting Hill, opened in early 1869 was also attributed to the lady. (84) Mrs. Bayly also gave direct

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81. Dial, 22 February 1861; "Shrewsbury Workmen's Hall," Parish Magazine, Vol.4(6), June 1862; Mrs. S. Hall (Ed), Women's Work in the Temperance Reformation, (1868), pp.31-34; "A Midland Town," Leisure Hour, No.1082, 21 September 1872; W. Caine, "Julia Wightman," Wings, Vol.16(3), March 1898; J. Fletcher, Mrs. Wightman of Shrewsbury, (1906), Chapter XIV. The best account of her work and its importance in terms of the changing attitude of the Church of England to the drink question is, G. Olsen, "The Pub and the Parish: The Beginnings of Temperance Reform in the Church of England, 1835-1875," (Ph.D. Thesis, Univ. of Western Ontario, 1971), Chapter 3 and pp.166-69.
82. Mrs. Bayly, Mended Homes and What Repaired Them, (1861); Portland Road Working Men's Hall, (1862); Weekly Record, 10 May 1862. On social conditions in the "Potteries," see, P. Malcolmson, "Getting a Living in the Slums of Victorian Kensington," London Journal, Vol.1(1), 1975.
83. Mrs. Bayly, "Workmen's Halls Versus Public Houses," Meliora, No.19, 1863.
84. Heasman, op.cit., p.261; Weekly Record, 12 July 1862; Church of England Temperance Magazine, 1 February 1869.

assistance to the Unitarian, Mary Carpenter, in her efforts to establish a Workmen's Hall in Bristol. The Hall was opened in July 1864. Until an effective supervisor was appointed in early 1865 the first months of the hall were very difficult because:

before a tone of propriety and good order could be established, the "roughs" took possession of the place, and a reign of disorder was introduced which quite kept away respectable working men. (85)

The most important club work undertaken by this group was carried out by Miss Adeline Cooper. In 1860 she obtained the lease of a former public-house, the One Tun, and transformed it into the Duck Lane Working Men's Club. Duck Lane was an insalubrious district of central London. One visitor described it as inhabited by "thieves and prostitutes," another regarded it as the locale of "an untamed and dissipated people."<sup>(86)</sup> Most of the population were casual labourers and the club drew most of its membership from the coster-mongers, crossing-sweepers, and general labourers who lived roundabout. It began in December 1860 with 40 members paying ½d per week, most of the cost of its establishment, some £457, having come from Miss Cooper. She deliberately set the admission fee low as she observed that unless admission was cheap the working man would not join. Moreover the public-house was free so too great a charge to enter the club would act as a

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85. The Working Man, 3 February 1866; On Carpenter, see H. Schupf, "Single Women and Social Reform in Mid-Nineteenth Century England; The Case of Mary Carpenter," Victorian Studies, Vol.17(3), 1974.

86. D. Bartlett, What I Saw in London, (Auburn, 1852), p.120; Nonconformist, 28 October 1863. Duck Lane still exists sandwiched between Wardour Street and Berwick Street in Soho. The Club no longer exists but the Lane is used as a parking spot for the barrows of the street traders.



tax on thrift.<sup>(87)</sup> The club soon prospered and by mid 1861 it had achieved that mark of respectability its own penny bank. To some observers Miss Cooper and her club had restored their faith in miracles. Of her membership one enthusiast remarked: "they used to be the terror of the district but the kind teachings of Miss Cooper ... has transformed a room full of them into a most attentive and respectful audience."<sup>(88)</sup> A Temperance Association was formed within the club in 1862. At a special tea to mark its fifth anniversary the secretary noted that over 382 pledges had been taken in the previous year. He went on to pay his own tribute to the powerful presence of Miss Cooper. "He was a brand plucked from the burning fire," he told the audience, "when five years ago he had received the pledge from the kind patroness of the institution."<sup>(89)</sup> By 1867 membership had reached 400 and larger premises were being sought.<sup>(90)</sup> Decoratively the club was fairly austere, the only portrait hanging in the club being that of Lord Shaftesbury. Facilities too were fairly primitive although the club did have a Friends of Labour Loan Society and a Barrow Club which allowed costers to hire their barrows from the club.<sup>(91)</sup> Skittles were

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87. A. Cooper, "Intemperance among the Working Classes: Its Cause and Remedy," Temperance Congress, (1862), pp.24-25; The Dial, 27 December 1861.

88. Weekly Record of the Temperance Movement, 21 December 1861.

89. Weekly Record, 9 February 1867.

90. Domestic Messenger, Vol.9(4), April 1867.

91. Leisure Hour, Vol.13(631), 30 January 1864; British Almanack and Companion, (1865), p.89; The Cottager, 1 February 1865.

forbidden as it was thought that their introduction would lead to arguments and disputes.<sup>(92)</sup>

Reflecting on the history of the club movement Solly accorded great importance to the inception of the Working Men's College. In later years the College and the Union's clubs were to enjoy close and cordial relations. Prior to the establishment of the Union it was not the existence of the College which Solly held to be significant. Rather it was the inspiring example of the College's founder Frederick Maurice. Maurice's ideas were to greatly influence the social philosophy espoused by the early club movement. There is little doubt that Solly closely identified with Maurice. While a minister in London, for example, Solly took every opportunity to attend the bible class run by Maurice at the College.<sup>(93)</sup> He had also written to Maurice to obtain the latter's approval of his suggestion to found a working men's college in Lancaster in 1860. For Solly the club movement considered as a social movement had a much higher ambition than simply that of supplying working men with a place to meet, to relax and play games. The real task of the movement was to foster fellowship, to bring a spirit of co-operation and reconciliation into all areas of social life.<sup>(94)</sup> Moreover

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92. Nonconformist, 28 October 1863; Other women active in the club cause after the establishment of the Union included Ellice Hopkins, better known for her work in the purity crusade. See, E. Hopkins, Work amongst Working Men, (4th edition, 1882), pp.60-61; 124-27; R. Barrett, Ellice Hopkins: A Memoir, (1907)

93. H. Solly, Eighty Years, Vol.11, pp.93-95.

94. For discussions of the theme of fellowship in Maurice's work see, C. Gloyn, The Church in the Social Order: A Study of Anglican Social Theory from Coleridge to Maurice, (Forest Grove, Oregon, 1942), pp.135-42; C. Sanders, Coleridge and the Broad Church Movement, (North Carolina, 1942), pp.241-42, and 264.

the representation of the club as a corporate entity concerned for the collective welfare of its members had strong affinities with the medievalist assumptions of Maurice's philosophy with its stress upon organic order and unity. (95)

Christian socialist involvement and influence in the early club movement was similarly strong. Maurice took an active part in the movement as did Ludlow and Hughes, the latter pair helping to found one of the early clubs. Hodgson Pratt, later President of the Union, entered it via his work with Christian Socialists such as Neale. It can be suggested that the club movement is further evidence of the importance of Christian Socialism in mid-Victorian England. Moreover, their role should not be seen as vague, utopian or reactionary, but rather, practical and progressive. (96)

In 1861 Solly united with a Congregational minister David Thomas to issue a prospectus on behalf of "The Working Men's National Union for the Erection of People's Institutes," a cumbersome title soon changed to the even more unattractive "Working Men's

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95. A. Chandler, A Dream of Order: The Medieval Ideal in Nineteenth Century English Literature, (1971); S. Prickett, Romanticism and Religion: The Tradition of Coleridge and Wordsworth in the Victorian Church, (Cambridge, 1976); S. Mencher, "The Influence of Romanticism on Nineteenth Century British Social Work," Social Service Review, Vol.38(1), 1964.

96. The more positive view of Christian Socialism has been put by P. Backstrom, "The Practical Side of Christian Socialism in Victorian England," Victorian Studies, Vol.6(4), 1963; A. Denholm, "Lord Ripon and the Co-Operative Movement," Historical Studies, Vol.17, (No.66), 1976. A recent marxist account also pays tribute to their ideas and achievements, see, G. Lewis, "1848: The Christian Socialist Connection," in Slavery, Imperialism and Freedom, (1978), pp.150-53. This is in direct contrast to an earlier marxist view of the group which stressed its Coleridgean Tory ideology and reactionary character, see, J. Saville, "The Christian Socialists of 1848," in J. Saville (Ed), Democracy and the Labour Movement, (1954), especially, 154-59.

Social Institutes Union for the Promotion of Education and Temperance." The document called for the setting up of some 2,000 institutes at an estimated cost of £2,000 each. In case any potential subscriber thought these rather grandiose ambitions the two authors pointed to the good results being achieved by Cooper, Wightman, and Bayly with the clear implication that if a sustained campaign of institute building was undertaken then the benefits would multiply accordingly. The aims of these bodies were to include the promotion of self help, to act as a counter-attraction to the public-house, to enhance class harmony, and not least to gain adherents to the Christian religion:

Christian men of the neighbourhood will meet on equal grounds with their bretheren of various classes, and, without obtruding their theological or ecclesiastical peculiarities, can manifest in speech and demeanour the holy and loving spirit of the Divine Philanthropist.

It was also hinted that the scheme be linked with the good name and popularity of the late Prince Consort hence their name of "Albert Institutes." To demonstrate the bona-fides of the organisation a number of prominent reformers had given their names as Vice-Presidents, Brougham having accepted the position of President. Those giving their blessing to the idea included Serjeant Manning, Recorder of Oxford (and Solly's brother in law), Matthew Davenport Hill, Rev. Newman Hall, Dr. Guthrie and Canon Jenkin.<sup>(97)</sup> Nothing came of these Napoleonic proposals, but a year later after informal discussions among those attending the annual meeting of the National

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97. Solly Collection, Vol.XVI Section 13(b), Item 1. The Dial, 21 June 1862. Solly and Thomas had also co-operated on The Dial newspaper, Thomas owned it and Solly had a number of shares in it.

Association for the Promotion of Social Science, it was agreed to convene a meeting in June to discuss an organisation to further the cause of Working Men's clubs. At that meeting the Union was formed.

Besides Solly and Brougham those attending the meeting included most of those who had assented to be Vice-Presidents of the projected "Albert Institutes" scheme. Two working men were also present. John Bebbington, was a costermonger and secretary to the Duck Lane Club, a rather obsequious and deferential figure, and John Bainbridge, journeyman upholsterer, who had become a firm friend of Solly's during the latter's period as a minister in Yeovil.<sup>(98)</sup> Soon after Solly left the West Country Bainbridge moved to the capital. Unlike Bebbington, he was a more assured and independent personality. Adeline Cooper in her discussion of the name of the new society stressed that it should contain the word "club," while Solly wanted the term "institute" inserted to show that provision would be made for improvement as well as amusement.<sup>(99)</sup> Edward Clarke, then earning his living as a journalist while studying for the Bar, was chosen to act as

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98. Bebbington was eager to show that club members had gained a new concern for the rights and sanctity of property. He told the meeting that he and his fellow members had "learned to respect the laws and further, we have learned to look upon the higher classes of society as our friends," Weekly Record, 21 June 1862.

99. H. Solly, Eighty Years, (1893), Vol.1, pp.193-96.

Honorary Secretary. (100)

In the weeks after the meeting in Waterloo Place the provisional Council met several times to discuss and to plan the work to be undertaken. Fortunately for their deliberations the idea of the working man's club and its role in the temperance reformation was brought before a wider audience in August at the temperance congress organised by the National Temperance League. Working Men's Halls and their achievements were warmly praised by Mr. Beck in his paper "Temperance Hotels and Working Men's Halls," while a most detailed review of the work of the club, illustrated by examples drawn from her experiences at Duck Lane, was given by Miss Cooper. Her talk was well received, for a few weeks previously, at the meeting of ministers of religion held before the Congress, her work together with that of her associates Wightman and Bayly had been the subject of a special commendatory resolution:

That this Conference, recognising the great value of such labours as those of Mrs. Bayly, Mrs. Wightman, Miss Adeline Cooper, Mrs. Fison and other zealous friends of the working classes, and impressed with the importance of thus uniting

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100. Clarke was unique in being the only Conservative associated with the movement (later going on to become Solicitor-General) and in being the only surviving member of the original Council to attend the Jubilee Dinner in 1912. In his memoirs he exaggerated somewhat his role in the inaugural meeting. He hinted that a paper he had read at the N.A.P.S.S. meeting had prompted the formation of the CIU. However, the essay had nothing to do with clubs or with recreation, its theme being the problems of the middle and lower middle class student, see, E. Clarke, "The City of London College," Transactions, N.A.P.S.S. (1863), p.516. For Clarke and the CIU, see, E. Clarke, The Story of My Life, (1918), p.63; D. Walker-Smith and E. Clarke, The Life of Sir Edward Clarke, (1939), p.35.

all suitable agencies for effecting permanent Temperance Reform among the working population of this country, desires to recommend the establishment or support of institutions for promoting educational and rational recreation among those classes, as a powerful means, when judiciously used, not only for accomplishing its main object, but also for commending to them the Christian principles of those thus labouring to improve their social and moral condition. (101)

By early autumn 1862 the Union was ready to embark on its work. It fell to Solly to undertake the task of bringing the club ideal before the general public. It was a job that would require great energy, considerable diplomatic skills, and the ability to raise subscriptions and donations to finance the work. Tact was essential to success. If working men were to be drawn to these clubs then they would have to be treated as equals not as children upon whom a benign philanthropy was bestowing great riches. On the other hand while touring the country Solly would have to take great pains not to offend the dignity or interests of local gentry for they could be as sensitive to what they took to be a slight as any man in fustian or corduroy. That he had such skills Solly had amply shown when for a short period he acted as a missionary, in tandem with Howard Hinton, for Joseph Sturge's Complete Suffrage Union in late 1842. His work for the Union had been his first involvement with a popular cause, having been a delegate at the Birmingham conference which formed the Union, along with Wade, Lovett and Vincent. (102) He was now older, approaching

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101. National Temperance League, Temperance Congress, (1862), p.7; The Dial, 9 August 1862; Weekly Record, 31 May 1862.

102. R. Cowherd, The Politics of English Dissent, (1959), p.114; R. Conklin, Thomas Cooper The Chartist, (Manila, 1935), pp.106-09; T. Tholfsen, "The Chartist Crisis in Birmingham," International Review of Social History, Vol.3(3), 1958; F. Gillespie, Labour and Politics in England, 1850-1867, (Durham, North Carolina, 1927), pp.22-26.

his half century, and although aided by the rail network (for without national communications there could be no national club movement) the constant travel, even when assisted by Clarke, would be a strain.

His first duty was to distribute the CIU prospectus. Acting on advice from Hall, Clarke and Marriott, Solly used the good offices and good will of the temperance movement as a means of publicising the new organisation. They took thousands of the leaflets and in their newspapers and periodicals warmly greeted the Union as an able and vigorous ally in the crusade against strong drink.

In addition to explaining the objectives of the Union and its mode of operation, the prospectus also gave a list of all those who held office. Among the Vice-Presidents were a sprinkling of peers, including Earl Spencer and Lord Lyttelton, numerous churchmen and prominent laymen.<sup>(103)</sup> The list also gave firm evidence of the strong ties between the CIU and the NAPSS. The Union had emerged from informal discussions at the Social Science congress and its ideology accorded exactly with the Associations ameliorist and strongly empirical approach to social problems.<sup>(104)</sup> Social questions were normally phrased and presented in the form of statistical inquiries which by setting out the dimensions of a

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103. The list is reproduced in Appendix I, Table A, below.

104. On the ideology and character of the N.A.P.S.S. see, P. Abrams (Ed), The Origins of British Sociology, 1834-1914, (Chicago, 1968), pp.44-52; A. Gilbert, The Work of Lord Brougham for Education in England, (Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, 1922), pp.111-13.



particular problem indicated the appropriate remedy to be taken. (105)

Throughout its existence the Association's Social Economy section heard several papers on the theme of rational recreation, and Solly regularly spoke at meetings on the general question of social reforms and the working man. At the 1861 Congress, for example, Solly spoke on "Working Men's Societies for Mental and Moral Improvement," while in 1868 and 1874 papers from Hardwicke and Fuller respectively dwelt on the question of provision for popular amusements. (106)

Apart from Brougham, who had been the first President and held that office again from 1860-65, six of the Vice-Presidents were Council members of the Social Science Association, including Guthrie, Hill, and the indefatigable Secretary of the Association, George Hastings, all men who seemed to confirm Peacock's sour view of that body as being composed of men "dismally far gone in the affectation of earnestness." (107)

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105. R. Pemble, "The National Association for the Promotion of Social Science: Some Sociological Aspects," (M.A. Thesis, University of Nottingham, 1968), pp.23-24; 62-64; L. Ritt, "The Victorian Conscience in Action; The National Association for the Promotion of Social Science, 1857-1886," (Ph.D. Thesis, Columbia, 1959).
106. For Solly, Transactions, (1862); Hardwicke, "In what form and to what extent is it desirable that the Public should provide means for the Recreation of the Working Classes," Ibid, (1868), pp.471-77; Fuller, "On Our Paramount Duty to Provide Wholesome and Pure Recreation and Amusement for the People," Ibid, (1874), p.692.
107. B. Rodgers, "The Social Science Association, 1857-1886," Manchester School of Economic and Social Studies, Vol.20(3), 1952. Peacock's view comes from Gryll Grange, (1861), p.63. A further link between the CIU and the NAPSS was indicated by the fact that one year after its foundation the Union joined that small group of popular organisations including the Early Closing Association and the Yorkshire Union to affiliate to the Association. See, E. Yeo, "Social Science and Social Change: A Social History of Some Aspects of Social Science and Social Investigation, in Britain, 1830-1890," (D.Phil, Sussex, 1972), pp.230-231.

Members of Council similarly offered a guide to the sources of support for the club idea. Female members of Council, besides Bayly and Cooper, included Mrs. Fison, a prominent sanitary and temperance reformer, Miss Anna Swanwick, well-known translator of German romantic poetry, and Miss Elizabeth Twining, founder of the Workhouse Visiting Society.<sup>(108)</sup> All were active in the gospel temperance movement founding between them a wide range of successful counter-attractions.<sup>(109)</sup> From the Working Men's College came Richard Lichfield, then editor of the Working Men's College Magazine, Godfrey Lushington, and Thomas Shorter, College secretary.<sup>(110)</sup> Provincial support came from the twenty-seven Corresponding Members whose numbers included Barnett Blake, agent for the Yorkshire Union of Mechanics' Institutes, Erskine Clarke, Dr. Elliott of Carlisle, and John Jones, Secretary of the South Staffordshire Adult Education Society.

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108. See, "Charitable Works of Women," Chambers' Journal, (1875), pp.439-41. Swanwick was also very active in the campaign for a "free Sunday," promoted the cause of higher education for women, and helped to found the People's Concert Society. Like many others in the club movement she came from an old established Unitarian family, see, M. Bruce, Anna Swanwick: A Memoir and Recollections, (1903), pp.50-52. Twining opened a club in 1878 as part of her mission in Great Ormond Street, see, L. Twining, A Few Words about Working Men's Clubs and Temperance Societies, (1879), and Recollections of Life and Work, (1893), pp.22-25; K. McCrone, "Feminism and Philanthropy in Victorian England: The Case of Louisa Twining," Canadian Historical Association, Historical Papers, 1976, (Montreal,1977).

109. Mrs. W. Fison, "The Women of Great Britain: Their Work in Temperance Reform," Congrès Internationale de Bienfaisance, (1863), pp.111-17; Rebekah Hind-Smith, "Pioneer Work of Temperance Women," in J. Rae (Ed), Proceedings of the World Temperance Congress, (1901), pp.231-32.

110. J.F.C. Harrison, History of the Working Men's College, 1854-1954, (1954).

Offices for the Union had been secured at 150, Strand. To finance its work a total of £273.6s. had been realised from donations, £100 of which came from William Neill. He thought the Union very worthy of such largesse. "In no way can a little money do so much good in helping working men to carry home their ways to their families, and that each pound contributed will save hundreds to the poor."<sup>(111)</sup>

Although there was almost no mention of the inauguration of the Union in the national press, after all the creation of yet another benevolent body hardly qualified as news, its existence was warmly applauded by the religious and temperance press. One writer thought that membership in a Union club would have the effect of elevating "to the dignity of honest citizens and good Christians many who now take rank among the pariahs and outcasts of England."<sup>(112)</sup>

The Union was thought to be the means whereby masters and men could be brought into closer and more harmonious relations.<sup>(113)</sup>

It was a "timely organisation" which would quickly prove itself to be "the best possible auxiliary of temperance, sanitary and religious reformers."<sup>(114)</sup> One editorial hailed the CIU as a body calculated:

to promote with the Divine blessing, the well-being of the working classes more efficiently and permanently than any other secular agency since the Preston reformers started the first teetotal society. <sup>(115)</sup>

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111. Inquirer, 29 November 1862.

112. The Dial, 21 June 1862.

113. Friendly Societies Journal, New Series, Vol.3(5), December 1864.

114. Nonconformist, 25 February 1863; Inquirer, 20 December 1862; The Builder, 27 December 1862.

115. Domestic Messenger, 5(3), March 1863.

Another commended the Union to the generosity of its readership as a "fellow labourer in protecting the sons of honest industry from the snares of the publican. They will help our movement, and our movement will help them."<sup>(116)</sup> Well-supervised, drink-free working men's clubs were seen as a major advance over the traditional artisans' club which had only instructed its members to attain "the minimum of providence through the maximum of beer."<sup>(117)</sup> Establishing clubs was a sure way to decrease drunkenness.<sup>(118)</sup> No other counter-attractionist agency, then or later, was visited with such approbation.

For its part the Union, although careful to stress its autonomy, was happy to draw on its links with the organised temperance movement. Clubs were promoted as the major alternative to the public-house, where the labouring man could find good fellowship and where friendly societies could find appropriately sober surroundings in which to transact their business affairs.<sup>(119)</sup> The first Council included many names distinguished in the total abstinence cause, a feature reinforced when Joseph Livesey consented to join the Council.<sup>(120)</sup>

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116. Weekly Record, 23 August 1862.

117. The Reader, 12 August 1865; "Public-House Clubs," Weekly Record, 14 November 1863.

118. W. Gilbert, "The Gin-Palace and the Working Man's Club," Good Words, 1872; Social Science Review, Vol.2(49), 16 May 1863.

119. CIU, "The Business Uses of Working Men's Clubs," Occasional Papers, No.3 (August 1863), and No.4 (November 1863); Social Science Review, Vol.1, 21 June 1862.

120. Livesey's attempt to establish a teetotal club had very limited success. See, A. Gallagher, "The Social Control of Working Class Leisure in Preston," (M.A. Thesis, Univ. Lancaster, 1975), pp.39-40.

Too much praise was thought not to be good for the Union so one friend warned it of the dangers of trying to proceed faster than working men would accept:

If elaborate rules are to be framed, and obtrusive moral precepts are to be glazed; if formality and exaggerated decorum are to be the orders of the day; if the artisan is not to be allowed to do anything but read tracts, play chess and drink ginger beer - the clubs will but swell the long catalogue of benevolent failures. (121)

Among those who took a keen interest in the progress of the club movement was Frederick Harrison. Unlike Solly the Comtean saw the club not as a means of reconciling classes but as a means of "crystallizing the innate proletarian virtues of solidarity and mutuality." (122) Harrison's enthusiasm was in marked contrast to the cool response of J. S. Mill to the new movement. He had been sent a copy of the prospectus by Solly who no doubt hoped that the philosopher would reply with a donation. However, his response was somewhat unexpected:-

I have no doubt that insofar as these clubs take the place of the public-house, they will be very useful, but I confess to some uncertainty whether they are a movement sufficiently in advance to meet the demands of the present time. I am doubtful whether an organised movement and subscriptions for the purpose of making men of the working classes more comfortable away from the women and children is the thing wanted now, so much as an effort on a large scale to improve their dwellings, and bring co-operative arrangements for comfort and mental improvement to all of them without distinction of sex or age. I do not say this to discourage you, nor with any fear of its doing so, but to account for my not taking so warm an interest in the scheme as you seem to expect that I should do. I think your plan likely to do good, but there are others likely to be still more useful. (123)

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121. Lecturers' Gazette, May 1863.

122. C. Kent, Brains and Numbers, p.83.

123. J.S. Mill, "The Later Letters, 1849-1872," Letter No.605, in F. Minoka and D. Lindley (Eds), The Collected Works of J.S.Mill, Vol.XV, (Toronto, 1972).

Another man far from happy with the plaudits being given to the Union, especially the popular acclaim being visited upon Solly as the "father of the movement," was Matthew Henry Feilde. In a letter to the Social Science Review in October 1864 he made his grievance publicly known. He wished it to be generally understood that "whatever credit attaches to the ORIGINATOR of working men's clubs I claim for myself. The honour ... of FIRST suggesting Clubs for Working Men is clearly mine."<sup>(124)</sup> In support of this challenge to Solly's title Feilde listed two publications where the justice of his case would be seen. The second of the papers was written in 1864. In it Feilde signed himself the "Originator of Working Men's Clubs." The subject matter of the tract is shown by its title - On the Adoption of Public Libraries and News Rooms Act (1855) for the City of London. Little was said about working men's clubs the bulk of the discussion being taken up with presenting a case for the broader adoption of the free public libraries legislation. A few years earlier, while resident at Nunhead in south-east London, Feilde published another pamphlet, On the Advantages of Free Public News Room and Lending Libraries, (1858), addressed to the ratepayers of Camberwell. He presented the familiar argument that if the working class was to be improved then reformers must cease "dreary sermonizing" and take up the promotion of pure and innocent recreations. To do this he suggested working men's clubs by which he seemed to mean a combination of reading and recreation room. Such rooms would help soften tensions between classes besides instilling in the working class a sound

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124. Social Science Review, New Series, Vol.2(10), October 1864.

political knowledge. The literary style of the author showed him to be a prickly character, quick to take offence and a man who already felt his claim to some wider recognition to have been put aside. He alleged that he was the moving force behind the Crystal Palace Company's Reading and News Room, opened in 1852, but was shabbily ignored by the directors. As claimant to the title "originator of working men's clubs" Feilde's credentials were rather slight. Other men (and women) had prior and better claims - Solly, Cooper, Clarke, Bastard and Marriott to note only the most obvious. His tract, however, deserves wider notice, as indeed does his energetic work on behalf of the cause of free public libraries.<sup>(125)</sup> If his ideas regarding working men's clubs have any claim to originality they lie in his throw-away suggestion in his letter that clubs should be rate-supported. Clubs would therefore be free of dependence upon "fluctuating and capricious" financing which often threatened their survival.<sup>(126)</sup>

It was not the job of the Union to establish clubs. Formally its primary function was to promote the club idea by pamphlets and letters to the press, through organising public meetings, offering practical assistance to men and women trying, in a particular district, to get a club started, and to act as an intelligence gathering agency for the club movement. Clubs would affiliate

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125. In 1861 he had given a paper to the Social Economy Section of the N.A.P.S.S. on the Public Library Act, see, Transactions, (1862), p.516. For his work on behalf of the cause of free libraries see, G. Jones, "Political and Social Factors in the Advocacy of Free Libraries in the United Kingdom, 1801-1922," (Ph.D. Thesis, University of Strathclyde, 1971), Vol.1, Chapter 4.

126. Social Science Review, Vol.2(10), October 1864.

to the Union which brought with it several advantages such as advice, the ability to hire and borrow equipment and books purchased by the Union for the clubs, and the right to attend or participate in any activities organised by the Union. The small fee charged for affiliation went to assist the Union's finances. The idea of a centralised body established specifically to give aid and direction to a particular cause was not novel by 1862. There were at least three antecedents to the Union's form of organisation. The first was the Yorkshire Union of Mechanics' Institutes which promoted good relations and co-operative activities among institutes and mutual improvement societies mainly in the West Riding. From the Yorkshire Union the CIU was to borrow the idea of the "Associate Card" scheme.<sup>(127)</sup> The second was the Workmen's Educational Union founded in 1852. The function of this Union was to organise free lectures on a variety of subjects in halls and buildings used by working men. Under the direction of its capable secretary, Benjamin Scott, it discharged this task most effectively. In its first year it promoted over 500 lectures, and by 1855 the figure had risen to over 3,000.<sup>(128)</sup> Finally there was the example of the Christian Socialist "Society for Promoting Working Men's Associations" established in June 1850 and which brought men such as Ludlow, Neale and Maurice into closer relationship with and understanding of the

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127. J. Popple, "The Yorkshire Union of Mechanics' Institutes," (M.A. Thesis, Univ. Sheffield, 1960).

128. Workmen's Educational Union, Annual Report, No.3, (1855); H. Roberts, British Association for the Advancement of Science, (1852), p.173; Idem, "On the Circulation of Pure and Instructive Literature," Congrès Internationale de Bienfaisance, (1863), p.99



metropolitan working man. (129)

There are also some general points to note concerning support for the Union. In particular the presence of a large number of Unitarians and Broad Church Anglicans within the organisation greatly influenced the work and ideology of the movement. Unitarians, the rationalist wing of dissent, had long been distinguished for their involvement with the cause of working class advancement. (130) They had been prominent for example, in the promotion of co-operatives and in the foundation of a number of mechanics' institutes their work deriving from the belief that "if men are to be freed from reliance on external authority they must be educated to be independent, and if men are to be responsible citizens they must be given knowledge." (131) In the early 1830's inspired by the work of Joseph Tucker in Boston, English unitarians founded domestic missions which took the form of social missions to the poor, making provision not only for spiritual needs but for intellectual and social improvement as well. The work began in East London in 1833 but it was in the provincial cities such as Liverpool and Leicester that the most enduring and successful of these innovations were

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129. C. Raven, Christian Socialism, (1920), Chapter VIII; T. Christensen, The Origin and History of Christian Socialism, (Aarhus, 1962), pp.142-51; P. Backstrom, Christian Socialism and Co-Operation in Victorian England, (1974), pp.35-43
130. On the theology of Unitarianism see, F. Mineka, The Dissidence of Dissent: The Monthly Repository, 1806-1838, (Chapel Hill, 1944), Chapter 1, passim; O. Griffiths, Religion and Learning, (Cambridge, 1935), Chapter XI; R. Webb, Harriet Martineau, (1960), pp.65-72; 283-85. I. Sellars, "The Unitarians and Social Change," Part IV, Transactions, Unitarian Historical Society, Vol.61, July 1963.
131. R. Holt, The Unitarian Contribution to Social Progress in England, (1952), p.20. On Unitarian work for good causes, see, M. Tylcote, op.cit., pp.50-51.

to be found.<sup>(132)</sup> Unitarians prominent in the club movement, included, Solly, Swanwick, Darnton Lupton, a leading radical and wool merchant of Leeds well known in the city for the vigour of his campaign against church rates, Hodgson Pratt, and Stephen Taylor, first President of the Southwark Club, later L.C.C. councillor and President of the Union after the retirement of Pratt.<sup>(133)</sup> As a number of authors have recently argued, there were very strong affinities between the theology, social philosophy, and political outlook of the Unitarians and that section of Anglican opinion designated Broad Church.<sup>(134)</sup> These mutual sympathies and inter-

132. H. Rack, "Domestic Visitation," Journal of Ecclesiastical History, 24(4), 1973, pp.370-73; E. Wilbur, A History of Unitarianism in Transylvania, England, and America, (Cambridge, Mass., 1952); R. Webb, "J.H. Thom: Intellect and Conscience in Liverpool," in P. Phillips (Ed), The View from the Pulpit: The Victorian Minister and Society, (Toronto, 1978), J. Simmons, "A Victorian Social Worker: Joseph Dare and the Leicester Domestic Mission," Transactions, Leicester Archaeological and Historical Society, Vol.46, (1971); R. Parry, A Century of Liberal Religion and Philanthropy, (Manchester, 1933). In 1879 Solly's son, the Rev. Henry Shaen Solly was appointed minister to the Liverpool Domestic Mission, see, A. Holt, A Ministry to the Poor: Being the History of the Liverpool Domestic Mission Society, 1856-1936, (Liverpool, 1936), Chapter VI.
133. For Lupton, who was responsible for the creation of the Leeds Working Men's Institute, see, Evidence to S.C. Sale of Liquors on Sunday Bill, P.P. 1867-68 XIV, Q 3196-98; and D. Fraser, Urban Politics in Victorian England, (Leicester, 1976); for Pratt and Taylor, see, H. McLachlan, The Unitarian Movement in the Religious Life of England, (1934), pp.298-99; Labour Annual, (1902). Unitarians were also instrumental in establishing clubs and institutes for men and youths in the United States, see, "Peoples' Clubs, Unions, and Fraternities," Old and New, Vol.2, December 1870 and "Peoples' Clubs of New England," Ibid, Vol.5, March 1872.
134. D. Wigmore-Beddoes, Yesterday's Radicals, (Cambridge, 1971); S. Prickett, op.cit., pp.165-78.

relationships help to explain the prominence of a number of the leading figures of the Broad Church movement in the Union. Maurice, as has already been noted, was a profound influence upon Solly and to a lesser degree upon Pratt, who also received much encouragement from Neale. Other Broad Church/Christian Socialist figures active included Hughes, Rev. Lyttelton, Harry Jones, the Rev. A.P. Stanley, Dean of Westminster and President of the Union after Lyttelton.<sup>(135)</sup> Evangelicals, usually in the van of every reforming body were not much in evidence in the club movement. Shaftesbury did become a Vice-President of the Union and chaired a number of CIU sponsored meetings. However, their general social philosophy was at variance with the stress upon amusement found in the club movement. Many Evangelicals, in common with sections of nonconformist opinion, were troubled by the club movement's implicit devaluation of the home as the centre of social life after work. Their estrangement from the club movement grew sharper when within a few years of its foundation it reversed its policy on the drink issue and disengaged itself from any specific religious purpose. The growing secular tendency of the movement thus dissuaded some sections of religious opinion from giving much support after 1866. Having discussed the origins and establishment of the Union and having surveyed some of its sources of support, the development of the movement after 1862 is now considered.

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135. D. Wagner, The Church of England and Social Reform since 1854, (New York, 1930), pp.31-55; P. Allen, "Christian Socialism and the Broad Church Movement," Dalhousie Review, Vol.49(1), 1969. Although he did not emphasise it in his autobiography, Solly was also strongly impressed by Thomas Hughes. During his editorship of the Beehive, Solly wrote a regular series of imaginary dialogues between a working man and a "Mr. H," regarding the benefits of the clubs. "Mr. H." was intended to be Hughes.

Upon taking up his post in August Solly set about those duties required of the Organising Secretary. These were of two kinds. First, publicity and information: bringing the club movement to the attention of the public. Second, providing aid and assistance to clubs in the process of formation.

To make people aware of the work of the Union a number of means were used. Solly attended meetings held to celebrate the formation of a club and at all of them he addressed the audience on the contributions which clubs could make to social and moral progress. These speeches were usually reported, if not by the national press, then certainly by the local paper which helped to widen the audience for information on the club movement. Publications formed another important part of this job. The Union adopted two methods. Firstly, beginning in 1863 a series of Occasional Papers were published. These reviewed the advance of the movement offering advice on practical matters such as what to do to keep the club together in the summer months and what drinks a club could provide. A magazine was also started, the Working Men's Club and Institute Magazine, published monthly beginning in early 1865. It ceased publication, however, some eighteen months later because of financial difficulties.<sup>(136)</sup>

The Movement benefited from Solly's wholehearted commitment to the campaign. He was responsible for answering the many inquiries at Union offices concerning the founding and government of clubs, for writing to the press to bring the movement to wider notice as well as to correct any misconceptions regarding the movement which were occasionally reported. On occasions his tone when speaking of

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136. CIU, Annual Report, No.3, (1865); Guardian, 19 April 1865; Mitchell's Press Guide, 1865 and 1867.

the benefits of working men's clubs became millennial. Addressing the Manchester meeting of the N.A.P.S.S. he sketched out a programme for the clubs in order to fit working men for the part they would be called upon to play in national life. It was no longer possible, he alleged, to look to the upper classes for national salvation, "their energies were chiefly expended in field sports and the turf, nor to the middle class, who were guilty of reckless speculation, inordinate greed and self-indulgence." Regeneration was to come from the working men's club movement, a cause destined to "revolutionize the country in the best of all possible ways."<sup>(137)</sup>

Much of Solly's time was taken up with the promotional meetings. These were by far the most common and easily organised methods of club formation. Broadly they were of two types. One, which might be called the "enrollment meeting," was called usually by a coterie of local gentry who had set a club on foot and wished working men to come forward to put their names down as members. The other, the "promotional," involved local elites perhaps in combination with some leading working men, holding a public meeting to consider the establishment of a club for the district. In this way support for the institution was tested prior to its opening thereby avoiding later disappointment if working men proved reluctant to sign up. Moreover, it allowed working men some limited participation in the club from its very inception rather than their being brought in after the major decisions had been taken. Whatever the form of meeting Solly was usually on the stage to say a

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137. H. Solly, "Working Men's Clubs, in Their Relation to the Upper Classes and to National Progress," Transactions, N.A.P.S.S., (1867), p.791.

few words about the movement and to show what advantages the new club could derive from affiliating to the Union.

A number of eminent men and women graced the platform on these occasions. George Sala, for example, took the chair at a meeting at the Albert Institution, the purpose of which was to press for the setting up of a club in the Blackfriars' district. A well-conducted club, he told the audience, would prove an "important step on the road to popular regeneration."<sup>(138)</sup>

Prominent local dignitaries and clergymen gathered at the Chelsea vestry in December 1863 to talk about the formation of a club for Chelsea.<sup>(139)</sup>

At the promotional meeting for the West Bromwich Club Lord Calthorpe presided, while Lord Ebrury took the chair at a meeting on behalf of a club for Kentish Town.<sup>(140)</sup> The ceremony to inaugurate the Chatham Working Men's Club was presided over by the Bishop of Rochester aided by a "number of the elite and principal inhabitants of the town."<sup>(141)</sup>

Local gentry did not confine their support for the club cause to mere verbal enthusiasm. Many gave material support to these new bodies. Premises for the club at Forest Hill, south-east London, were given free by a local benefactor. Though control was to be vested solely in the hands of the members, they were assured of "liberal promises of help" from the "principal gentry and ministers of the neighbourhood."<sup>(142)</sup> Farringdon Club,

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138. Social Science Review, 2(70), 10 October 1863.

139. Ibid., 2(79), 12 December 1863.

140. Nonconformist, 1 July 1863.

141. Lecturers' Gazette, August 1880.

142. Social Science Review, 2(43), 4 April 1863.

officially opened in January 1863, met in a rented house "fitted up by the contributions from the wealthy inhabitants of the neighbourhood."<sup>(143)</sup> Local gentlemen purchased the lease of a house, for

£250, for use by members of the Wandsworth Working Men's Club.

The club opened in February 1863. Newcastle's first club, opened in James Street in 1863, was the fruit of the labours of a group of local activists led by Sir William Armstrong and Joseph Cowen.<sup>(144)</sup>

At many of these meetings working men were brought on to the platform where they discharged a valuable, if subordinate, role in the proceedings. They spoke up for the benefits of club membership conscious of the need to convince the more suspicious or hesitant of their brothers in the audience of the independence of these institutions.<sup>(145)</sup> It was the respectable artizan who was called

upon to second the numerous resolutions passed at these assemblies.

An example of the elaborate social etiquette at work in these meetings is provided by the gathering to inaugurate the club for the district around St. Martins-in-the-Fields. Alderman Sir Frederick Guy, as resident patrician, took the chair having first informed the audience that to show his conviction as to the worth of these clubs he was guaranteeing the rent for the first year. Solly spoke next concluding his remarks with a formal motion to establish a club. A working man, Mr. Brady, secretary of the Pimlico Club, seconded, while two other working men, Taylor and Pelham, also urged the meeting to give their support. The latter

143. Ibid, 2(34), 31 January 1863.

144. D. Bean, Tyneside, (1971), pp.195-96.

145. Friendly Societies Journal, 5(8), May 1865.

was especially attended to for he was a bootmaker who lived in the model dwellings close by where the club was to open and had been a vocal campaigner for its creation. The motion was passed nem. con. The proceedings closed with the election of a provisional committee which included twelve working men from the district.<sup>(146)</sup> Many formal opening ceremonies were also accompanied by a soiree, such as that held at the Highgate Working Men's in January 1872. Besides the ordinary members over 200 gentlemen attended.<sup>(147)</sup>

There were also examples of clubs where working men took the initiative for a club independent of outside help. A group of artisans resident in Soho approached the CIU for advice on the setting up of a club. Unusually the CIU gave not only advice but also agreed to underwrite the rent of the premises for the first year. Local firms were canvassed for help with materials to decorate the rooms, while those who had already enrolled were "busily engaged in their leisure time in repairing, cleaning, white-washing, and painting, and fitting up the premises."<sup>(148)</sup> In late April the club opened its doors. Over 160 members joined in the first week, eager no doubt, to enjoy the advantages of a smoking room, reading room, games room, library, and, unusually for a central London club, a skittle ground.<sup>(149)</sup> Artizans in Kentish Town were no less enthusiastic than their Soho counterparts.

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146. Social Science Review, 2(59), 25 July 1863.

147. Times, 23 January 1872.

148. Social Science Review, 2(43), 11 April 1863.

149. Ibid, 2(47), 2 May 1863.



Many gave up their free time in summer to prepare a house which they had leased for use as a club. One facility which the club was to offer its members was the provision of hot-meals early in the morning.<sup>(150)</sup>

The pattern of club formation was the same outside the capital. Over 40 people, for example, attended a meeting in November 1863 to consider the formation of two clubs in Hastings. Lucas Shadwell, a local landowner who had already formed similar clubs for workers on his estates at Winchelsea and Gnestling, offered to make available rooms in a hall in Castle Street for use by one of the clubs. He would also waive the rent for one year. The offer was accepted.<sup>(151)</sup> A large public meeting was held at the Town Hall, Derby, in November 1863, to listen to Solly and Erskine Clarke propose the transformation of the Working Men's Association, founded by Clarke, into a club.<sup>(152)</sup>

People attending such meetings, or who had read some of the growing literature on the Union would have seen that the movement had four main objectives, and in every promotional meeting these aims were clearly set before the audience in order that all present might see the benefits which would accrue from the foundation of clubs for working men. The objectives were:-

- (1) To provide an aid to temperance for the working man.

Clubs could assist the inculcation of sober habits

firstly by providing a refuge for the reclaimed

drunkard. Solly thought this to be one of the primary

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150. Ibid, 2(58), 18 July 1863.

151. Ibid, 2(77), 21 November and 2(78), 28 November 1863.

152. Bee-Hive, 21 November 1863.

tasks of the club. Just because a man had signed the pledge did not make him any the less an individual who needed companionship and amusement, needs formerly met by spending the evening at the local pub. One reason for violating the pledge was thought to be the "unnatural demands" the act imposed upon the signatory for it wrenched him from his former haunts and companions while making no provision for free time. He was thus left isolated and excluded. If the club could supply such a man with a place to relax and refresh himself free from the temptations ever present in the bar room then much good would be achieved. Secondly, for those of moderate habits or those who had not signed the pledge the club would provide a resort where they could pass their free-time without any of the compulsions or inducements to purchase strong liquors and would come to learn that pleasure and drinking were not synonymous. Sobriety would be increased in direct relation to the growth in the number of working men's clubs.

- (2) To offer a solution to the leisure problem. This issue has already been discussed. Clubs could develop a variety of rational amusements to amuse and delight their membership. The content of any club's recreation programme was flexible, each club being left to devise its own according to the wishes and needs of the members. Clubs would bring:

all the influences of Art, Literature, Poetry, Fiction, the blessed power of Music, and the healthy happy action of Rational Recreation, to aid in renewing and unfolding, in purifying and elevating the weary, often stunted, perhaps degraded, nature of the Sons of Toil, when the day's work is over. (153)

- (3) To work for the reconciliation of classes. All classes could participate in the formation of clubs. Local gentlemen, by giving assistance and advice, would disabuse the working man of any notions that the interests of the classes were opposed. By entrusting or sharing the government of these institutions with the artizan the clergyman or philanthropist would show that they had faith in the capacity of the working man to exercise rational judgement. Gentlemen could enroll as Honorary Members and their presence might do much to help the fledgling club. They might offer to start classes, for example, or organise an excursion for the members and their families. The theme of class harmony was mentioned in most club literature in these early years. The CIU was thought to promote "that mutual sympathy and friendly intercourse as well as that interchange of benefits between the different classes and sections of society, which is not more stringently required Christianity than is needed for the preservation of social order and national progress." (154)

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153. Domestic Messenger, 5(3), March 1863.

154. The Reader, 24 June 1865.

- (4) To assist the material advancement and prosperity of the working man and to spread the idea of association. Clubs could offer rooms to local friendly societies in which to hold their meetings. Penny banks, coal clubs, labour loan societies and other aids to thrift could be started up amongst the membership. Clubs would also help to foster the spirit of association among the working class, an ideology already seen in friendly societies and co-operative societies. This spirit, Thomas Hughes noted, "from a class point of view ... may look menacing, from a national point of view it can only be regarded as the most hopeful sign of our strange time." (155)

The attainment of all four objectives would ensure both the spiritual and material uplift of the club movement's membership.

Given the stress upon thrift and class collaboration it is not surprising to find many employers in the forefront of those persons anxious to give help to the movement. This was the great era of the model employer, the captain of industry who did not limit his concern for his labour force solely to extracting from them maximum output for minimum wages. Though the tradition of the paternalist employer dated back to the late eighteenth century exemplified by entrepreneurs such as Wedgewood, Strutt and Arkwright it was in the mid-nineteenth century that the importance of this kind of undertaking was re-discovered. Axon, commenting on the work of a new generation of model employers, presented them as an example

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155. Social Notes, 1(20), 20 July 1878.

for others to emulate. "At last a leaven of the employer class are anxious to fulfill the duties of their station, to appreciate the opportunities which their position gives them to add to the happiness, even virtue, of their fellowmen," he remarked. (156)

Provision for the free-time of their labour force was urged upon the socially concerned captain of industry. A description of working class life in Dudley concluded that far too many working men:

are accustomed to spending their leisure hours at the marble or skittles alley, pigeon flying, dog or cock fighting. We have no doubt that this number would be considerably reduced if employers of labour ... were to provide suitable places for recreation and instruction. (157)

In the 1850's and early 60's mill owners in Lancashire and small masters in London founded reading rooms for their workers where for a small charge, usually 1d, an operative could read a wide variety of newspapers and improving periodicals. (158) Some employers built Working Men's Halls where facilities for improvement and entertainment were offered, such as that provided by Mr. Twelvetrees for the 500 employees at his factory at Bromley-by-Bow. (159)

Victorian prosperity was marked by numerous schemes, of varying degrees of inventiveness, to resolve that great question of the day-to-day relations of Capital and Labour. Those employers who

156. W. Axon, "Masters and Men," British Almanack and Companion, 1871, p.48.

157. "Life in the Colliery Districts," Eclectic Review, New Series, Vol3, July 1862, pp.91-92.

158. K. Allen, Thesis, op.cit., pp.152-55; "Penny Reading Rooms in London," Social Science Almanack, (1860); See also, A. Helps, The Claims of Labour, (1844), pp.140-51.

159. The Dial, 8 November 1861.

took up the cause of arbitration, who wrote upon the need to promote conciliation as the basis for industrial life, who offered money for prize essays on the best means of promoting the common interests of master and men, these were the kind of men who often added a club to the list of workplace amenities and often took a seat on platforms to promote the club cause both locally and nationally.<sup>(160)</sup> Rupert Kettle, a judge at Wolverhampton County Court and able speaker for the value of arbitration (having acted as an arbitrator in the local carpenters' dispute in 1864) was also President of Wolverhampton Working Men's Club. He was asked by the membership to use his good offices to secure the formation of arbitration courts in other towns.<sup>(161)</sup> J. Corbett, owner of a saltworks near Bromsgrove founded a club for employees marking the opening ceremony with a special tea for the members and their families.<sup>(162)</sup> A few years before Corbett's club, Pratt had been very impressed by the favourable response to his remarks on the need to create clubs by employers during a propaganda tour of the Midlands area.<sup>(163)</sup> Other employers who built clubs included Messrs. Smith and Payne, candlemakers of Millwall and Frederick

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160. For a full discussion of the model employers see, A. Yarmie, "Benevolence and Labour Management in the Mid-Victorian British Textile Industry," Europa, Vol.2(2), 1979, pp.45-46; 57-58; D. Roberts, Paternalism in Early Victorian England, (1979), Chapter 7, passim; H. Perkin, in A. Birch, Small Town Politics: A Study of Glossop, (1959).

161. V. Allen, "The Origins of Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration," in The Sociology of Industrial Relations, (1971), pp.73-74.

162. CIU, Annual Report, No.16 (1878), pp.23-24.

163. Inquirer, 13 November 1869.

Braby, a London metal manufacturer who had opened an institute for employees in the Euston Road in late 1863. Later he built a club and library for workers in his Deptford plant in the early 70's.<sup>(164)</sup> Best known of the model clubs were those of Salt and Peckover. Titus Salt added a club to the extensive range of amenities of Saltaire in the early 70's. The club cost over £25,000 and by 1875 was reported to have a membership of some 600.<sup>(165)</sup> Peckover was the head of a family of quakers in Wisbech Cambridgeshire, famed locally for their charity and good work. In 1864 he established a very large and well-appointed working men's club in the town which was held up as an important example of the kind of labours which members of the wealthier classes could render the club movement.<sup>(166)</sup> Clubs of this type tended to be spacious and well-fitted, far more comfortable, perhaps, than many of their more independent counterparts. In their mode of government, on the other hand, they were less innovative. Most founders allowed only a small measure of self-government to the institutions. Committees could make decisions only in terms of the limits set by the patron. This meant that if the benefactor was of strongly teetotal persuasion the club would exclude beer and members could not vote to admit it at the club. There were often other, more niggling, constraints. Billiards or bagatelle tables might be excluded for

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164. Labour News, 18 April 1874; Inquirer, 12 December 1863; CIJ, 27 March 1885. See also the Nelson Club, Warwick a model institute erected at the expense of Messrs. Nelson, Dale & Co. Pioneer, 26 January 1884.

165. A. Holroyd, Titus Salt, (Saltaire, 1871), pp.18-21; R. Balgarnie, Sir Titus Salt: His Life and Lessons, (1877), p.228; Capital and Labour, 3 February 1875.

166. W. Bray, Prize Essay on the Rise and Progress of Wisbech Club and Institute, (Wisbech, 1885); F. Gardiner, The Fiftieth Birthday of a Model Institute, (Wisbech, 1914).

fear that their admission would stimulate gambling and disorder on the premises. (167) Not all employers found their labour force keen to take advantage of their munificence. A Liberal factory owner in Blackburn, Eli Heyworth, discovered that few of his employees could be induced to join the temperance working mens' clubs he set up in the 70's and 80's. (168) Few of these clubs, however, could have been as restricted in their appeal as that opened in Bristol in 1880 by John Lysaght. At the formal opening ceremony most of the Conservative councillors were in attendance, while in the club:

there were pictures of the Queen, members of the Royal Family and Conservative Statesmen round the walls; the watchword was "loyalty;" and members had to promise "To fear God, to honour the King [sic] and be stern in defending the Liberties of the People." (169)

After the late 70's employer instituted clubs were of diminishing significance to the club movement although in some towns and villages such clubs retained a local importance. For example the Nelson Club in Warwick was indebted to the largesse of a local employer for the supply of newspapers and periodicals while Lady Bell noted that there were several clubs in Middlesborough operated by firms for their employees. (170)

If the objectives set before the club movement satisfied local paternalists they did not altogether please many clergymen

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167. Gardiner, op.cit., p.32.

168. G. Trodd, "Political Change and the Working Class in Blackburn and Burnley, 1880-1914," (Ph.D. Thesis, Univ. Lancaster, 1978), p.250.

169. H. Mallor, "The Organised Provision for Cultural Activities in Urban Centres, and Their Impact upon the Community, 1870-1910," (Ph.D. Thesis, Univ. of Bristol, 1968), Vol.1, p.371.

170. Pioneer, 26 January 1884; Lady Bell, At the Works: A Study of a Manufacturing Town, (1907), p.127



who would have been happier if the movement had also adopted more specifically religious aims. In Particular club literature might have suggested that clubs could be the means whereby working men, influenced by clerical benevolence and kindness, could be brought back into the fold of the church. This ambition was clearly stated by Solly and Thomas' "Albert Institutes" project but had vanished by the time the first Union prospectus was published.

In a number of the clubs established prior to the CIU the religious function was clearly prominent. One measure of the success of these bodies was the number drawn into regular attendance at the bible class or men's meeting.<sup>(171)</sup> Chalmers told Solly that when he arrived in the parish in 1857 there were parts of it he could not enter. He was insulted and no poor came to his church. A year after opening his club a great transformation took place. He was now "sure of a welcome wherever he went ... and the galleries of his church were now crowded."<sup>(172)</sup> Charles Lowder, an Anglo-Catholic priest incumbent of St. Peter's, London Docks, founded a club and institute as part of his parish work beginning with 180 members in 1860. A year later 400 members were on the books.<sup>(173)</sup> The Queen Street Club, Huddersfield was formed as a result of action by local clergymen, in 1861 and was soon flourishing.<sup>(174)</sup> The

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171. M. Bayly, Introduction to Long Evenings and What to do in them, (1872).

172. H. Solly, Eighty Years, Vol.2, pp.165-66.

173. G. McIlhiney, "A Gentleman in Every Slum: Church of England Missions in East London, 1837-1914," (Ph.D. Thesis, Univ. of Princeton, 1976), pp.136-37.

174. J. Hemming, "Adult Education in Huddersfield, 1851-84," (M.Ed. Thesis, Univ. Manchester, 1966), p.172.

Union was careful to stress its neutrality in matters of theology. If individual ministers wished to start up clubs as part of their commitment to pastoral care then the Union was more than willing to offer advice. Beyond that the CIU was reluctant to endorse any specific religious task for the clubs. Many of the early clubs, nevertheless, were the fruits of clerical labour. In Kidderminster for example, in 1864 the first club opened, the work, unusually, of the local evangelical vicar.<sup>(175)</sup> Clubs were strongly recommended in religious periodicals as providing parsons with a ready and effective way to win the hearts and confidence of working men.<sup>(176)</sup>

J. Stephenson argued that clubs:

will only last and be really useful when they are conducted in a deeply religious spirit. The managers must have the great aim before them of making these institutions Christianizing agencies. <sup>(177)</sup>

It was suggested that it was natural for a club to be attached to the mission thereby providing the "stepping-stone to temperance and to God."<sup>(178)</sup> These positive views of the potential of the working Man's club lasted long after the church became disillusioned with the policy of the CIU especially as regards such matters as the prohibition of strong drink. Meantime, the club idea accorded well with the new zeal for the promotion of rational amusements as part

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175. K. Tiller, "Working Class Attitudes and Organisation in Three Industrial Towns, 1850-75" (Ph.D. Thesis, Birmingham, 1975), pp.111-12.
176. "Working Men's Clubs and Institutes," Church of England Magazine, June 1865; Bishop of Bedford, "Working Men's Clubs," English Illustrated Magazine, Vol.8, December 1890; J. Wells, "Working Men's Clubs," Economic Review, January 1894.
177. J. Stephenson, "The House that beats the Public-House," Sunday Magazine, Vol.2, January 1866.
178. Temperance Record, 12 March 1885.

of the churches' work. In his address to the Church Congress in Liverpool, 1869, the Rev. Chambers insisted that

Parson Killjoy ... would have more influence with his men and lads, if he were known to countenance their boat-racing and cricket, their wrestling and racing, their glees and theatricals, and were not entirely taken up with the idea of cramming them with goody tracts and books. (179)

A decade later a Church of England Recreation Society was founded to promote pure and enlightening entertainments mainly using parish halls as recreation rooms. (180)

In addition to Chalmers, Rylance, and Solly, other clerical activists in the early club movement included Harry Jones, Robert Sawyer and Stewart Headlam. Jones was instrumental in helping to bring the St. James and Soho Club into existence. He was asked by local working men to use his good offices to obtain donations for the club "from certain great people in St. James' Parish. This I flatly refused to do, saying that if they could not afford to stand upon their own legs they deserved to fall." Instead Jones managed to secure a favourable loan from the Union's banker, Henry Hoare, which the men later repaid. (181) Robert Sawyer was a prominent member of the Church of England Temperance Society, serving as

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179. Official Report of the Church Congress, (Liverpool, 1869), p.133. Chambers was a Corresponding Member of the CIU.
180. Rev. C. Bullock, "The Attitude of the Church towards Pure Literature and Recreation," Ibid, (Sheffield, 1879), pp.317-18.
181. H. Jones, Fifty Years, (1895), p.36. Further discussion of Jones work with St. James and Soho and of his support for clubs is given in East and West London, (1875); "Working Men: Some of Their Ways and Their Wants," Macmillan's Magazine, Vol.13, January 1866, p.248; "The Homes of the Town Poor," Cornhill Magazine, Vol.42, October 1880. For a discussion of Jones' life and work see, B. Heeney, "Harry Jones and the Broad Church Pastoral Tradition in London," in P. Phillips, op.cit.

secretary of a club in the 1870's. He was enthusiastic regarding the good work carried out by the clubs and firmly rebutted the ill-founded charges that clubs tolerated drunkenness. (182) Headlam, was a member of the ultra radical Commonwealth club, achieving the unusual distinction of turning one of the capital's leading radical centres into "something of a Christian Socialist forum, bringing clerical friends such as Arthur Stanton to speak, and lecturing frequently himself." (183)

The one example of the Union's specific involvement with religious questions was the CIU sponsored conference on "Working Men and Religious Institutions," held at the London Coffee House in January 1867. A large number of working men heard speakers from their own class as well as Hughes, Solly, Miall, and Maurice examine working men's attitude to the church and its functionaries. Most speakers were agreed that much good would come from a change of heart on the part of the clergy towards the working man. Mr. Wynn, a plasterer, spoke for the majority, when he argued that by mutual concern and involvement in counter-attractionist ventures common bonds of sympathy and respect would develop between the priest and the artizan. (184)

By the late 70's relations between the club movement and church and chapel were growing distinctly cooler. Ministers had reservations as to the wisdom of the drink-selling policy as well

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182. N.A.P.S.S., Conference on Temperance Legislation, (1886), p.47.

183. J. Orens, "The Mass, Masses and Music-Hall: A Study of Stewart Headlam," (Ph.D. Thesis, Columbia, 1976), pp.70-71.

184. Working Men and Religious Institutions, (1867); Bee-Hive, 26 January 1867; Church of the People, 10(2), February 1867; Church of England Temperance Magazine, January 1867. Over 200 working men were said to have attended.

as an aversion to the growth of militantly secularist clubs. The radicalisation of London club land in the 80's was to deepen that estrangement. Club members were held to be suspicious of mixing with gentlemen in broadcloth. In part this was a continuation of working class anti-clericalism which regarded every parson with suspicion seeing him as a "moral policeman employed to keep them down."<sup>(185)</sup> But it was also a response to the often harsh and intemperate attacks on the club movement made by resident clergymen or blazoned across the religious press which did little to endear religion to the clubman. One reporter noted that members of London clubs resented the appearance of the local vicar in the club believing that clergymen "should confine their attention to churches, chapels and mission halls,"<sup>(186)</sup> Like paternalist employers, concerted church activity after the mid 70's was usually restricted to rural districts and small towns organised through the Church of England Temperance Society.<sup>(187)</sup> In Norwich, for instance, by 1910, the Church of England had 15 men's clubs with a total membership of some 800.<sup>(188)</sup>

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185. Church of England Magazine, July 1867; A. Shepherd, The Gospel and Social Questions, (1902) and G. Haw (Ed), Christianity and the Working Class, (1906), note the bitterness of many working men towards the clergy. See also, O. Chadwick, The Victorian Church, Part II, (1970), p.268.
186. CIJ, 8 April 1893. See also, H. McLeod, Class and Religion in the Late Victorian City, (1974), pp.67 and 93, footnote 117.
187. "Working Men's Clubs," St. James Magazine and United Empire Review, 33, February 1878, pp.171-72.
188. C. Hawkins, Norwich: A Social Study, (1910), p.296. See also, Olsen, thesis, Appendix F for details of Oxford and Lichfield

The informal control over club policies and activities found in a number of model institutes raised the more general question of the independence and control of the clubs. Sympathisers were quick to point out that any suspicion that the movement lacked independence would fatally compromise its progress.<sup>(189)</sup> Providing a commodious and well-appointed club would not induce a working man to join if there lingered in his mind any suspicion that he would not be free to govern it. If Working men's clubs were to be successful then it was suggested that the only help which should be given was the simple but important aid needed to obtain suitable rooms. Otherwise club men should be left to themselves.<sup>(190)</sup> The example of the reformed country friendly societies showed unequivocally that working men would not give their wholehearted support to a body controlled by patrons; they seemed preternaturally suspicious of any body whose organisation was not in their hands.<sup>(191)</sup> The sad history of the mechanics' institute reinforced the argument that participation in government of the club was the essential precondition for retaining the support of the working man. All club literature insisted that clubs must be free from the taint of patronage.

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189. Letter from William Blazeby, for example, Secretary of the Rotherham Working Men's Club, Inquirer, 15 April 1865.
190. "Intemperance: Its Causes and Cures," National Review, January 1861, pp.140-41.
191. Evidence of J. Stansfield, Third Report, Commissioners appointed to Inquire into ... Benefit Building Societies, P.P.1873, xxii, pp.202-03; E. Stanhope, "Friendly Societies," Quarterly Review, Vol.138, January 1875, p.211; S.G. Osborne, Letters, (1890), Vol.11, pp.236-37. Rev. John Clabon during a discussion of the problem of patronage reported that during an interview he had with the Prince Consort in 1854, Albert was adamant that any institutions must be self-governed or they would not gain the working man's loyalty, see, Times, 9 January 1872. See also, M. Fuller, West Country Friendly Societies, (Lingfield, 1964), pp.20-21; 49.

The principle of management which it was urged the clubs should adopt was the "Carlisle" system named in honour of the work of Dr. Elliott in his Working Men's Reading Room founded in Carlisle in April 1848. To avoid any accusation of patronage or external interference Elliott's Reading Room devolved its management to a committee at least half of which was to comprise men who were in receipt of weekly wages.<sup>(192)</sup> The same principle was adopted for the government of the Recreation Society in Lancaster. Literature describing the Union pressed for all clubs to adopt the Carlisle scheme. Speaking at the first annual meeting of the CIU Brougham stressed that it was vitally important that in the clubs the councils should be composed of the working men themselves.<sup>(193)</sup> Policy, as it developed, was to suggest that committees of management should have at least 50% working class representation, this figure to be seen as the minimum. The remainder of the committee was to be chosen from the Honorary Members, that is from those gentlemen who made donations to the club or had in some other way made a material or organisational contribution to the club.<sup>(194)</sup> Thus of the 10 men committee of the United Brothers Working Men's

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192. R. Elliott, "On Working Men's Reading Rooms established in 1848 at Carlisle," Transactions, N.A.P.S.S. (1862), pp.676-78; "Labourers' Reading Rooms," Household Words, 13 September 1851; "Carlisle Reading Rooms," Christian Socialist, 2(51), 18 October 1851. J. Walker, in J. Cassell, op.cit., pp.103-04. For a full description and evaluation of Elliott's work see, T. Graham, "Some Aspects of Working Class Adult Education in Nineteenth Century Carlisle," (M.Phil Thesis, Univ. of Nottingham, 1972), Chapter IV.
193. Lecturers' Gazette, August 1863; see also, Lord Brougham, "On the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge," Transactions, N.A.P.S.S., (1859).
194. Social Science Review, 2(49), 16 May 1863.

Club, at least 6 had to be bona-fide working men. (195)

A club could not guarantee its success by adopting the Carlisle principle. On the other hand, by demonstrating that the idea of the club as a partnership was no empty slogan and that working men would exercise real control over their clubs it was hoped that the clubs could avoid the fate which had been visited upon so many other schemes of social amelioration. (196)

The need for democracy was a theme in almost every discussion of the club movement. Hastings, secretary of the Social Science Association, made the point forcefully in his speech to members of the Mealcheapen Club, Worcester. A successful club, he observed, was based upon the axiom "of mutual help ... whereby every member felt bound up in the interests of his fellow member." If the need for mutual assistance was lost or the independence of the management weakened then disaster would quickly befall the club. (197) A similar moral was drawn from the history of the Hackney Club. Founded in 1858, by late 1860 its membership was falling away despite the lavishness of its provision. To those charged with looking after the club the cause of this rapid decline was clear: the members had been "over-nursed by those who represent a class above the working man." (198)

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195. United Brothers Working Men's Club, Rules, (1888).

196. See, B. Jerrold, Signals of Distress, (1863), pp.237-38; 255-56.

197. Social Science Review, 2(69), 3 October 1863.

198. Ibid, 2(61), 8 August 1863. Harry Jones remarked that any club supervised by a vicar was sure to end in failure, see East and West London, p.263.



Not everybody concerned with the progress of the club movement was happy with such democratic practice. Mrs. Bayly, for instance, was skeptical of the benefits of such a policy. In her opinion:

If the work of such institutions [clubs or Halls] is left entirely in the hands of working men, the plans will be deficient in power, method and stability, and for want of the conservative element will be ever in danger of falling to pieces. (199)

Mrs. Bayly had a number of allies in her suspicions of the working man's capacity for good and wise government. Joseph Livesey, for example, at a conference on the progress of the club movement held at the Whittington Club in May 1864, argued that management was not to be left to working men. If failures were to be avoided then limitations had to be placed upon self government.<sup>(200)</sup> What these anti-democrats wanted was "dual control," that is to allow working men a limited measure of government but for the really important powers to rest with the honorary members or benefactor of the club. It was a system commended by the Earl of Carnarvon when opening the Highclere club, and by Adams in his pamphlet on clubs in rural areas where he argued that although committees would be composed of the "most intelligent of working men" yet they would still require "watchful guidance" and the most careful supervision if the club was to prosper.<sup>(201)</sup> It was a policy strongly repudiated even by

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199. Mrs. Bayly, "Working Men's Halls v. Public Houses," Meliora, No.19, 1863, p.262.

200. Social Science Review, New Series, Vol.1(6), June 1864. He was roundly opposed by Lyttelton and Barnett Blake.

201. Common Good, 1(4), 30 October 1880; J. Adams, Social Clubs for Working Men, (1875), p.9.

Solly who thought its adoption would do much to generate class suspicion and prejudice which the club movement was founded to diminish,<sup>(202)</sup> Even after forty years of club propaganda and experience, Jebb thought that allowing working men sole or preponderant control of the club a dubious virtue. Given such a position there was "always the chance of the roughest element gaining predominance."<sup>(203)</sup>

Pious statements by club ideologues repudiating patronage were not sufficient to erase from many members' minds the suspicion that patronage was a key feature of Union practice. The cry to throw off patronage was one of the key aspects of the ideology which inspired the revolt of 1883-84 which produced the full democratisation of the club movement. So what did members mean by patronage and how did it operate in the clubs?

Patronage was a vague term which was generally used to express the working man's resentment at the domination of the clubs by sections of the local middle class or lower middle class. It was antipathy to that image of the working man which saw him as the object of solicitous concern akin to some heathen savage who required christian salvation to rescue him from barbarism. The working man was not a creature in need of conversion or "civilization." In particular the infantilising tendencies of the ideology and practice of patronage was rejected. "Working men have been treated as children and kept in leading strings long enough," declared one magazine" and it is high time they should take the

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202. Working Man, 7 April 1866; Common Good, 1(5) 6 November 1880.

203. E. Jebb, Cambridge: A Brief Study in Social Questions, (Cambridge, 1906), p.131.

management of their affairs in their own hands."<sup>(204)</sup> Promoters of the club movement were counselled against proselytism when trying to draw the working man into the movement:

The sturdy pride of a working man hedges off at once from any attempt to hook him to a pet scheme. (205)

The artisans' claim to be treated as equals, capable of making rational judgements, was constantly being rebuffed by reforming movements who professed to have their interests at heart but which refused to admit their right to an equal share in the government of such organisations. No one questioned the right of the local gentry or clergy to posts of control in popular organisations. Working men, on the other hand, had to display their fitness to occupy even the most minor office.<sup>(206)</sup> Moreover debates on the propriety of allowing the working man a share in government, ignored or overlooked the substantial experience many working men had in self-government through the holding of office in friendly societies, trade societies and co-operative bodies.

Working class resentments could grow from the myriad little ways in which their role in the clubs was presented as subordinate to that of the gentlemen or other benefactor. At promotional meetings the working man was paraded on the stage like some exotic

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204. Friendly Societies Journal, 5(8), May 1865.

205. S. Neil, Public Meetings and How to Conduct Them, (1868), p.22.

206. An example of the way in which working men were disregarded was illustrated by the habit of holding formal meetings at a time when working men would be unable to attend. For example the 1881 Annual Meeting of the Worcester Union was held in the early afternoon; a public meeting for working men was held in the evening. See, CIU, Annual Report, No. 19, (1881), p.21.

beast lately brought back from the dark continent. His role was to second motions, not to propose them; to speak after his betters had finished. His demand for independence was unthinkingly passed over. The record of working men conducting their own organisations unfettered by the need for external aid was hardly thought worthy of remark. Complaints about patronage were above all expressions of the belittling and condescending manner with which respectable working men were treated.

Union insistence upon the requirement that clubs be jointly managed could go some way to assuaging working class suspicions. Yet the limits of that control might not be set by the working man. In the model institutes working men were allowed to manage on the condition that they did not question certain fixed policy decisions, most commonly that intoxicating drinks would be forbidden. The membership was never asked for its views on the policy. On the contrary their unquestioning acceptance was a prior condition for the club's existence. If challenged the dissentients would have only one choice: leave the club. Mr. William Leaf, a local Eastbourne businessman who set up a club in 1863, made it perfectly plain where his sympathies lay. He stipulated that intoxicants would not be sold, nor would dancing be allowed in the club. Moreover, the lecture room was to be used for the inculcation of total abstinence at least two evenings a week.<sup>(207)</sup> Given such rules potential members might easily wonder what government meant in such organisations. For if all the important questions were decided in advance then all that was left to any committee were quite minor

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207. All Year Round, 26 March 1864.

matters such as whether to have a smoking concert or what books to obtain for the library, although even this latter function might be curbed if the patron forbade the purchase of novels or works of a controversial nature. Lord Stanley spoke strongly against clubs beginning with highly elaborate rules and prohibitions. Instead he wanted benefactors to trust to the good sense of the ordinary members to see that things were properly organised, a line of argument which some members of Council endorsed. (208) The Saturday Review gently but shrewdly satirised the kind of club where the benefactor's foibles were imposed upon the unwilling membership:

The frowsy smell of Social Science haunts every room; and even the strictly unobjectionable newspaper, and the glass of cold water, and the copy of Paley's Evidences ... seem to be tainted with something dreary and dusty and unwholesome. (209)

There were also informal methods of control which constrained the freedom of the membership. For example, the trustees, those men who underwrote the mortgage or guaranteed the rent of the club, might be able to influence policy on controversial matters. If they were staunch teetotalers, for instance, then if the membership contemplated admitting strong liquors to the club they might gently inform the committee that new trustees would have to be found if such a measure was successfully introduced. Dent noted that the role of the trustees remained important even after the revolt. He still knew of clubs where members were not allowed to play cards

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208. Guardian, 9 August 1865; See also, Lecturers' Gazette, August 1873.

209. "The Artizan and His Friends," Saturday Review, 12 August 1865.

or which were forced to close on Sunday to satisfy the fads of the trustees.<sup>(210)</sup> How far such informal power operated is difficult to tell. In many instances the prejudices or beliefs of the trustees would be well known so no members would even contemplate challenging their rule or would avoid discussing reforms which it was clear would generate dissent. As Dent's comments show there was some disagreement in the club movement regarding the propriety of Sunday opening. While the membership might express itself strongly in favour of Sunday opening, a number of Sabbatarian trustees and patrons were opposed to the practice. At Dodsworth Working Men's Club in 1872 the treasurer, the Rev. Hudson, and all Honorary Members resigned when the ordinary members voted to open the club on Sunday.<sup>(211)</sup> Even where Sunday opening was tolerated some clubs found the activities restricted. For example, at Micheldever Club secular books and games were forbidden on the Lord's Day being replaced by "portfolios of nice prints, principally from scriptural subjects .. and Christian Knowledge Society books."<sup>(212)</sup> Some patrons agreed to Sunday opening on the pragmatic grounds that by opening the club men could be saved from going to the public-house.<sup>(213)</sup> However the Union's sympathy for sabbath opening caused it to forfeit the

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210. CIJ, 23 July 1887; Dent's comments were in rebuttal of remarks made earlier by Solly that there was little patronage in the early club movement, see, CIJ, 16 July 1887. See also the discussion in R. Price, "The Working Men's Club and Victorian Social Reform Ideology," Victorian Studies, Vol.15 (2), 1971, pp.131-33.

211. CIU, Annual Report, No.10, (1872), p.16.

212. Ibid, p.13.

213. "Working Men's Clubs," Temple Bar, 8 July 1863.

support of many of those active in the Early Closing movement who had pressed for Saturday to be made the day of leisure in order that Sunday might be kept inviolate as a day of worship. (214)

Hard evidence on the patronage issue is difficult to discover. Every report on the club movement touched upon it but almost no evidence was presented as to its precise operation. In this respect it was like the other nameless vices of Victorian England whose existence could be alluded to but good manners and the requirements of decency drew a discreet veil over. It was recognised, however, that while clubs required some outside assistance the potential for patronage would remain:

Unless the clubs can be made self-supporting they can never be in a position of independence from external influences, from the caprices of well-intentioned tyranny, or the blight of patronage. Institutions for the benefit of working men should originate among, and be managed by, themselves ... the habit of self-government is in itself no mean help towards a higher personal life and a greater fitness for the duties of citizenship. (215)

A similar point was made by Moggridge. The wealthy men often looked to for support of working men's clubs

also like to control and some of their 'fads' and fancies are almost sure to wreck the project ... the consciousness that the club is managed by others, not of their own class, is sufficient to raise the suspicion of dictation and interference in the minds of working men. (216)

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214. On the changing ideology of sabbatarianism and the composition of the pro and anti-sabbatarian movements; see the remarks in B. Harrison, "Religion and Recreation in Nineteenth-Century England," Past and Present, No.38, 1968, pp.103-108, 109-112.

215. "Working Men's Clubs," All Year Round, 26 March 1864.

216. M. Moggridge, Public-Houses for the People, '1879), p.6.

What working men were rejecting in the revolt of the early 80's were the elements of noblesse oblige and deference contained in the notion of patronage. (217) It also involved resistance to the notions of class control and discipline which attracted donors and subscribers to give generously to the early club movement. (218) In particular ordinary members opposed the rhetoric of paternalism found in the writings and behaviour of some Union officials.

Paternalism implied that men of wealth and leisure were required to lead the club movement as the mass of the ordinary members were not yet sufficiently mature to know their own minds. They would have to be governed, as a father rules his family, until such time as they proved themselves to have attained that standard of independence and rationality which showed that they had passed from childhood to adulthood. The theory was one matter, the practice another. Firstly, the very men that the club movement set out to attract, whose presence was held to be essential to the higher purposes of the movement, were the independent, respectable and superior working men, the "stiff-backed Rads" as Solly once referred to them. (219) These were men unlikely to place themselves under the benevolent despotism of Union grandees. Secondly, there was a contradiction at the heart of paternalist ideology, namely the assumption that at some point the rulers would be called

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217. For an analysis of the ideologies of paternalism and patronage see, N. Abercrombie and S. Hill, "Paternalism and Patronage," British Journal of Sociology, Vol.27(4), 1976.

218. Price, op.cit., p.143.

219. House and Home, 4 September 1880.



upon to stand down from their dominance as their charges would have reached that level of development which made them capable of controlling their own future. But the history of the Union confirmed the accuracy of Mill's dictum regarding the problems of paternalist theory; "long before the superior class could be sufficiently improved to govern in the tutelary manner ... the inferior class would be too much improved to be so governed."<sup>(220)</sup> Soon after the Union began its work the ordinary membership began to press for a share in its government.

At the end of its first year of work the Union totalled twenty-two clubs with a total membership of some 4,700. There were eleven other clubs in the process of formation.<sup>(221)</sup> Financial support for the work had come from the £700 raised in donations and subscriptions as well as a more modest income realised from the sales of publications and affiliation fees. The largest expense had been the payment of salaries and printing bills. The St. James and Soho Club had also benefited from the unusual generosity of the Union which advanced the club £7.<sup>(222)</sup> Some 15,000 copies of club literature had been distributed and there was a balance of £175 to carry forward to the following year's work. At the annual meeting, held at the Royal Society of Arts in Burlington House, the various speech-makers were convinced that the Union had an assured future ahead of it, provided, as Maurice, stressed, that it did not become

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220. J.S. Mill, Principles of Political Economy, (1909 edition), p.754.

221. Social Science Review, 2(58), 18 July 1863; Solly Collection, Vol.XVI, Section 13(b), Item 1. The list is given in Appendix B.

222. For full accounts, recently discovered at CIU headquarters, see, Appendix B.

too beholden to donors and forget to encourage its constituent clubs to pursue the path of self-sufficiency.<sup>(223)</sup> There were indications that the following year would see even faster progress. At Birmingham Central Working Man's Club, for example, meetings were organised to consider the expansion of club work. Sub-committees had been formed to aid the formation of clubs in Bradford Street, St. George's, Gosta Green, and Birmingham Heath.<sup>(224)</sup> The Union could take especial pride in the setting up of the St. James and Soho Club. It was established by a group of working men in Crown Street, Soho, who had turned to both the Union and Jones for advice. In the first week after its formal opening over 160 men joined, mainly from the building trades, and the club was managed entirely by working men.<sup>(225)</sup> To those critics of the movement who worried at the lack of specific religious aims in the movement, Lord Lyttelton replied that "the great clubs of London were carried on a similar system, and they never asked a man's religion when they admitted him."<sup>(226)</sup>

Evidence of the benefits which accompanied these clubs was soon forthcoming from a variety of sources. Some three to four hundred men visited the Southampton Working Men's Halls every evening. Of their behaviour it was noted that "so orderly are the members that a single woman is found sufficient to take charge of each hall and supply the refreshments."<sup>(227)</sup> The counter-

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223. Nonconformist, 15 July 1863.

224. Social Science Review, 2(77), 28 November 1863.

225. Social Science Review, 2(43), 11 April 1863; 2(47) 2 May 1863.

226. Weekly Record, 18 July 1863.

227. Social Science Review, 2(34), 31 January 1863.

attractionist role seemed to be working extremely effectively, as illustrated by one "J.F." admitted to membership in the Leeds Working Men's Institute. He was:

a drunkard, and used to frequent the low concert halls, and ill treat his wife ... He came to the Institute in 1862, and was so well-pleased with it, that he became a regular member, and gave up his bad ways. When he first came to the Institute he had only one suit of working clothes, now he has a black-cloth suit for Sundays, and an evening suit. His boys go to school, and his wife is a happy woman. (228)

The tap room and the club room were held to represent very different ways of life. The former was the "way of reckless waste and debasing selfishness, the other of honest enjoyment and manly thoughtfulness." (229) Clubs were also thought to combat the spread of secularism:

The success of this movement must greatly tend to undermine popular infidelity, by the diffusion of knowledge, by taking the working man at a deeper level than any existing society reaches, and without regard to their sectional opinions provide for their healthful recreation. The objects of the Union have been carried out for several years in Carlisle by means of the Working Men's Reading Rooms, and we are assured ... that skeptics are no longer a premium or half-worshipped as heroes. (230)

The new movement was commended in a review of the progress of working men's clubs in Leeds:

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228. Leeds Working Men's Institute, (Leeds, 1869), Appendix III, p.11. See also, "Working Men's Clubs," Once a Week, Vol.8, May 1863.
229. The Cottager, 2 January 1865. See also, Leisure Hour, Vol.13, 29 October 1864.
230. The Apologist, No.6, December 1862.

as clubs become part and parcel of working class existence, a purer tone of feeling will have been called into play, many of the working men will have mounted the first step of the ladder and have made the first stride towards their emancipation from the thralldom of the public-house. It is from this point of view that the formation of these clubs appears to the best advantage and deserves most support. (231)

The change which was noticed in the working men who joined these clubs was often remarked upon. Speaking at the Annual Meeting of the Union in 1876, the delegate from the Rochdale Club told the audience that the committee had recently voted to furnish the main room of the club "with a Brussels carpet ... the introduction of which he defended on the grounds that the members were thereby induced to conduct themselves with greater propriety." (232) At the Portland Hall it was a commonplace to remark on the easy and friendly manner "in which the higher and lower classes mingle together at the social gatherings." (233) As a result of club life "outward manners and mode of speech were held to undergo a great and almost immediate change for the better, gross language

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231. Leeds Mercury, 10 December 1864, quoted by D. Moburg, "George Odger and the English Working Class Movement, 1860-1877," (Ph.D. Thesis, Univ. of London, 1953), p.112. Benefits of a very different kind flowing from the establishment of clubs were prophesied by Mr. Cooper who thought that by the creation of clubs the working man would improve "and then perhaps we should not be so appalled by reading so many trials for murder, making our blood run cold." South London Press, 17 January 1874.
232. Bee-Hive, 15 July 1876.
233. Portland Road Working Men's Hall, p.19. The Secretary of the Plympton St. Mary Club (Devon) made a similar point in his report: "The way in which all classes meet one another on friendly terms in this club have exceeded my greatest expectations, and I feel that were these institutions more common, there would be a great increase in sympathy between the aristocracy and the working class in England." CIU, Annual Report, No.12, (1874), p.21.

and personal rudeness disappear."<sup>(234)</sup> One further benefit of the club movement was to provide earnest working men with facilities for social and political discussion thus allowing them to enjoy the full benefits of recently-won citizenship.<sup>(235)</sup>

To bring the clubs and the Union before a wider audience the CIU organised a series of lectures and discussions on topical social and political questions. Held in the Exeter Hall in June and July 1865 the invited speakers included Hughes on the "Labour Question," Wilfred Lawson on the "Permissive Bill" and Maurice on "Citizenship." So vigorous was the discussion after Maurice's lecture that Lord Lyttelton, who was in the Chair, thought that the Union's position of neutrality had been breached. But Maurice was of the opposite opinion. He had asked to hear the views of working men and had been glad to have been given the opportunity of doing so.<sup>(236)</sup>

In the three years after its foundation the Union continued to advance slowly. In November 1864 a meeting was held under the direction of Hughes to discuss the idea of setting up a Metropolitan Working Men's Hall, a central club, which was one of Solly's pet projects. Bainbridge was elected Secretary of the provisional committee, which included Beales, Cremer, and William Allen.<sup>(237)</sup> The Union claimed to know of 116 clubs, of which 41 had been established in the previous year. Ordinary members exceeded 16,000 while Honorary Members numbered 958. To assist the club movement

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234. CIU, Annual Report, No.13, (1875), p.5.

235. Bee-Hive, 11 May 1872. The point was made by Frederick Harrison.

236. Reasoner, 1 June and 1 July 1865; The Reader, 24 June 1865; Bee-Hive, 24 June 1865.

237. Inquirer, 12 November 1864.

in London monthly tea meetings were held to which secretaries and representatives of the metropolitan clubs were invited. Here matters of common concern were debated and mutual difficulties examined. They had been set up in response to pressure from the constituent clubs for some form of representation which would deepen the support for the Union among the London clubmen. This request for participation was considered by the Council who responded with the suggestion that tea meetings might be used to provide a forum for the examination of club problems. In a report to Council Solly was forced to note that despite the positive regard in which the movement was held by many friends of the working class, it was not growing as fast as hoped nor was it as secure in the affections of the working man as might be expected. Some of the problems facing the movement were practical, for example, in London, the difficulties of securing suitable accommodation at reasonable rents in which clubs could be held. Others were far more intractable. One was the continued popularity of the public house as a place of resort. (238) Solly and some of his compatriots may have been over-sanguine in their expectations that the club movement would carry all before it. Nonetheless even the most pessimistic member of Council might have believed that the movement would have attained a greater purchase upon the loyalties of the working man than was being demonstrated. The attractiveness and importance of the public house to the working man's life style was undiminished.

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238. This was the major theme of a conference held at the Whittington Club to review the progress of the movement, Inquirer, 14 May 1864.

Clubs seemed to have done little to weaken its sway. (239) The working man might sample the club, but too often he was found a week later back at the "Duke of Rutland." Few friendly societies left their rooms at the public-house for the improving surroundings of the nearby club, "notwithstanding the evil consequences which generally result from habitual resort thereto." (240) Local friendly societies preferred the trusted location to the new facilities being advertised. Some did move, but the majority opted for the freedom of the publican's room. (241) In common with other counter-attractionist ventures clubs were thought to come off unfavourably when compared with the "liberty" found at the local tap-room. Clergymen noted that many clubs and the like failed because "a man is expected to dress cleanly and tidily to enter them; and men whom we want to influence will not trouble

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239. On the pub and its role in working class life see, British Almanack and Companion, 1865, p.86; Morning Herald, 3 January 1867; E. Moore, "The Social Value of the Saloon," American Journal of Sociology, Vol.3, July 1897, p.6; Evidence of E. Bryan, S.C. on Public Institutions, P.P.1860, xvi, Q.987; M. Gorham and H. Dunnett, Inside the Pub, (1950), Chapter 1; B. Harrison, "Pubs," in H. Dyos and M. Wolff (Eds), The Victorian City: Images and Reality, (1973); M. Winstanley, "The Rural Publican and His Business in East Kent before 1914," Oral History, Vol.4(2), 1976; I. Prothero, op.cit., pp.28-30; 34-35; A. Metcalfe, "Working Class Free-Time Activities in Newcastle-Upon-Tyne and South Northumberland, 1780-1880 with special reference to Physical Activity," (Ph.D. Thesis, Univ. of Wisconsin, 1968), pp.85-88.
240. CIU, Annual Report, No.3, (1865), p.9.
241. S. Smiles, "Workmen's Benefit Societies," Quarterly Review, Vol.116, October 1864, p.326; A Workman, Working Men and Working Women, (1879), pp.31-36; P. Gosden, op.cit., pp.117-19; J. Rowley, "Drink and the Public House in Nottingham," Transactions, Thoroton Society, Vol.79, (1975), pp.80-81.

themselves to do so when the beer-shop invites them to come as they are." (242) When working men had experienced the benefits of club life then getting them to put on a shirt and collar seemed to present no difficulty. Enticing them into regular membership, however, proved more of a problem. The other major difficulty remained that of patronage. Solly charged that:

No slight harm has been done in many instances to this movement, both by public journals and in general private conversation, by unqualified depreciation of all higher class co-operation in the establishment and management of working men's clubs, and by branding such co-operation with the invidious title of patronage, or by describing it as unwarrantable interference. (243)

To allay working class suspicion and to gain labour movement support for the Union Solly met with a deputation from the London Trades Council in early March 1863. Alaric Watts took the chair and those attending the meeting included Potter, Solly, Mantz and Charles Murray. Dunning, a bookbinder, suggested that the meeting treat the matter of their relations with the Union very cautiously. If the Union was given formal endorsement and encouragement by the trade societies then it was quite likely that such a move would lead to the withdrawal of support for the CIU by the employers, which he took to be the most important source of CIU finance. He added that he doubted if London working men could be persuaded to move from their traditional meeting places. If the movement was

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242. Province of Canterbury, Lower House of Convocation, Report by the Committee on Intemperance, (1869), Appendix V, No. 1257, p.138. It was said that working men would not clean themselves to go to the club but went to the beer-shops "as dirty as they like," Ibid, p.141.

243. CIU, Annual Report, No.3, (1865), p.12.



to have any success in this respect then it would more likely come from the provinces. Mantz and Murray spoke on behalf of the Union, the former indicating that the Council and the CIU shared similar objectives in that both aimed at the improvement of their respective members, while the latter told the delegates that it was his belief that the "great want among trade societies was sobriety," and inasmuch as the Union could help in this respect it was to be recommended. A formal resolution was proposed by Mantz and seconded by Dunning:

Working men's clubs are calculated to promote a good understanding and a spirit of helpfulness among all classes of the community; that they will necessarily promote the interests of all wisely constituted trade societies, as well as the pecuniary well-being of both the employers and the employed.

The meeting concluded with delegates being urged to ask their own societies to assist in the formation of clubs.<sup>(244)</sup> A further meeting with Solly left matters much as they were, although soon after there was an acrimonious exchange of correspondence between Solly, Odger and Goddard over working class expenditure on intoxicants. Peace was restored after a deputation met with Lord Brougham when it was agreed that although the movement had the blessing of the L.T.C and although individual members were urged to join their local club, no society could formally join with the CIU.<sup>(245)</sup> Solly did not give up. In early June he met with a deputation headed by Applegarth, Odger, Guile and Coulson. In his address Solly spoke of the benefits which the respectable working man could expect to derive from membership of a club. He dwelt

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244. Bee-Hive, 14 March 1863.

245. D. Moburg, Thesis, op.cit., pp.110-111.

particularly on the advantages to trade and friendly societies of having a well-conducted place to meet which could also act as a house of call and informal labour exchange where a man might find out about the state of the local labour market. These practical benefits were noted by the group. Some like Guile expressed their sympathy, others like Odger were more suspicious. They wondered why so many noblemen and gentry appeared so eager to help the working man. Some delegates were not convinced that some hidden, sinister, purpose lay behind the movement, for example, was the labour exchange function to be used as a way for employers to gain access to blackleg labour during a trade dispute? They again refused to give official endorsement for societies to join, nor did they accept Solly's offer to the Council to meet in rooms at 150 Strand. However, they agreed that Solly had eased some of their worries and still felt that clubs could aid individual members.<sup>(246)</sup>

Over the next few years Solly continued to court the trade union movement in London. At the 1866 Annual Meeting, the need to involve all the leading men of the trades union movement in the club cause was stressed and in September Solly, in the company of other Council members, met with the LTC and the London Working Men's Association to press again for these bodies to urge upon their membership the benefits which would come from transferring their meetings to clubs.<sup>(247)</sup>

Solly was not alone in his campaign. William Allam,

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246. Social Science Review, 2(53), 13 June 1863; London Trades Council, 1860-1950: A History, (1950), p.6. In the 1890's the LTC did use the Club Union Building in Clerkenwell to hold their delegate meetings.

247. Inquirer, 14 July and 15 December 1866.

secretary of a London club, also tried to disabuse his fellow-trades unionists of any prejudices they had about the club movement. Many artisans, he noted, thought that the real aim of clubs was to draw working men together in order

to enable the clergyman to bring them together under clerical supervision, induce them to attend his place of worship, teach in his Sunday School ... Or they think that a few swells keep the management entirely in their own hands and that a working man in corduroy is shunned by such fellows. (248)

In response to mounting pressure from independent clubs in the midlands and after a series of conferences to consider the matter, the Union decided, in 1866-67, to allow each club to make its own judgement on whether or not to sell alcoholic drinks. Most clubs quickly voted for the beer. This had the effect of making clubs more attractive places. It gave them a source of income to be used in making the club more comfortable, useful and self-sufficient. It also demonstrated that the Union was flexible on matters of policy and was willing to concede the cogency of alternative arguments on the drink question. (249)

The growth of the Union now began to quicken. The Union was thought to have recovered from the particularly bad year of 1867 when strikes and reform agitation were said to have weakened working men's interest in the clubs. (250)

Most clubs now had ancillary organisations attached to them,

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248. Labour News, 6 July 1866.

249. See Chapter 4 below.

250. Weekly Record, 5 October 1867.

such as friendly societies, savings banks, loan societies, coal clubs, and a few co-operative societies. In 1872 the Union claimed to have 245 affiliates of which some 64 were self-supporting. This figure had doubled from the 32 clubs reported to be self-supporting in 1867.<sup>(251)</sup> However Union statistics were unclear as to what was meant by self-supporting. There were two definitions of the term and the difference between them was marked. The first implied that a club was totally self-supporting, that is all expenditures were met from income, including rent, fuel, light etc. The second, more restricted understanding of the term, meant that a club met all ordinary expenses involved in the day-to-day running of the body from income, but items such as the mortgage or the rent did not come from simple income being paid for by donations or the subscriptions of honorary members. Many clubs, especially after the introduction of drink, could attain the second meaning of self-supporting; fewer were totally independent though their number was increasing throughout the 70's.

Membership figures varied. From the returns sent in by 164 clubs in 1872 it was calculated that the average membership was 150, the range of variation being quite large. The smallest club had 80 members, the largest, a club in Darlington, had over 1900.<sup>(252)</sup>

While the clubs were beginning to make progress the Union was riven by dissension. In 1867 Solly retired from the Union, ostensibly because he could not carry out his duties without payment and his salary was a drain on the slender finances of the Union.

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251. Bee-Hive, 22 June 1867; Spectator, 9 May 1868.

252. CIU, Annual Report, No.10, (1872).

There were, however, hints that his style of administration was opposed by Pratt and Paterson who found him high-handed and autocratic. He parted on the most amicable of terms there having been a testimonial organised to repay him for his labours. The Union was now under the control of the "triumvirate" - Auberon Herbert, Thomas Paterson, and Hodgson Pratt. Herbert had little time from his other work for day to day office-work. He was, however, a great clubman. While at Oxford he had founded the Lord Canning and Chatham Clubs, he then helped to set up the Junior Carlton, and was regarded as the "founding father" of the Savills.<sup>(253)</sup> Paterson was a cabinet-maker and positivist who had joined the council in 1867. The need for him to earn his daily bread prevented him from becoming fully involved in Union work. It was to Pratt that the burden of organisation, and propaganda now fell.<sup>(254)</sup>

Pratt, a former member of the Indian civil service who had been forced to retire early because of poor-health, had been brought into the club movement by Solly in 1864. Like Solly, he was a unitarian and they shared interests in questions of educational and social reform.<sup>(255)</sup> There were also major differences between them. Pratt was far more of a democrat than Solly. He was also more inclined to secularism than Solly. Pratt and Solly had also disagreed on the direction of club work. Pratt held that consolidation was more pressing than uneven and irregular growth. Thus he

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253. P. Harris, Auberon Herbert: Crusader for Liberty, (1943), pp.82-83.

254. The best summary of the Triumvirate's work is in G. Tremlett, The First Century, (1962), Chapter IV.

255. In the 1840's both had come into contact with "moral force" Chartism in the West Country which prompted them to take up the cause of social reform.

was less concerned with the proselytization role and more concerned to strengthen the clubs already affiliated. This did not prevent him from undertaking a very successful tour of the provincial clubs in 1872 which provided him with the material for a well-regarded pamphlet on club life. (256)

After leaving the Union Solly busied himself in various good works including helping to found the Charity Organisation Society, and for the early part of 1870 editing the Bee-Hive, during which time the paper lost both its circulation and its character as a paper of labour becoming indistinguishable from the general run of "improving periodicals." (257)

In 1871 Solly dealt the CIU a blow when he returned to the club cause as Secretary of the Association for Promoting Working Men's Social Clubs and Institutes. The Association had Lyttelton as its President and a number of the Union's council went over to the new organisation taking with them most of the peers and bishops whose donations kept the Union in the black. (258) The Society took temporary offices at the London Artizans' Club, its expenses being met by initial donations of £100 - £50 of which came from Samuel Morley. In February a further £50 was donated by Brassey. The only reason given for the need for a new organisation was that

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256. H. Pratt, Notes of a Tour Among Clubs, (1872), see also, Capital and Labour, 8 April 1874.

257. On Solly's role in the C.O.S. see, H. Bosanquet, Social Work in London, (1912), pp. (2-17); for the Bee-Hive, see, Eighty Years, Vol. 11, pp. 383-86; S. Coltham, "George Potter, the Junta, and the Bee-Hive," International Review of Social History, Vol. 10(1), 1965, pp. 34-40.

258. Temperance Record, 18 February 1872; Solly Collection, Vol. XV, Section 13(a), Item 13. For a list of the Council see Appendix B.

Solly wanted to return to the club cause but could not work without salary. By May Solly had spoken at 18 meetings, the most important of which had been his address to the Trades Union Congress in March. After his speech Kane (Secretary of the North of England Malleable Iron Workers) and Nicholson (Secretary of the Manchester Trades Council) proposed the following resolution which in the manner of these things, was passed unanimously:

In the opinion of the members of this Congress it is desirable to aid the good work in which Mr. Solly has been engaged for so many years, viz., in assisting to establish Working Men's Clubs and Trade Halls, feeling assured that if his labours are crowned with success, the Social, Moral, and Intellectual improvement of our class will be considerably advanced. (259)

Solly had also tried, unsuccessfully, to persuade Bruce to include clauses defining clubs in the forthcoming licensing bill to clarify what constituted a bona-club. At the end of July 1871 a circular was sent to officials of both societies proposing amalgamation. In the re-organised CIU Solly was to attend meetings, advise on the formation of clubs but was not to vote. (260) On his return Solly found things very changed. Pratt had now come to dominate the Union while others on Council were less than jubilant at Solly's return.

Dissension had weakened the movement, although clubs in general were benefitting from the general social conditions of the 70's which were favourable to the advance of popular leisure.

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259. Solly Collection, Vol.XV, Section 13(a), Item 13; For Solly's speech see, Trade Halls and Social Clubs, (1871)

260. Temperance Record, 29 July 1871.

Incomes were rising, while the price level either held constant or fell. Most importantly the hours of labour continued to fall. By the mid 70's the Saturday half holiday was almost universal, while more trades had their hours regulated under the 1867 Factory Extension Acts. For those in strong Unions the 1870's saw a general reduction in hours worked. Moreover in many cities the success of the Nine Hours Campaign diminished work time and increased free time.<sup>(261)</sup> The club idea was also being taken up abroad. At a meeting of the Industrial Society of Mulhouse the President read a paper on "Des Cercles d'Ouvriers a propos des Working Men's Clubs d'Angleterre," which dwelt particularly on the ways in which clubs could reconcile capital and labour. A committee was established to consider setting up a club in the town using the £4,000 which the President, M. Siegfried, had offered to provide.<sup>(262)</sup> In France, clubs were often set up by paternal employers such as Comte de Mun and Leon Harmel as well as under the auspices of the Catholic Church. Towards the end of the century the church was encouraged to take up club work by Leo XIII. In his papal bull *Rerum Novarum*, Leo praised the positive role of clubs in deepening the collective spirit.<sup>(263)</sup> The list of clubs

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261. On hours of labour see, J. Hodgson, "Movements for Shorter Hours, 1840-1875," (D.Phil. Thesis, Oxford, 1940); M. Bienefeld, Working Hours in British Industry, (1972), Chapter 4; E. Allen, et al, The North East Engineers' Strikes of 1871, (Newcastle, 1971), Chapter 2; Metcalfe, Thesis, *op.cit.*, pp.125-34; M. Hodgson, "The Working Day and the Working Week in Victorian Britain, 1840-1900," (M.Phil Thesis, Univ. of London, 1974), pp.39-48; 148-61; D. Molyneaux, "The Development of Physical Recreation in Birmingham, 1871-1892," (M.A. Thesis, Birmingham Univ. 1957).
262. Royal Society of Arts Journal, Vol.17 (844), 22 January 1869.
263. Leo XIII, The Pope and the People, (1903; Bishop Snow, Church and Labour, (1895), p.41; L. Wallace, Leo XIII and the Rise of Socialism, (North Carolina, 1966).



known to the Union in 1869 also included clubs in Sydney (New South Wales) and Hobart and Longford (Tasmania).<sup>(264)</sup>

Further confirmation of the growing maturity of the club movement was given when in 1875 the Associate Card scheme was amended with the approval of the Home Secretary to give "honorary members" under the scheme the same rights of obtaining drinks in clubs as ordinary members.<sup>(265)</sup> The Associate Card had been borrowed from the example of the Yorkshire Union.<sup>(266)</sup> It had been the practice in the mid 60's for London clubs to invite provincial club men to come and visit them. To give this practice greater force a deputation had waited upon the Home Secretary, Sir Stafford Northcote who agreed to allow the Union to organise an associate scheme. It meant that on payment of a small fee to the Union, a full paid-up member of an affiliated club would be given an extra card, the pass card, which admitted him to any other club in the Union which took part in the scheme. Not all clubs recognised the associate card. On occasion there was some friction between clubs over its operation. It was alleged, for example, by members of some very popular clubs that they found it difficult to gain admission to their clubs on nights when entertainments were being held because the club was crowded out with associate members. Some clubs went as far as restricting the entry of associate members

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264. Solly Collection, Vol.XVII, Section 13(b), Item 5(a).

265. Club Yearbook and Directory, (1961); WMCJ, 15 May 1875. The CIU had also asked the Home Secretary to permit members of friendly societies which met on club premises to obtain drinks if they paid a nominal sum for membership. This was rejected.

266. Tylecote, op.cit., pp.82-83.

to certain hours or days in order to prevent any disputes arising. By the late 80's many clubs refused to admit associate members during hours when public-houses were closed. Generally the project worked well. There was a difference in emphasis however between the Union's understanding of the scheme and that of the mass of the membership. For the club ideologues the associate card would help to promote co-operation and closer unity between the constituent clubs. To the ordinary member the great attraction of the card was that it allowed him to enjoy a wider range of facilities and amusements which were not always available at his own club.

Clubs also benefitted from the general re-organisation of the rules for friendly societies registration in 1874-75. The Friendly Societies Act, 1875, allowed working men's clubs to register thereby gaining for them the advantages of corporate status already enjoyed by registered friendly societies. The Act required that every January the club had to send in registration details to the Registrar. By registering the club was given a public guarantee of its bona-fides, while gaining the benefits which derived from definite legal status. These included the right to sue (and be sued) in the name of the trustees, the right to prosecute an official who defaulted with or misappropriated the funds of the club, a procedure very complicated for an unregistered body, the right to hold property and mortgages without a trust deed, and freedom from income tax payable on funds held by the club.<sup>(267)</sup> For the member,

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267. For the Act see, P. Gosden, Self Help: Voluntary Associations in the Nineteenth Century, (1973), pp.77-90; CIU, Model Rules and Details of Friendly Society Registration, (1885); Registry of Friendly Societies, Model Rules for a Working Man's Club, (1911).

Registration required the club officials to hold an annual meeting at which accounts for the year's financial dealings would be available. The Union urged all clubs to apply for the certificate of registration. The Union was also fortunate in that the new Registrar responsible for overseeing the new legislation was an old friend of the movement, J. M. Ludlow who replaced John Tidd Pratt. His general support for the club movement as well as his detailed work for the clubs at the Registry made him a respected figure in club circles. (268)

In 1877 Dean Stanley became President of Council. He replaced Lord Lyttelton who had committed suicide in 1876. Lyttelton, former Apostle and intimate of Gladstone had taken a deep interest in social questions. He combined an abiding belief in the elitist function of education (which he brought to bear on his work on both the Clarendon and Taunton Commissions) with a genuine concern for the advancement of the working man. He was a zealous supporter of popular education in his home county of Worcestershire and had taken up the club cause with great enthusiasm. He was Solly's major support, confident, and defender, and his early death was a sad blow to Solly. (269) The new President was already known to London club men. He frequently conducted parties of club men around Westminster Abbey as part of the Union's programme of Saturday afternoon visits, as well as holding social teas where he met with working

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268. See, J. Dent, J. M. Ludlow: Christian Socialist and Co-Operator, (Manchester: 1921); N. Masterman, J. M. Ludlow: The Builder of Christian Socialism, (Cambridge, 1963); Christensen, op.cit., pp.269-83.

269. For Lyttelton see, Illustrated London News, 29 April 1876; Bee-Hive, 29 April 1876; B. Askwith, The Lytteltons: A Family Chronicle of the Nineteenth Century, (1975), pp.106-07; P. Stansky, "Lyttelton and Thring: A Study in Nineteenth Century Education," Victorian Studies, Vol.5(3), 1962.

men. (270) He now became head of a movement which was marked by progress on the one hand and major difficulties on the other. There were said to be 450 clubs affiliated, a figure later discovered to be much exaggerated. The idea of forming clubs into District Unions in order to promote closer co-operation and mutual helpfulness between the London clubs had taken a further step forward when a Union of East London clubs was established in early 1878, the lead having come from the radical Commonwealth Club. (271) In the south-east the first of the Unions, formed in May 1876, continued its work despite some difficulties with fluctuating membership. (272) It was the financial health of the Union, however, which was causing the gravest concern. At the 1875 Annual Meeting Lord Rosebery had presented the Union with a cheque for £175 to pay off its accumulated debts. Yet in a little over two years the CIU owed money again. Unless the financial position could be stabilised future growth would be impaired.

One problem which hindered financial improvement was the lack of up to date and accurate information on the numbers involved in the movement. Until the mid-80's the keeping of records was a haphazard business, and little reliance could be placed upon the figures of affiliates given in some of the Annual Reports. Some idea of the size of the club movement can be gauged by examining some of the printed lists of clubs issued occasionally by the Union.

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270. G. Olver, A. P. Stanley: His Life, Work, and Teachings, (Boston, 1885), pp.323-24; "Dean Stanley" Westminster Review, Vol.60, October, 1881.

271. WMCJ, 19 January and 2 February 1878.

272. For clubs in this Union see, Appendix B, Table.

These show that many clubs said to exist did not. It was, for example, alleged that numbers affiliated to the Union in 1866 were 302.<sup>(273)</sup> But published lists for 1871 show that there were 85 clubs known to the Union outside London and 59 in the capital while the numbers for affiliates were 59 and 47 respectively.<sup>(274)</sup> The list published in the Labour News Almanack for 1874 shows a modest increase. Numbers known to the Union totalled 489 while those affiliated had risen to 223. London still dominated the movement with 78 clubs, but other areas were growing. For example, Lancashire had 25 known, 6 affiliated, Kent 25 and 12, and in Yorkshire the figures were 51 and 12.<sup>(275)</sup> While these figures were probably out-of-date they do provide a slightly more accurate and consistent picture of club growth than the mass of statistics appended to Annual Reports.

District Unions were also formed in the provinces. To promote village clubs Unions had been set up in Berkshire and Suffolk in 1875.<sup>(276)</sup> In 1878 a Manchester Branch of the Union was formed consisting of 14 clubs.<sup>(277)</sup> It was followed by a

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273. Working Man, January 1866.

274. Solly Collection, Vol.XVII, Section 13(b), Item 5(b).

275. Ibid, Item 5(d). For a compilation of figures of club growth based on data in the Solly Collection see, Appendix B. The figures for the Labour News were prepared by the methodical William Minet from information held at CIU headquarters. It might not be a completely accurate list but it accords with impressionistic evidence concerning the club movement at this date, and whatever its minor shortcomings gives some indication not only of the size of the movement but of its geographical distribution.

276. CIU, Annual Report, No.13, (1875), p.7.

277. K. Dockray, The Manchester and District Branch of the Club and Institute Union: A Survey, (Manchester, 1927), pp.10-12.

Hyde Union, a Shropshire Union and a Worcester Union, the latter containing 19 clubs.<sup>(278)</sup> Following a meeting in Maidstone Town Hall a Kent Association of Town and Village Working Men's Clubs was founded.<sup>(279)</sup> Evidence of the popularity of clubs was given by the numerous references to their growth in the House of Lords inquiry into Intemperance.<sup>(280)</sup> The increase in clubs registering under the Friendly Societies Act showed that clubs were heeding the advice of the Union. Registration was thought to be a wholesome form of legal regulation and therefore was to be encouraged by the central body. Every five years the Registrar published tables of clubs registered which showed the size and geographical distribution of the club movement.<sup>(281)</sup> They did not form, however, a complete picture of club growth. Firstly, not every club could register. Clubs, for example, having declared political objectives in their Rules, could not register under the Act. This excluded some of the larger London radical clubs. Clubs which raised money through shares purchased by the membership were also barred from registering. Secondly the register was always out of date by the time it was published. Some clubs listed had gone out of existence while others had not yet registered. Thus the Registrar General's figures, a most valuable and under-used source for the history of clubs, are an under estimate of the total size of the club movement and even more so of the affiliates to the Union.

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278. For clubs in these Unions see, Appendix B.

279. WMCJ, 9 February 1878.

280. P.P. 1877 xi.

281. For a presentation of some of these tables see, Appendix B.

In 1878 Solly broke with the club movement for the last time. He had left his post as organising secretary in 1873 but had retained his seat on the Council. Early in 1878 he received information from George Savage, a die-sinker and a man with whom Solly had become well-acquainted during their mutual work for technical education, concerning abuses of drink in London working men's clubs. The allegations were never detailed but it was implied that some clubs were under the control of brewers. Solly, with no evidence, went straight to the Home Secretary and Lord Shaftesbury to make them aware of these charges. He did not bring the matter before Council. Pratt, upon hearing of Solly's behaviour convened a special meeting of Council to consider the matter. They noted that:

Statements of an injurious nature affecting working men's clubs having been made to the Earl of Shaftesbury, Mr. Samuel Morley, and to the Chairman and Secretary of the Inland Revenue Board, the Council feel bound to state that no definite charge has been made and that the Council consider they have no information to act upon.

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Solly, seeing the motion as a vote of censure resigned immediately.

He did not forget the incident, however, referring to it in a

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282. Solly Collection, Vol.XVI, Section 13(b), Item 1. Solly did not discuss the issue in his autobiography. Of the reasons for his departure he wrote, "They can better be imagined," Eighty Years, Vol.11, pp.412-13. But this is disingenuous on Solly's part for he also describes an exchange of correspondence between Pratt and Young, Secretary to the Inland Revenue Board, over clubs and drink, which Solly alleges he helped to set up. In an indirect way this is true for Young, after receiving Solly's allegations was most concerned that the privileges of the working men's club vis-a-vis intoxicants were not being abused. Thus he wrote to Pratt to obtain his assurance that the Union was still policing the drink selling policy.

manuscript letter to the CIU in October 1886.<sup>(283)</sup> Two years after his departure he hinted that he would like to return to the Council but he was gently warned that there would be much opposition on Council to any move to re-instate him.<sup>(284)</sup> So Solly left the movement he had done so much to bring into existence. He remains a contradictory character. A man of great energy and commitment to a cause he dissipated all the good will he won by his high-handed style of management, which, perhaps would have proved more acceptable had it not at the same time been combined with a habit of toadying to men with titles, especially Lyttelton. If he was, as one recent study has underlined "irascible," he could also be "the most fertile and genial of administrators."<sup>(285)</sup>

With Solly off stage, his influence on the club movement now confined to random observations on its progress published in one of his series of labour magazines, the real direction of the movement came from Pratt.

Pratt, although not in the best of health, gave much time and money to a number of popular movements. Besides the clubs and the free Sunday campaign his most important work was for peace and for co-operation.<sup>(286)</sup> In 1880 his long involvement with

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283. Ibid, Vol.XV, Item 34.

284. Ibid, Vol.XVI, Item 1.

285. K. Woodroffe, "The Irascible Henry Solly and His Contribution to Working Men's Clubs, Charity Organisation, and 'Industrial Villages,'" Social Service Review, Vol.49(1), 1975; The Reasoner, 1 July 1865.

286. For Pratt see, B. Hall, Hodgson Pratt and His Work for the Working Men's Club Movement, (1913); Dictionary of National Biography, (Second Supplement, 1912); CIJ, February 1901; J. Saville, "Hodgson Pratt," Dictionary of Labour Biography, (Bellamay and Saville, eds.,) Vol.1, 1972; C. Raven, Hodgson Pratt and the Early Days of the Co-Operative Movement, (Manchester, 1934); P. Redfearn, The History of the Co-Operative Wholesale Society, (Manchester, 1913), Chapter XI.



pacifism prompted him to join with Cremer, William Phillips and others to form the International Arbitration and Peace Association, whose journal Concord, he edited for a short time.<sup>(287)</sup> He was also very active in the co-operative movement. One of his ambitions upon joining the club movement was to bring the clubs closer to co-operation. In this work he was aided by Solly who had sent a letter on behalf of the Union to officers of co-operative societies inviting their assistance in furthering the club movement arguing that both would gain from improved mutual relations.<sup>(288)</sup> Solly had been inspired to send such a letter by the warm response given to the establishment of the Union by co-operators. In particular they welcomed the emphasis upon thrift and counter-attraction.<sup>(289)</sup> In 1877 Pratt suggested to the Southern Section of the Co-operative Congress that it should form a body to promote the co-operative cause in southern England. This was agreed and the organisation, the Guild of Co-Operators was launched with a series of four lectures given at Exeter Hall in June 1878.<sup>(290)</sup> Premises of the Guild were 150, Strand. In August 1878 Pratt lectured to the Co-Operative Hall, Lower Norwood, on the theme of the need for closer relations between clubs and co-operative stores.<sup>(291)</sup> As part of the bait

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287. The most recent discussion of popular pacifism omits any mention of Pratt or his contribution to the movement, see, E. Sager, "The Working Class Peace Movement in Victorian England," Histoire Sociale, Vol.12(23), 1979.

288. Co-Operator, No.47, January 1864; See also, "Co-Operative Societies," Ibid, No.91, July 1866.

289. Ibid, No.4, October 1863.

290. W. Brown, A Century of London Co-Operation, (1928), Chapter VII; P. Backstrom, Christian Socialism and Co-Operation in Victorian England, (1974), Chapter 7; A. Bonner, British Co-Operation, (Manchester, 1961), pp.498-99.

291. Co-Operative News, 10 August 1878.

to stimulate interest in the Guild and its work clubs could obtain free lecturers from the Guild as well as three month's free supply of Co-operative News.<sup>(292)</sup> During a speech at the Co-Operative Congress in Manchester he set out the benefits which would follow from bringing the two movements together:

The co-operators would supply the prudence, thoughtfulness and steadiness, knowledge of the best means of saving and making the most of savings, or rendering the economical condition of the labourer more secure than it has ever been. On the other hand, the clubbites would teach the co-operators to become more social, to take an interest in combined efforts for enjoyment, for the cultivation of political knowledge, intellectual improvement, and the culture of the higher faculties ... every club should have its co-operative store, and every co-operative store its club. (293)

But both movements seemed reluctant to move into closer harmony. A body such as the Castle Street Co-Operative Institute which combined club and store was very unusual.<sup>(294)</sup> An earlier appeal for co-operative stores to attach themselves to clubs had been sharply rejected. Societies in the north thought such a move unnecessary, even inimical to the movement's progress.<sup>(295)</sup> Pratt aided by Holyoake proposed that the CIU combine with the Co-Operative News to become the official journal of the club movement. The idea was made at the 1878 Congress. However, the board of

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292. Guild of Co-Operators, Annual Report, No.4, (1882), p.4.

293. Report of the Co-Operative Congress, No.10 (Manchester, 1878), p.21.

294. Capital and Labour, 10 March 1875.

295. Co-Operative News, 20 January and 27 January 1872. The Co-operative Societies seem to grow distinctly cooler towards the Union after the clubs began to sell drink.

the newspaper rejected the idea alleging that it would do damage to the circulation. Although the Central Board was favourable to the merger, regretting its rejection by the News, nothing more could be done.<sup>(296)</sup> In terms of the future of the Union the most important step taken by the Guild was the appointment of a young radical bricklayer, J. J. Dent, to the position of Honorary Secretary in August 1880.<sup>(297)</sup> Pratt's ambition to unite clubs and co-operation had had little success. Disappointment was not defeat. Pratt's first tries at uniting clubs with co-operation had been rebuffed. Nonetheless he was determined to keep the idea before the club movement and to do all possible to make the clubs a base for co-operative work.

What of the clubs themselves? How had the growth of the movement affected them? How were they organised and who frequented them?

Although the advance and prosperity of the club movement can be illustrated by a series of statistical tables there is no similar way in which the progress of the constituent clubs can be clearly represented. For the central point about the club was its variety; it is impossible to present some ideal type club based on an averaging of features to be found in different clubs. All that can be done is to present some aspects of the development of the club.

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296. Co-Operative Congress, No.11, (Manchester, 1879), p.21. At the end of Solly's tenure of editorship of the Bee-Hive, he had tried, also unsuccessfully, to make the newspaper the official organ of co-operation, S. Coltham, "George Potter and the Bee-Hive Newspaper," (D.Phil. Thesis, Univ. Oxford, 1956), pp.235-36.

297. Co-Operative News, 7 August 1880.

Building is the most logical place to begin. Club life was enjoyed in a variety of surroundings. A few clubs were privileged to meet in purpose built premises, their erection and amenities having been paid for by a local benefactor. Up to the 1880's examples of this type of club were rare. Where they existed they were usually "model" institutes such as the Wisbech. In York, in the mid 70's, the Castlegate Club, had its exterior designed to resemble a public house, "gaily painted ... [with] the windows surmounted by large letters, in gold and crimson, setting forth to passers-by the name of the institution." (298) With the rapid expansion of the movement from the mid 80's some working men began to think about erecting a purpose built club themselves. Clubs such as the Peckham Radical and the Hatcham Liberal, both in south-east London, were products of the 1880's boom. Some opponents of the club movement were rather dismissive of the architectural pretensions of the clubmen. An East End radical club was described by a city missionary thus:

The building occupied by the club is a gloomy looking place, built of brick with square openings for windows, very suggestive of a country madhouse. (299)

In northern England the growth of purpose built clubs was assisted by the work of friendly societies which began to erect clubs for members. An example of this form of development is given by the Barnsley Friendly Societies Club, founded in the late 80's to cater for the 7,000 members of local friendly societies. Moreover the

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298. British Almanack and Companion, 1875, p.92. The club had 500 members.

299. London City Mission Magazine, Vol.52(611), October 1887.

the process of building clubs was eased when clubs mainly in the north began to raise money by issuing shares in the club to members. Normally every member was required to take at least one 5/- share which went towards the building fund.

The majority of clubs had to content themselves, at least in their early years, with far more modest premises. For working men starting with few resources the most likely solution was to rent a house, or suite of rooms in a house, for use as a club. The Industrial Working Men's Club in Morley began with nine members meeting in a cottage to play dominoes. It grew steadily to some 80 members when larger premises were obtained.<sup>(300)</sup> Some decorating, the purchase or borrowing of some furniture, and the affixing of a plate on the wall outside and the club was in operation. Clubs commonly began with two or three rooms and then expanded as the venture proved more popular eventually moving into larger and better-appointed premises. The Hand-in-Hand Club, Liverpool, met in a building formerly used by Welsh baptists as a chapel but they "have got on in the world, and have migrated leaving their old sanctuary, after some considerable alterations, to be pressed into the service of a club."<sup>(301)</sup>

For those with outside assistance the first step towards the creation of the club might be the renting of a house while for those clubs which evolved from reading rooms all that was initially required was to expand the amenities offered by the room. Obtaining suitable premises was seldom an easy task. Landlords might be

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300. CIU, Annual Report, No.20, (1882), p.33.

301. Temperance Star, 15 October 1874.

reluctant to allow the rooms to be used as a club, particularly if drink was to be sold, and some guarantees for the rent would usually be required. For many clubs this was where the support of the local gentry might prove to be crucial for their agreement to act as trustees or guarantors would often convince hesitant landlords that the risk involved in leasing was minimal. Financial pressure was probably the most important influence in prompting working men to seek external aid, for besides the rent there would be a host of other bills, for fuel and light, for example, to be met, (302)

Of the general social composition of the trustees little is known although they tended to be recruited from the local shopkeepers, clergy, gentlemen and small masters who lived close to the club. The first trustees of the Victoria Working Men's Club, Sheerness, which opened in 1872, were a tailor and outfitter, a chief officer of the coastguard, and a photographer. (303) The friendly society which met at the St. James and Soho Club had three trustees, a porter, a jeweller and an accoutrement maker, two of whom lived locally, while the jeweller lived in Battersea. Later all three were replaced by a teacher, tailor, and salesman. The secretary of the fund was a local furniture dealer. (304)

One way of raising funds to commence club work or to support expansion was to hold a soiree or conversazione in aid of funds

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302. Hemming, M. Ed. Thesis, *op.cit.*, pp.55-62 stresses the importance of financial constraints.

303. W. Wood, A History of the Victoria Working Men's Club, (Sheerness, n.d. 1925?). This is one of the best of the official histories of particular clubs, most of which are little more than exercises in institutional hagiography.

304. PRO FS/15/464/736, London EA.

such as that organised by the Dorking Club in February 1861. Presided over by Lady Cavendish, the evening consisted of a vocal and instrumental entertainment given by Messrs. Slappoffski followed by a members' dance. (305) At Rotherham Working Men's Club a campaign to raise the £50 required to set up the club was held in early 1864. The annual rent of £34 was to come from the members who paid 8d per month subscription and the takings from various games. (306) Members of the Shoreditch Club attending the annual meeting of 1866 were told that in the previous year the club had an income of £54.11.7d realised from members' subscriptions, income from entertainments, and a donation of 21/- from the local vicar. (307)

For most clubs the income from membership was not enough on which to manage. Thus there was a need to supplement it with money raised from other sources. Amongst the most popular means of expanding income were the hiring of rooms to friendly societies, temperance societies, or trade organisations, mounting public readings and elocutionary entertainments and holding bazaars or exhibitions. At the Wisbech club, for example, an exhibition and bazaar in the summer of 1868 raised over £300 in two days. (308)

The need to underwrite the rent and to maintain a steady

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305. Lecturers' Gazette, March 1861.

306. Inquirer, 29 April 1864.

307. Lecturers' Gazette, March 1866.

308. "The Business Uses of Working Men's Clubs, CIU, Occasional Paper, No.3, (1863) and "Experience in the Management of Working Men's Clubs," Occasional Paper, No.12, (August, 1868).

income was also likely to influence the character of the initial membership of the club. Men known locally with roots in the community were more likely to come forward as members or be accepted on to committees than relative strangers. The respectable artisan was far more likely to be looked upon with favour than the transient labourer.

Having overcome the hurdle of obtaining premises the next problem was fitting them out in order to make them suitable for the enjoyment of club life. Most clubs were decorated and furnished by the selfless labours of the members who gave up their free time after work to paint and make ready the club. Sometimes their work was aided by well-wishers. At the Castlegate club local businessmen donated furnishings, floor-coverings, and gave help with the alterations.<sup>(309)</sup> Greenwalk Club, Bermondsey, benefitted from the donation of a series of paintings comprising "many chefs d'oeuvres of the Italian, Spanish, and Dutch Schools, besides works of merit by English Artists."<sup>(310)</sup> Most clubs, however, relied on the free labour of the membership together, no doubt, with the unrewarded work of the womenfolk in making up curtains and furnishings for the institution. Skilled workmen could transform modest premises into a first class club. J. J. Dent, later secretary of the Union, worked upon the Eleusis Club with his father. His skill as a bricklayer and his general enthusiasm for the project was rewarded when he was honoured by being admitted to membership although just 15 years of age. He was the only member of the Eleusis allowed to join before reaching 21.<sup>(311)</sup>

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309. A. Peacock, "York's First Working Men's Club," York History, No.2, (1974), p.91

310. Lecturers' Gazette, April 1873.

311. CIJ, May 1901.



When the Cobden Club, Kensal Road, decided to erect a new building it was on the understanding that it would be constructed by the labour of "members who are chiefly connected with the building trades, and who have agreed to take only one half in wages the other half will be taken in debentures."<sup>(312)</sup> At the opening ceremony of the new club the platform was not filled with the usual assortment of noblemen but included Firth, Broadhurst, Passmore Edwards and Helen Taylor.<sup>(313)</sup> Even at the end of the century the importance of members' free work had not diminished. Of Norwich I.L.P. club it was reported that "various craftsmen in the Party have put in at least £100 worth of voluntary labour in fitting out and decorating the premises."<sup>(314)</sup>

Deciding on the use of the rooms would be the next item the members would have to consider. If pressed for space then some rooms would have to serve a dual purpose. The major room, for example, might be used for lectures, concerts, and entertainments. The reading room might also have to be used on certain evenings as a smoking or conversation room. As far as possible the following was regarded as the minimum requirements for a club to function - a reading room, a smoking and conversation room, a games room, a room for holding classes or small meetings (perhaps also doubling as a library), and a larger room for concerts, public meetings and the like. A games room was usually adopted by most clubs. It contained the billiards and bagatelle tables which provided

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312. House and Home, 4 September 1880. The club had begun with a mere dozen members in 1875.

313. CIU, Annual Report, No.19, (1881), pp.24-25.

314. I.L.P. News, No.11, February 1898.

clubs with their greatest source of income after the bar. In 1872 the Green Walk Club received over £54 from the hire of its lecture hall and from the bagatelle tables. (315) The cost of such equipment was quickly returned. (316) A decent room for concerts and theatricals could also provide the club with a valuable source of revenue. (317) There were a few clubs which had space for a gym and a few fortunate clubs in towns and in villages had a patch of land where members could play games in summer. Beyond these minimum facilities the use of premises varied greatly. Members of the West Ham Radical Club decided to convert the front of their premises into a barber's shop for the convenience of members and to increase its income. (318) Marylebone Working Men's was almost unique in setting aside one floor of the club for use as a co-operative store. (319) At the Upholsterers' Club the members had facilities for dining on the premises. (320) The need for income was especially important during the early years of the movement as there was a tendency for clubs to lose members in the summer months when working men would enjoy the fine evenings

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315. Lecturers' Gazette, April 1873. Billiard-table makers such as George Edwards were familiar figures in London clubland and adverts for their products were prominently displayed in the club journals.
316. For a price list of such equipment see, J. Adams, op.cit., Appendix, p.14.
317. R. Logsdon, Working Men's Clubs and How to make them Self Supporting, (n.d. 1872?), p.5.
318. CIJ, 5 November 1887.
319. Bee-Hive, 3 September 1864.
320. CIJ, 23 April 1887.

with their families and friends or take the opportunities offered by good weather for earning overtime. Any schemes which helped keep clubs together in summer, such as organising trips to the country, were seized upon for a fine summer and a mild autumn could ruin an otherwise popular club.

Room allocation, when space was at a premium had to be thought out carefully. Bad management could make life unbearable for the membership. Class work, for example, could be neglected if it was held on those evenings when the billiards tournament was to take place.<sup>(321)</sup> It required great tolerance on the part of the members to make these often rudimentary conditions bearable and to prevent the association breaking up at the first upset.

Having resolved the practical issues the club could now open for business. For those elected to serve on the committees the responsibilities were now beginning. There were rules to be drawn up and matters of procedure to be decided upon, at Benego Working Men's Club, for instance, it was a rule that "no games or publications be admitted without the consent of the committee."<sup>(322)</sup> The Union supplied model rule books which clubs could purchase, simply adding their own name in the space provided. Most clubs took these rules adding their own laws to suit local needs. Rule 6 of the Walthamstow Club informed the member that "No Smoking, Singing, Disorderly Conduct, Improper Language, or other practice

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321. According to Bax, Shaw was booked to lecture at one club only to find the members engrossed in a game of billiards. He inquired of the players what was happening as he was supposed to deliver a lecture in the same room. To Shaw's discomfort the players told him they "didn't want no dam'd lecture," and carried on with their game. B. Bax, Reminiscences and Reflections of a Mid and Late Victorian, (1918), p.113.

322. F. Catt, The First Hundred Years of Benego Working Men's Club. (Benego. Herts.. n.d. 1978?). p.13.

likely to give annoyance to the Members shall be allowed in the club room."<sup>(323)</sup> Rule books also contained details of the hours at which the club would be open. Even after the clubs sold alcohol it was a decision of the club as to what hours members would be admitted. The committee also had to decide the procedures for membership of the club, for example, at what age were members to be admitted, how long did a member have to be proposed before he could be elected into membership, what charges would be made for membership and admission, would the associate card scheme be adopted and if so would any restrictions be placed upon its use? One club, at Yalding, even went as far as having a blackball system to decide membership; one in three was enough to exclude.<sup>(324)</sup>

If the members voted in favour of intoxicants then further regulations had to be considered such as the hours of bar opening. Drink facilities forced clubs to pay close attention to matters of administrative detail. Stewards to control admission at the door became essential for if non-members gained admission and managed to obtain liquor in the club then an offence against the licensing laws had been committed. It was vital that at all times the club was open it was adequately supervised by someone from the committee or directly answerable to them. Drink selling clubs could ill afford a lax attitude towards admissions. By the late 80's many of the largest London clubs had a steward who was a paid official of the club. At the United Radical he was paid £90 p.a. and was the most important of a number of paid workers employed by the club

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323. A. Barker, Fifty Years a Club, (1913), p.11.

324. W. Galpin, in CIU, Practical Club Management: Prize Essays, (1885), p.12.

including a cashier, doorkeeper, pot-man and billiard-maker. (325)

Most clubs allowed smoking although there were some clubs, such as the Castlegate, where its admission caused much debate. (326)

The same was true of the issue of Sunday opening. By the late 70's most clubs opened the same hours on Sunday as the rest of the week. In this respect they differed from other counter-attractionist schemes where Sunday closing was customary, the result of the attitudes of their benefactors who desired that the Sabbath be kept as a family day. (327)

Takings from the bar, entertainments, and games room required the committee to be vigilant to ensure that no irregularities occurred in book-keeping. The post of treasurer grew in importance throughout this period. The Union stressed the need to maintain proper accounts suggesting that clubs send in their balance sheets to headquarters for evaluation. (328) By 1912 affiliated clubs could take advantage of the free offer from the Union of having their books audited annually.

Clubs were above all democratic bodies and their committees were elected to office. Elections were usually held in the spring or autumn often being accompanied by an anniversary dinner. The third annual meeting of the Brickcroft Club, Rochdale, was held at the Town Hall on 1st January 1878. Over 300 members and wives sat

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325. W. Pett-Ridge, "Club Life in East London," National Review, Vol.18, September 1891.

326. Peacock, op.cit., p.90.

327. R. Calkins, Substitutes for the Saloon, (Boston, 1901), p.251; M. Hennell, "Evangelicalism and Worldliness," G. Cuming and D. Baker, Popular Belief and Practice, (Cambridge, 1972), pp.234-35.

328. See samples of balance sheets published regularly in the Workman's Magazine, or the WMCJ.

down to the tea and after the Annual General Meeting had been held a members' ball commenced, dancing going on until 3 a.m., (329)

Committee duties were not to be taken lightly. At the United Brothers Club the committee met once a week and any committee member who failed to attend on three consecutive meetings without good cause had to appear before his fellows to explain his absence. If he failed to give a satisfactory account of his conduct he was expelled. (330)

During the early years of the movement there were three major offices, the President, Secretary and Treasurer. A few clubs also had Vice-Presidents and these honorary positions often went to the local M.P. or Parliamentary candidate in addition to any benefactors the club had. During the 80's many additional offices grew up of which the most crucial were the Political Secretary, who was in charge of the Political Council of the Club, a common feature of all radical clubs, an Entertainments Secretary, and an Educational Secretary, although many clubs combined the offices of Political and Educational Secretary. Many clubs were said only to come alive in the weeks preceding an election with various factions fighting to gain office. The annual general meeting was held before the formal elections. This gave members a chance to express their approbation or disapproval of the policies pursued during the year. For the committee it was an opportunity to sound out general club opinion on matters of organisation. Should money be set aside for the purchase of the mortgage? for example, or should more money

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329. WMCJ, 2 February 1878.

330. United Brothers Club, Rules, (1888).

be spent on the library or on billiard tables? Presidents represented the club on external bodies, their role being that of ambassadors of the club movement. Many London presidents, for example, were also ex,officio Vice-Presidents of the Workmen's Auxiliary of the Sunday Society. The Political and Entertainments Secretaries were often regarded as being in friendly rivalry for the loyalty of the membership; the former took charge of all the political work undertaken by the club from arranging political lectures to raising donations from the membership for the variety of political causes which had called upon the club for aid. At demonstrations it was the President accompanied by the Political Secretary who led the club contingent, being followed by the members of the Political Council who also carried the club's banner. All that passed for entertainment was the preserve of the Entertainment Secretary. He booked the artists for variety evenings, arranged bands for club dances, hired theatrical companies, as well as co-ordinating the entertainments put on by the club for the wider community, such as childrens' parties which by the late 80's became a regular fixture at Christmas time in the London clubs. Most radical clubs, by the mid 80's, had their own bands and all radical clubs aspired to have their own banners for use on marches and demonstrations. The John Bright club took delivery of its new banner in late October 1887. Its colours were mauve, white and green with the words "Liberty and Progress" dyed into it in yellow and red. The club hoped that Bradlaugh would preside over a formal unfurling.<sup>(331)</sup> The fourth anniversary of the United

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331. CIJ, 3 September 1887.

Radical was the occasion for the presenting of the new banner.

Mr. George Howell presided and Mr. Bradlaugh unfurled the banner:

The obverse side bears the name of the club and an artistically conceived emblem of its political and social nature, whilst the reverse side displays a figure of Liberty trampling upon the prostrate form of Despotism, with his shattered shackles and his minions Priestcraft and Privilege. Surrounding this device are medallion portraits of Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Bradlaugh, the late Mr. Odger, the late Mr. Ernest Jones, and Mr. Dorell, the Secretary of the Club. (332)

"A Brighter Dawn Awaits the Human Day," was the motto chosen for display on the new banner of the North Camberwell Progressive Club. Speaking at the unfurling ceremony, Mr. Woodmances remarked that the banner's motif was being borne out "for the time was coming when there would be a universal brotherhood, when every man would be equal with his brother." (333)

Membership in the clubs was of two kinds - ordinary and honorary. The latter consisted of those who had aided the club in some way or upon whom the club wished to confer membership. They usually paid no less than 10/- p.a. to the club, most paying more. At Slaithwaite Labour Club, under Rule 14, employers were eligible for membership in the Club provided that they paid the trade union rates to their employees. This Rule was taken seriously by the club, for instance a small employer, G. Haigh, was expelled because the workers in his knitting factory were paid

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332. CIJ, 2 April 1887.

333. South London Leader, 12 July 1890. See also, Michael Davitt's speech at unfurling ceremony of banner of West Southwark Radical, Labour World, 26 October 1890. The new banner of the Hackney Radical Club bore the inscription:

"That there should be classes that exclusively labour and classes that exclusively enjoy the fruits of other people's labour is opposed to reason and justice," CIJ, 28 April 1894.



below the local union rate. (334) In most clubs the bulk of membership were ordinary members paying their subscriptions monthly or quarterly, although some clubs allowed weekly payments. It was suggested that 2d per week would suffice for a country club, although where there were insufficient members to make certain activities feasible a district union might be set up to spread the expense. (335) For Metropolitan clubs in the mid 80's it was thought that 3d per week was the minimum that could be charged if the club was to survive. (336) Some idea of the range of membership and entrance fees is given by Table 3, below. As to the size of total membership of the Union in the 80's the Union worked on an average of 150 members per club. By 1912 this figure had increased to 306 from a previous working figure of 287 in 1905. (337)

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334. D. Clarke, "The Labour Movement in the Colne Valley," (Ph. D. Thesis, Univ. Sheffield, 1978), p.280.
335. Rev. J. Marshall, "Working Men's Clubs," Temperance Chronicle, 10 January 1896; E. Kerrison, "Village Clubs," Royal Agricultural Society Journal, Vol. 13, (1877), p.376.
336. Practical Club Management, p.6.
337. CIU, Annual Report, No.50, (1912), p.52.

**TABLE 3: Membership Charges and Entrance Fees at Metropolitan and Provincial Clubs, 1889, 1894, 1901.**

|            | 1889<br>(N-306) |    |          |     | 1894<br>(N-439) |    |          |     | 1901<br>(N-721) |     |          |     |
|------------|-----------------|----|----------|-----|-----------------|----|----------|-----|-----------------|-----|----------|-----|
|            | Subs.           |    | Entrance |     | Subs.           |    | Entrance |     | Subs.           |     | Entrance |     |
|            | M               | P  | M        | P   | M               | P  | M        | P   | M               | P   | M        | P   |
| Not known. | -               | -  | -        | -   | -               | -  | -        | -   | -               | -   | -        | -   |
| 2d- 3d     | -               | 8  | -        | -   | -               | 34 | -        | -   | 19              | -   | -        | 126 |
| 3d- 6d     | 57              | 97 | 50       | 190 | 26              | 36 | 36       | 401 | 1               | 103 | -        | -   |
| 6d- 9d     | 57              | 45 | 75       | 52  | 93              | 88 | 74       | 52  | 20              | 59  | -        | -   |
| 9d-1/-     | 31              | 5  | 24       | 5   | -               | -  | 29       | 12  | -               | -   | -        | -   |
| 1/- - 2/-  | 7               | 2  | 6        | -   | 11              | 22 | 6        | 7   | 90              | 275 | 11       | 59  |
| 2/- +      | -               | -  | -        | -   | -               | 8  | -        | 25  | 6               | 6   | 6        | 56  |

NOTE: Subscriptions are expressed in terms of monthly payments.

SOURCE: CIU, Annual Reports, No.27; No.33 and No.39. Appendix Tables IX & X.

M = Metropolitan Club  
P = Provincial Club

Little detailed evidence has been found on the composition of club membership. What evidence does exist suggests that there is no reason to doubt that the overwhelming majority of club members were men in receipt of weekly wages. This did not mean that no one from the lower middle class ever joined a working man's club. Many small tradesmen or shopkeepers were members either because they enrolled or because they acted as club trustees. There were also examples of men who joined the movement as artisans and progressed to become supervisors, foremen, or some other intermediate occupation. However, there was never the take over of the club movement by the lower middle class as had allegedly happened with the mechanics' institutes. Working men remained firmly in control in the clubs and democratisation only served to confirm and reinforce their dominance. At Newcastle the better sort of craftsman controlled the committee in the early 70's while the Camden Town Club was governed by a committee of varied occupations as Table 4 shows.<sup>(338)</sup>

**TABLE 4:** The Social Composition of the Camden Town Club Committee.

| Number | Occupation               |
|--------|--------------------------|
| 3      | Journeymen Upholsterers. |
| 1      | Carriage Maker           |
| 1      | Bookbinder               |
| 1      | Cook                     |
| 1      | Fretcutter               |
| 1      | Glass painter            |
| 1      | Press-reader             |
| 5      | Clerks                   |
| 1      | Tin-plate maker          |
| 2      | Piano makers             |
| 3      | Printers                 |
| 1      | Telegraph Machinist      |
| 1      | Tailor                   |
| 1      | China-warehouseman       |
| 1      | Packer                   |

SOURCE: Working Man, 17 March 1866.

338. For Newcastle, see Minute Books, (Newcastle Public Libraries); P. Bailey, op.cit., 119-20.

A recent study has also offered information on some of the working men active in the Birmingham Working Men's Club as Table 5 indicates:-

**TABLE 5:** Prominent Artisans involved with Birmingham Working Men's Club.

| Number | Trade                    |
|--------|--------------------------|
| 1      | Pin & Rivet Maker        |
| 1      | Manager                  |
| 1      | Artistic metal operative |
| 3      | Brassworkers             |
| 1      | Printer                  |
| 2      | Cordwainers              |
| 1      | Jewellery operative      |
| 1      | Gun-barrel maker         |
| 1      | Carpenter                |
| 1      | Clerk                    |
| 1      | Commission Agent         |
| 1      | Boot and Shoe Maker      |
| 1      | Milliner.                |

SOURCE: A. Hooper, "Mid Victorian Radicalism: Community and Class in Birmingham, 1850-1880," (Ph. D. Thesis, Univ. London, 1978), Appendix IX(1)

By far the most detailed piece of evidence concerning membership comes from the occupations of 1459 members of the Jewish Working Men's Club given in its first Annual Report, 1875:

**TABLE 6:** Occupations of Members of the Jewish Working Men's Club.

| Number | Occupation        |
|--------|-------------------|
| 305    | Tailors           |
| 197    | General dealers   |
| 184    | Cigar Makers      |
| 77     | Travellers        |
| 36     | Boot-makers       |
| 32     | Machinists        |
| 31     | Butchers          |
| 29     | Cabinet makers    |
| 27     | Clerks            |
| 22     | Cutlers           |
| 16     | Clickers          |
| 15     | Furniture brokers |
| 13     | Diamond workers   |
| 12     | Jewellers         |
| 12     | Teachers          |

TABLE 6: cont.

| Number | Occupation           |
|--------|----------------------|
| 11     | Feathermakers        |
| 10     | Dressmakers          |
| 9      | Fishmongers          |
| 9      | Furriers             |
| 9      | Waterproofers        |
| 8      | Hatters              |
| 6      | Carvers              |
| 6      | Gilders              |
| 5      | Printers             |
| 5      | Tinsmiths            |
| 4      | Bakers               |
| 4      | Confectioners        |
| 3      | Bookbinders          |
| 3      | Carpenters           |
| 3      | Cooks                |
| 2      | Looking-glass makers |

SOURCE: J. Jacobs, Studies in Jewish Statistics: Social, Vital and Anthropometric, (1891), p.39.

Note: 300 did not give their occupation.

In the late 1860's nearly all the 42 members of the Lowerhouses Club were mill-workers, while in 1863 70 clerks and 650 skilled workmen and labourers made up the membership of the Southampton Club. (339) - Bradley Mills Club, Huddersfield, drew its membership from local carpenters and gasfitters. (340) In 1875 the Batley Working Men's Club had 364 members of which 46 were tradesmen, 28 clerks, 83 joiners and masons and 205 were operatives. (341) Of the seven working men's clubs in the newer working class suburbs of York Rowntree stated the membership to be drawn from "skilled

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339. Hemming, Thesis, op.cit., p.174; Nonconformist, 15 July 1863.

340. CIU, Annual Report, No.8, (1870), p.28.

341. Popple, Thesis, op.cit., Vol.1, p.99.

workers and general labourers, and some of them to a small extent by clerks.<sup>(342)</sup> Leeds Working Men's Institute was said to be frequented by all sections of the labouring class "who mix harmoniously together from respectable artizans to the low fellows who may be seen leaning against the wall of public houses or frequenting concert halls or similar places."<sup>(343)</sup> The London Artizan's Club was said to be composed solely of artizans, no labourers having applied for admission.<sup>(344)</sup> Most of the literature on the club movement indicated that the respectable aristocrat of labour was in the ascendant in club land. This is not surprising for not only did they have the cultural tradition which made it more likely that they would join clubs, but they also had the incomes necessary to enjoy the facilities which the club offered. Those characteristics of this stratum most emphasised by Hobsbawm - above average earnings, security of employment, and regularity of employment - were the material basis on which the club movement was built. Without members who were able to pay the various costs and charges involved in membership and to maintain those payments over the year the club movement would have failed.<sup>(345)</sup> These included the membership fee, the entrance fee, and the payment for the associate

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342. B. Rowntree, Poverty: A Study of Town Life, (1901), p.327.

343. Leeds Working Men's Institute, p.5.

344. H. Solly, Evidence in Second Report of the Commissioners Appointed to Inquire into Friendly and Benefit Building Societies, Part II, P.P. 1872 xxvi, Q.8410.

345. E. Hobsbawm, "The Labour Aristocracy," Labouring Men, (1964), pp.273-4; Idem, "The Labour Aristocracy Reconsidered," M. Flinn (Ed), Proceedings of the Seventh International Congress of Economic History, (Edinburgh, 1979).

card. As the movement advanced, so the costs increased. In addition there were charges for games, some clubs made an admission charge to the concert hall on variety nights, there were drinks and cigars to be bought, payment for classes and excursions, and "whips" or other donations to political causes. The scale and variety of these costs varied from club to club but all members would have to meet the minimum charges for admission and membership. Club beer was perhaps slightly cheaper than pub beer, its real attraction however, was not its cheapness but its purity. Club beer was held to be free from the adulteration common at the corner tap room.

Those involved with the early club movement were of the opinion that "every inducement" to become members of clubs ought to be offered to the "upper section" of working men. It was thought that the movement would be unlikely "to retain the membership of the lower sections of the operatives."<sup>(346)</sup> In particular it was thought that the movement would benefit from the presence of men who had made the practice of "respectability" and "independence" the cornerstone of their life style and ideology.<sup>(347)</sup> However the positive contribution made by the artisans had to be set against the charges that they were narrow and exclusive in their dealings with others, especially with the class of labourers below them. During the prize giving at the Artisan's Institute Alsager Hill

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346. Inquirer, 2 July 1864; WMCJ, 5 January 1878.

347. R. Gray, "The Labour Aristocracy in the Victorian Class Structure," in F. Parkin (Ed), The Social Analysis of Class Structure, (1974), pp.24-26; G. Crossick, "The Labour Aristocracy and Its Values: A Study of Mid-Victorian Kentish London," Victorian Studies, Vol.19(3), 1976, pp. 305-08; T. Tholfsen, "The Artisan and the Culture of Early Victorian Birmingham," University of Birmingham Historical Journal, 4(2), 1953/54, pp.147-48 and 157-65.

took the opportunity to lecture the assembly on the "narrowness of some artisans who wished to exclude what they were pleased to call the 'unskilled labourers' from their institutes." If these organisations were to prosper he concluded then "class distinction amongst men must be forgotten."<sup>(348)</sup> The attitude of disdainful superiority adopted by some clubmen towards their fellow-workers was also rebuked by Gaston:

There is no aristocracy of labour; all are equal, all necessary to the world, and for one to set himself up, because he belongs to one particular trade, above another who follows a craft of a different sort, is to prove himself a snob of the most ignorant sort. (349)

During the early years of the movement there were examples of clubs which were organised around the division between artisan and labourer. At Chowleigh Working Man's Club, North Devon, founded by the Countess of Portsmouth, the club was open on different nights to different groups. The artisans had two nights, labourers two, and youths, two. The club was closed on Sunday. In the afternoons the club admitted women.<sup>(350)</sup> In a village club in Hampshire tradesmen were not admitted with labourers. The former had the club from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. while the latter enjoyed its facilities from 5.30-10.30 p.m. There were even differential subscriptions with tradesmen paying 2d per week and labourers 1d.<sup>(351)</sup> Clubbability

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348. National Reformer, 9 September 1877; See also, Capital and Labour, 21 October 1874; Inquirer, 14 May 1865.

349. CIJ, 25 June 1887.

350. CIU, Annual Report, No.8, (1870), pp.25-26.

351. Times, 4 January 1873; see also letters from Tidcombe and Redwell on 8th and 9th January concurring that labourers and artisans mixed but little during their free time.



deserves to be considered as one of the important dimensions of the life style of the labour aristocrat, to be added to those other attributes such as thrift and respectability. The dominance of the artisan, however, did not mean that club life was unknown to the less favoured working man. One observer cited the example of the large and powerful Boro' of Hackney club as disproof of the general rule that it "was only for the best class of skilled artisans that club members are derived and that the genus "Rough" is not largely represented."<sup>(352)</sup>

In any discussion of membership the position of two other groups needs to be considered - women and youths. During the formative years of the club movement there had been some talk on the propriety of admitting women to membership, as they had been, for example, at the Charlton Marshall Club.<sup>(353)</sup> Admitting women was held to bring two benefits. Firstly it would give women a place to spend their free time in the company of their menfolk. Secondly the feminine presence in the club room would do much to assure good order and decency. In some philanthropic clubs women were admitted but it was argued that many men felt uncomfortable with women in the club.<sup>(354)</sup> At Saltaire they were admitted paying a lower subscription than the men, 1/- a quarter compared to 2/-.<sup>(355)</sup> Maurice was in favour of their membership. Speaking

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352. St. James Magazine and United Empire Review, Vol.33, February 1878; see also the report of James Lowe, President of the Club in CIU, Annual Report, No.16, (1878), pp.22-23.

353. It was not clear whether Solly and Thomas' "Albert Institutes" project would have admitted women.

354. National Review, Vol.10, January 1860.

355. A. Holroyd, op.cit., p.21.

at the opening of a working man's institute he told the men in the mixed audience:

There are plenty of clubs ... to which people who have leisure resort to when they are tired of their hearth and homes ... Well, I do not wish you to regard this hall as such a club; I want you to regard it as a place to which you may bring your wives and children - as a place in which they may learn as well as you. (356)

J. S. Mill, as might be expected, was strongly sympathetic to female membership. Writing to William Trant he complained:

I am sorry to see that the rules of the Cobden Club, Bermondsay Square, limits its advantages to males. I should like to see women admitted on equal terms to all such societies. At least the benefits of the library surely, on every consideration, could be extended to them. (357)

Emily Faithfull too thought that women should be given formal membership as it would help them to appreciate the club's reforming influence upon their menfolk. (358) The exclusion of women troubled a number of commentators on Pratt's paper to the Co-Operative Congress in 1891. Miss Becker and Mr. Greening spoke for many when they insisted that the clubs ought to be for the whole family. (359)

The issue was debated at the 1873 Annual Meeting. Speaking

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356. F. Maurice, Lecture delivered at the Opening of Norwood Working Men's Institute, (1860). The building had been erected at the expense of a local gentleman, Arthur Anderson and cost £2,500. Speaking at the formal opening of the Haley Hill Club, Halifax, Stansfield was happy to note that women were to be admitted to the club. "The time had come to throw overboard the old conventionalisms on this subject, and he did not see why the people of both sexes should not enjoy together the advantages of such an institution," he told a cheering audience. Englishwoman's Review, No.70, February 1879.
357. J. S. Mill, Later Letters, Vol.XVII, Letter dated 15 November 1870.
358. E. Faithfull, "The Influence of Working Men's Clubs on Their Homes," Transactions, N.A.P.S.S. (1871), p.523.
359. Co-Operative Congress, (Manchester, 1871), pp.12-13.

from the Chair, the Marquis of Lorne wryly noted that many of:

the London clubs are not very popular with the ladies - indeed if women's suffrage ever became law several of these clubs would be abolished by Act of Parliament. Such, he was sure, would not be the case with working men's clubs, for the wives of working men patronised them freely and were glad to welcome them as means of drawing their husbands and sons from the pot-house and gin-palace.

Speeches in favour of the membership of women were made by Mr. Hickcox and Miss Smith, Secretary of the Women's Suffrage Association. However, most of the delegates while admitting that women might profit by admission to the library and to the entertainments were opposed on "moral" grounds to formal membership. (360)

For most of the 70's and 80's the issue was not so much the admission of women but the need to win their support for the club cause, a task given much urgency by the campaign against the drink-selling club which presented the women as its implacable foe.

Neil cautioned the promoters of clubs against presenting them as a rival to the home. He proposed that the "sympathies of the mothers of a district ought to be duly enlisted in its prosperity." (361) A similar point was made by the President of the Bishop's Stortford Club, Mr. Gilbey, at the annual dinner. He urged members to think of ways in which women could be brought into closer relationship with the club while he asked the ladies present to "use their influence with young men and induce them to join; he believed it was the safest investment they could make." (362)

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360. Lecturers' Gazette, August 1873. See also the editorial in support of the women's case, Ibid, February 1874.

361. S. Neil, op.cit., p.91

362. Women's Union Journal, Vol.2(13), February 1877.

Before joining in a campaign to found a club for the working men of Holborn the Rev. Worthington canvassed the opinion of the local bible women concerning the tendency of such institutes. Finding them favourable he went ahead with the scheme. (363)

There was much opposition, often clerical, to the clubs which played upon the theme of the club as subversive of domestic comfort. For J. Symington (a compositor) in a prize essay on the "Working Man's Home" the true club for the working man was his family; he did not want philanthropists founding clubs or other bodies which would draw the labourer away from the domestic circle. (364)

The Rev. Charles Collyns appealed to working mothers:

Do not let your lads be club lads; let them be home lads. Old England will prosper, and real reforms make way if her people are a home loving people. If they become essentially clubmen, good-bye to the sturdy English spirit. (365)

The supposed antagonism between club and home was another reason given by Burns for his dislike of the working man's club for if they did not lead to drunkenness then they did produce "the desertion of the home, and the abandonment of domestic and social obligations." (366) Wives were warned that men who regularly resorted to a club generally made "a very poor specimen of a husband." (367) In the

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363. Lecturers' Gazette, March 1868.

364. J. Symington in J. Begg, Happy Homes for Working Men and How to get Them, (1866), pp.176-77

365. "Home Life v. Club Life," House and Home, 16 August, 1879; See also, "Club Life and Home Life," Temperance Record, 13 February 1879.

366. J. Burns, Labour and Drink, (1904), p.46

367. London Temperance Times, No.81, July 1900.

idealised portrait of home life the father was a central figure:

making toys for his children, decorating the walls of the home with Landseer's pictures in self-made frames, constructing some useful ornament, piece of furniture for home use or an industrial exhibition. (368)

Club life broke up the unity of the family depriving the family of the soothing yet guiding hand of the pater-familias. "It is the duty of sisters," extolled the Rev. Walker, "to make their brothers so happy that they will not want to spend their evenings at the club." (369)

At the end of the 80's the question of the admission of women was revived. At the North Camberwell Radical, for instance, after a considerable agitation, it was decided, at a general meeting, to "admit the fair sex on this night (Saturday evening) in future, much to the satisfaction of our wives and sweethearts." (370) By 1890 clubs were being recommended to admit wives, daughters and sweethearts to the entertainments (if they did not already do so) and make provision for the women to meet at the club some afternoons in the week "to discuss questions of special interest to women." (371) Most clubs made some allowance for the admission of women, to concerts, for example, or to the members' dances which London clubs held on a Monday evening. (372) Women also helped out with catering

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368. Rev. Charles Bullock, Official Report of the Church Congress, (Sheffield, 1879), p.317.

369. "Christianity and Amusements," Wesleyan Methodist Magazine, Vol.14, April 1890, p.253.

370. CIJ, 12 November 1887.

371. CIU, Annual Report, No.28, (1890), pp.18-19.

372. The practice was not universal. There were still some clubs at the turn of the century which refused to admit women at any time. See Gaston's poem, "Mary's Complaint," CIJ, January 1901, dedicated to clubs which did not admit women.

for the children's parties. Beyond this modest policy clubs were divided. Radicals such as Frederick Verinder or Bessie Biddlecombe were strongly in favour of full rights for women. Mrs. Biddlecombe, moving force of the MRF in the late 90's, argued that as clubs aspired to be considered democratic institutions then they ought to fulfill that promise by admitting women, especially as they had been a valuable source of support for the movement. (373) The Bradlaugh Club, where the MRF held its Executive Meetings, was one of few clubs which admitted women as members. (374) Its members recognised that this was unusual. They knew that many other clubs strongly opposed their policy. They attributed this hostility to the general prejudice of Englishmen to the social and political emancipation of women. (375) Many clubmen who wrote to the club journal on the issue expressed themselves in favour of women's rights. (376) They were warned, however, that mixed clubs would bring with them a number of problems. "What would there be to prevent the fair ones from energetically canvassing the members and by their blandishments get a majority of their own sex upon the committee of management, and thus practically turn a working man's club into a mothers' meeting?" asked one editorial. (377) The

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373. Club Life, 18 March 1899.

374. R. C. Liquor Licensing Laws, P.P. 1897 xxxv: Qs. 16,246-47. At its March 1879 meeting the Tower Hamlets Radical club had voted to admit women on the same conditions as those under which men were admitted, see Englishwoman's Review, No.72, April 1879. Another club which admitted women was The Social Club, The Jewish Working Men's in Great Alie Street.

375. Club Life, 28 January 1899.

376. Ibid, 18 February 1899.

377. Ibid, 4 February 1899.

anti-feminist argument was put by Isaac Danziger, Vice President of the Netherlands Club. The club had a long established policy of issuing "Ladies Tickets" for concerts and entertainments, but Danziger was very hostile to the membership of women as a right. A man, he observed, had a right to go to his club:

to talk over current topics, to have a hand at cards, a game at billiards, or what not, whilst his wife stays at home to cook the dinner and perform the other household duties ... I have quite sufficient petticoat government at home, and I do not want it about with me as a recreation. (378)

There the matter stood. Women at many clubs could gain a limited admission, but even where they did so it was as tolerated guests without membership rights. (379)

The other problem concerned the admission of youths. The entry of young men into the mechanics' institutes had on many occasions brought with it unforeseen difficulties. At the annual meeting of the Holbeck and New Wortley Mechanics' Institute the members voted to end the experiment of supplying chess and draughts boards in the reading room in consequence of the "very large number of young members who soon joined the Institution, all eager to play. Noise, confusion, and disturbance soon followed so that it became necessary to remove them downstairs and even then they proved a regular nuisance." (380) Similar problems troubled the club

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378. Ibid, 11 February 1899.

379. The issue is currently being revived in a campaign led by a woman in Wakefield, "The Equal Rights in Clubs Campaign" which has been set up to press for full rights of membership for women who still cannot vote or sit on committees. Sunday Times, 30 December 1979.

380. Holbeck and New Wortley Mechanics' Institute, Minutes of Committee Meeting. See also, Yorkshire Union of Mechanics' Institutes, Annual Report, No.20, (Leeds, 1857), p.14.

movement. Observers remarked that the admission of youths had been productive of much "mischief."<sup>(381)</sup> At Coventry Working Men's Club it was a Rule that:

Any person wishing to join if under the age of twenty shall bring a note from his parent or if an indoor apprentice from his master signifying their approval. (382)

The Committee of the Basingstoke Club voted in April 1875 to expel all members under the age of 18 "in consequence of their disorderly conduct, and the damage done to the bagatelle table."<sup>(383)</sup> The problem of the younger member did not seem to grow any easier over time. One club member lamented:

The manner in which some of the younger members of the Institute conduct themselves at the periodical "Free and Easies" is simply abominable, they have no respect whatever for persons who come as friends of the members, or for those who voluntarily give their assistance to make the evening enjoyable. (384)

Stourbridge Club which had a relatively flexible policy on the admission of young men was forced to close down its bagatelle room in the early 1890's in a bid to stamp out the rowdy boys who took it over.<sup>(385)</sup> Even if they were not a nuisance, young men were seen as a drag on the higher work of the movement; they were too much engrossed in cards or concerts "to spare any time for lectures

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381. Working Man, 24 March 1866.

382. Coventry Working Men's Club, Additional Rules, (1865), (MSS at Coventry R.O.)

383. Labour News, 17 April 1875.

384. The Institute, Vol.3(25), March 1890.

385. H. Palfrey, The Story of Stourbridge Club and Institute, (Stourbridge, 1948), p.41.



and discussions on matters pertaining to their future."<sup>(386)</sup> In the early days of the movement there was little uniformity regarding the admission of young men, although it was known that clubs which admitted lads rarely won the loyalty of the working man as well.<sup>(387)</sup> One cause which it was suggested it was most fitting for clubs to take up was the formation of youth clubs and institutes. One of the objectives of the Kent Union, for instance, was the provision of an institution for boys until they were old enough to join a club.<sup>(388)</sup> Pratt was very keen that the larger clubs should set aside a "Youths' Room" where young men of the district could find a "judicious mixture of wholesome recreation and of trade instruction."<sup>(389)</sup> By the end of the century most clubs did not admit any man to membership before the age of 18. Some, like the Eleusis, required men to be over 21 before making them members; even some of those which allowed youths to join at 18 did not make them full members until they had served a probationary period or until they attained the age of majority. To cater for youth a range of youth clubs and institutes were set up from the late 70's. Many of these were attached to social settlements or other religious bodies, while others were independent initiatives concerned to provide that combination of craft training and recreation recommended by Pratt.<sup>(390)</sup>

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386. CIJ, 23 April 1892.

387. CIU, Annual Report, No.8, (1870), pp.19-20; WMCJ, 2 October 1875.

388. WMCJ, 9 February 1878. See also, "Youths' Institutes," Leisure Hour, Vol.12(587), 28 March 1863.

389. CIJ, 24 September 1887.

390. W. Braithwaite, "Boy's Clubs," in E. Urwick (Ed), Boy Life in Our Cities, (1904); C. Russell and L. Rigby, Working Lads' Clubs, (1908); W. Eager, Making Men, (1953), Chapters 6-8; J. Gillis, Youth and History, (1974), pp.140-43.

After twenty years the future of the movement seemed assured. The number of clubs known to the Union was increasing, while to give a greater impetus to club formations in the provinces, an area of work which had languished after the departure of Solly, the Union inserted adverts in the local press drawing attention to the clubs as a means "for promoting the social welfare of the labouring classes."<sup>(391)</sup> The growing importance of the clubs was shown by the Union's consultation in choosing a successor to the late Dean Stanley as President of the Union. Delegates were sent to meet with the Council and their decision was that the post be offered to Brassey. He now joined a much enlarged Council which also included Headlam, Thomas Paterson, his wife Emma, founder of the Women's Protective and Provident League in 1874 which met at CIU offices, as well as representatives of the London Clubs including Taylor (Southwark), Fishbourne (St. James and Soho) and Lowe (Boro' of Hackney.)<sup>(392)</sup> In his first address to the annual meeting Brassey stressed the positive accompaniments of club growth, repeating the tired homily on the need of the Union to retain the support and approval of the "intelligent, educated, and influential."<sup>(393)</sup> With a real ability to mis-read the future he concluded:

It is for the more thoughtful and patriotic part of the community to decide whether this central organisation will be maintained, and its workers thereby enabled to continue their services to the thousands of men who resort in an ever increasing degree to the clubs. (393)

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391. CIU, Annual Report, No.20, (1882), p.17

392. Emma Paterson had been Assistant Secretary to the Union since 1867. On her work for the cause of women's trade unionism see, N. Seldon, Women in British Trades Unions, 1874-1976, (Dublin, 1978), Chapter 1, passim.

393. CIU, Annual Report, No.21, (1883), p.5.

For the work to be maintained however, something had to be done to reform the Union's chronic financial difficulties. In 1883 the Union's deficit reached £205 and its solvency was not aided by the discovery that a number of its administrative staff had misappropriated the funds. In 1881 one of the clerks defrauded the Union of £45 and in 1883 another ran off with some of the affiliation fees.<sup>(394)</sup> The need to place the Union's finances on firmer foundations thus avoiding the periodic appeals to the generosity of the "educated and influential" was an essential precondition of the growing pressure for re-organisation which began to make itself felt in the first two years of the 80's. The demands for reform came from the leading affiliated clubs which had formed the backbone of the Union. They were reinforced by the affiliation of clubs of pronounced radical and secularist persuasion which had grown up during the republican agitation of the 1870's. These clubs had no wish to belong to an organisation which begged, cap in hand, for a few pounds from a nobleman or gentleman. They sought an independent organisation, one responsible to those clubs from which it drew its financial strength. They sought freedom and democracy. Their cause was aided when Dent, skilled craftsman, secularist, and a figure well-known and respected in the Councils of radical clubs, was appointed Secretary of the Union in 1883, having been Pratt's assistant in the Guild of Co-Operators. He shared with his mentor the desire to bring the clubs and co-operation into greater harmony. From the combination of financial weakness, radical ascendancy and skilled leadership, were to come the forces which brought the Union under democratic control.

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394. Ibid., No.19, (1881), p.15; No.21, (1883), p.24.

CHAPTER 3: THE CLUB MOVEMENT: PROGRESS UNDER DEMOCRACY.

In no age has more progress been made in raising the status of the workers. Men who were a few years ago abject and servile, dreading the powers of employers, now walk abroad with independence, with a feeling of equality, even superiority, over those who employ them ... working men in clubs and public places show intelligence in questions of the day never displayed before, and great thinkers are aiding them in finding the best work to be accomplished next, and the earnest solution of the difficulties that stand in the paths of the worker. (1)

If the Union is to maintain its character as a national institution, it must take up the work of organising the provinces in earnest, and we are sure in every sense that the work will pay for doing. (2)

Gentlemen had long learned that their club life was the instrument in the destruction of rudeness and want of consideration for others ... he was satisfied that clubs were educating working men to be gentlemen in the truest and best sense of the word. (3)

In 1882 the Union reached the end of the first stage of its development. Further progress depended upon liberation from its association with philanthropy and the establishment of more enduring connections with the world of organised labour. Under democratic control the Union grew rapidly and strengthened its position in the working class community. The reform and re-direction of the club movement in the thirty years after 1882 was also aided by the sterling work carried out by the two secretaries, J. Dent from 1882 to 1892 and then B. T. Hall. Although very different in personality and style of work these two men carried much of the administrative load which had previously been carried out by the voluntary labours of the CIU's middle class leadership. Progress also had its

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1. CIJ, 20 January 1894.
  2. CIU, Annual Report, No.27, (1889), p.5.
  3. G. Holyoake at the 1894 Annual Meeting; CIU, Annual Report, No.32, (1894), p.82.

penalties. Political disagreements and dissension caused some sections of the club movement to leave the Union. In the mid 80's there was a concerted attempt to lead the political clubs from the Union as it was felt that it no longer served the needs of the radical clubs. In some areas new organisations came into existence to which clubs could affiliate. These developments challenged, at least in the short term, the ascendancy of the Union in the club world. Moreover, the focus of Union work in the 80's was directed at the metropolitan clubs. Little attention was given to the requirements of the provincial constituents nor was much notice taken of the need for active propaganda work in the regions to bring the importance of affiliation to the attention of the newly formed clubs. Thus from the 1890's the need to make the Union once again a truly national movement impelled the officials to undertake propaganda and publicity trips on a scale which had not been used since the pioneering days of the Rev. Solly. If Dent helped ease the passage of the Union from paternal to democratic organisation, then Hall was the key figure in bringing London and the provinces back into union again. In this Chapter the evolution of the club movement after 1882 is presented showing the strengths which accompanied democratisation as well as the problems of the next phase of organisational advance. Political work undertaken by London clubs is also discussed insofar as the radical ideology of some of these clubs contributed to the democratisation of the CIU and later brought a number of them into conflict with the Union regarding the role of political clubs in the organisation.

On Friday 6th July 1883 the Union issued the first number of its new periodical, the Club and Institute Journal. It cost a

half-penny and was to appear fortnightly. The movement had lacked its own journal since the Workmen's Club Journal had ceased publication in February 1878. Before proceeding with this new (and costly) venture the Union wisely obtained promises of support from the clubs which had undertaken to purchase some 600 copies of the new paper although to be self-financing many more than that number would have to be sold. One reason for risking a new journal was the feeling that the growth of the movement merited a periodical which would keep the membership informed of activities as well as publishing articles of more general interest. The new editor was Mark Judge, a man of advanced Liberal opinions who had distinguished himself by his tireless work in the campaign for the "free Sunday." This made him well-known in the radical clubs as well as the social ones.<sup>(4)</sup> The new paper was the fifth major attempt to provide a forum for the exchange of news and ideas on the club movement. The first venture, the Club and Institute Union Journal, perished within two years of its birth in 1865 succumbing to financial difficulties. The movement was too small and weak to support the paper especially as it cost 6d which placed it beyond the means of most of the ordinary club membership. After the failure of this magazine, news on the progress of the movement could be gleaned from a number of sources, for example, the Unitarian newspaper, the Inquirer, and the Institute and Lecturers Gazette regularly carried short items on the work of the Union. In 1870, when Solly held the editorship

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4. Judge stayed for the first six issues when the editorship was taken over by Minet and then Hobson. In an effort to make the paper more attractive the Union appointed the editor of the North London Press, Ernest Parke, to take charge. He too left and was replaced by a radical clubman Randolph Cuereel who stayed from mid 1887 until July 1888 when Richard Gaston was appointed editor.

of the Bee-Hive, one of the few positive innovations he made was to print a regular column on club doings. This ended when Solly ceased his connection with the paper. Solly's next publishing experiment, the Workman's Magazine, also printed pieces on club formations, analyses of balance sheets, and news of the activities of individual clubs. Encouraged by the growing popularity of the movement the Union decided to publish its own journal, the Workmen's Club Journal, under the editorship of Pratt. The first number appeared on May 15th 1875.<sup>(5)</sup> It cost 1d and was to appear weekly. Besides features on the club the paper also carried stories of an "improving kind" and news on matters such as artizans' dwellings, building societies and thrift, calculated to appeal to the "respectable" clubman reader. The journal lasted until early 1878. It had never proved very successful. Most club men declared it to be a dull thing. Moreover there were difficulties in obtaining a reasonable circulation as many clubs bought two or three copies for their reading rooms rather than urging their members to purchase an individual copy. The expense of running the journal added to the indebtedness of the Union. But though troubled by the lack of enthusiasm amongst the membership for a paper the Council remained committed to providing some means whereby information on the club movement could be broadcast. After the failure of the proposed merger between the clubs and the Co-Operative News the Union turned to two social reform journals for space on club matters. A club column appeared regularly in House and Home and another in Social Notes edited by an old friend of the movement Alsager Hill.<sup>(6)</sup>

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5. In 1874 William Minet had contributed an occasional column on club matters to Labour News.
  6. The second series of the paper was titled Social Notes and Club News.



When that paper ceased publication the Union decided to try again with its own journal. (7)

Thus the clubs once again had their own paper, although many members probably doubted whether it would survive long especially when its first number opened with a dull and predictable Presidential Address from Brassey delivered at the Twenty-First Annual Meeting. (8)

One recurrent source of worry was finance. In the 20th Annual Report it was noted that the Union was receiving an increasing amount of financial support from its affiliates, but it was still not large enough to make the Union self-supporting. Thus it was argued that "until that time comes (say in four or five years hence) [when the Union could be made self supporting] the richer members of the community may be fairly asked not to allow such an organisation as the Club Union to fall to the ground." (9) But even with assistance from the wealthy the Union's current deficit stood at £205. The continuing indebtedness of the Union was a constraint upon further expansion. Although there were a growing number of metropolitan clubs which made a special levy amongst their membership which was remitted to the Union this was still insufficient to place the Union's finances on surer foundations. (10) In 1881

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7. Solly's paper, Common Good, which appeared in 1880 carried little direct information on the club movement. However it did publish news about the Social and Political Educational League of which the clubs were a major institutional support, see below, Chapter 5.
  8. His speech was full of praise for the good relations then existing between masters and men and the need for technical education, but said little of the current difficulties of the Union and the future direction of the movement.
  9. CIU, Annual Report, No.20, (1882), pp.22-23.
  10. The Tower Hamlets Radical Club, for example, levied  $\frac{1}{2}$ d per month from its 300 financial members.

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the Union's attempt to establish a seaside home ended in financial embarrassment and despite continued support from persons of "education and leisure" the amount realised from this source was declining.<sup>(11)</sup> Since its inception the pattern of donations to the Union had not changed markedly except for a sharp decline in those given by gentlemen in the late 70's. This is shown by Table 7 below:

TABLE 7: The Pattern of Donations to the CIU.

| TYPE OF DONOR | NUMBER OF DONORS. |      |      |      |
|---------------|-------------------|------|------|------|
|               | 1871              | 1878 | 1882 | 1885 |
| Anonymous     | 1                 | 0    | 0    | 0    |
| Clerical      | 25                | 21   | 17   | 13   |
| Non-noble     | 190               | 135  | 95   | 95   |
| Noble         | 21                | 25   | 11   | 11   |
| Noble-female  | 5                 | 7    | 8    | 4    |
| Female        | 16                | 13   | 10   | 11   |
| Institutional | 14                | 37   | 9    | 5    |

SOURCES: CIU, Annual Report, No.9, (1871).  
 CIU, Annual Report, No.16, (1878).  
 CIU, Annual Report, No.20, (1882).  
 CIU, Annual Report, No.23, (1885).

While the pattern of donations remained much the same the amount realised from this source was on the decline. It had never been sufficient to stop the Union from running into debt every few years but from the early 80's it began to tail off, a process accelerated by the revolt. Table 8 shows the relative contribution of donors and clubs to the Union's finances:-

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11. CIU, Annual Report, No.19, (1881), pp.15-16.

TABLE 8: The Structure of the Union's Finances, 1881-1892. (in £s)

| PAID BY | Y E A R |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |      |      |      |      |
|---------|---------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|------|------|------|
|         | 81      | 82  | 83  | 84  | 85  | 86  | 87  | 88  | 89   | 90   | 91   | 92   |
| CLUBS   | 201     | 216 | 241 | 329 | 459 | 558 | 682 | 782 | 1063 | 1124 | 1188 | 1169 |
| DONORS  | 334     | 340 | 331 | 388 | 279 | 232 | 215 | 185 | 178  | 135  | 132  | 172  |
| TOTALS  | 535     | 556 | 572 | 717 | 738 | 790 | 897 | 967 | 1241 | 1259 | 1320 | 1341 |

SOURCE: B. Hall, Our Fifty Years, (1912).

Union laxity in administration served to compound the financial difficulties. Until the mid 80's there were only faltering attempts to ensure that the clubs known to the Union formally affiliated and that once affiliated they paid the requisite fees to the head office. The affiliation fee was also set too low to be financially effective. London clubs, for example, were supposed to pay an annual fee but not all did so. These financial constraints were worsened by the discovery in the early 80's that one of the clerks had misappropriated fees. The need to help the Union out of its difficulties prompted the senior and more prosperous clubs to impose a levy upon their membership. It also made the Union more dependent upon the clubs for its survival. Representatives of the London clubs who sat on the Council recognised that responsibility for the Union was increasingly falling to the constituent clubs yet formal control remained with the unelected subscribers.

Following the 1883 Annual Meeting the Council, at its first meeting of the new year, resolved to call a conference in London to review the state of the club movement. It was to be held in October and clubs were invited to nominate delegates to attend. The exact purpose of the conference was not disclosed but it emerged from the general discussion that followed the Annual Meeting that it was intended to serve as a forum where ideas pertaining to the revitalisation of the CIU could be exchanged. (12) Because of difficulties in organisation the Conference was postponed until Saturday 10 November when delegates would meet to discuss "The Importance of Registration," the "Importance of Good Book-keeping," and "The Best

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12. CIJ, 6 July 1883.

Means of Popularising the Union." To stimulate interest in the Conference, papers not exceeding fifteen minutes in delivery were invited with a prize of 5/- going to the author of each paper read.<sup>(13)</sup> Judge, in an editorial of October 26th, offered his own observations on the topics set before the conference noting that one serious question to be dealt with concerned the representation of clubs on the Union. "There seems to be a feeling, which we must admit is well-founded," he wrote "that the clubs have not sufficient voice in the management of Union affairs." He pointed out that the 10 representative members were small in relation to the size of Council which could total 46 inclusive of elected representatives.

St. James and Soho provided the venue for the conference which began mid-afternoon with Mr. Sands in the chair. Three papers were read on the general topic of popularisation, one by Solly which recommended the appointment of a travelling agent (the Rev. Solly?) and a revival of provincial propaganda through public meetings. Mr. Wood advocated the appointment of delegates to attend Union meetings and to report back on such meetings to their clubs, while Fletcher Pape argued for a federal system i.e. each group of clubs in a district should unite and elect delegates from a district meeting. The central body would be formed from these district delegates. In the ensuing discussion all speakers were agreed that the Union was in need of "radical alteration." Fishbourne of the host club was emphatic that the clubs must make a greater financial contribution to the upkeep of the Union for "so long as the Union depended partly upon outside subscribers those subscribers

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13. CIJ, 28 September 1883.

would claim some voice in its management." A point ably supported by Handover (Cobden Club) who pointed out that patronage undermined the independence of the Union. Judge and Fuller (London Patriotic) made the proposal that members of the Union should be directly elected by the clubs. This would end the desultory attendance at the monthly delegate meetings as well as end the demoralising dependence of the Union on donations. Tayler was for caution in these matters. He drew especial attention to the problems of the provincial clubs in any schemes for direct representation and the need for the Union to maintain its propaganda work. Mr. Sand was also concerned to take the sting out of the meeting which had been aroused by the talk of patronage. He told delegates:

Class distinction existed unfortunately, but the main object of himself and of the other members of Council was to level those distinctions. He knew himself from experience how paltry they were, and how much real friendship might exist between different social grades.

But his speech was given little attention. Like Solly's anachronistic suggestion Sands' intervention showed that most of the subscribers were remote from the pressing concerns of the club delegates. They had little understanding of the depth of feeling aroused by the patronage issue nor did they comprehend the force of the argument put by Pape and others that if the Union was to progress then the clubs must take control of its direction. At the conclusion of the meeting a resolution calling for a committee to be formed to consider making the Union truly representative of the club and institutes which composed it was carried unanimously. The committee, of seventeen members together with the Secretary and Chairman of the Union were then elected. (14)

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14. CIJ, 16 November 1883. The list of committee members is given in Appendix B.

Judge's reflections on the Conference formed the theme of the editorial in the CIJ, 23 November. While anxious to demonstrate the benefits which would follow from a democratisation of the Union he was equally keen to show that it was not intended by such a move to make the Union a "class institution." Like Solly, Pratt and numerous others Judge was concerned to stress that one of the most positive features of the Union was the way it brought "people of different grades and classes together, and helps to make them understand each other." The Union helped to remove that "curse of society," class prejudice and worked to eradicate that ignorance which promoted distrust between classes. He was also careful to stress that the talk of patronage had nothing to do with the Union which had steadfastly refused to interfere with the internal affairs of any of its constituents and had always advised those who donated money to clubs or took a share, as honorary members, in their management, to let members run the club themselves. The tone of Judge's editorial was pacific. He was determined to show why there was a need for reform yet he also wanted to show why such reforms would not alter the fundamental character and meaning of the club movement.

The dangers of over-hasty reform were discussed by William Minet. In particular he worried lest the desire for representation exclude the provincial affiliates thereby making the Union the creature of the London clubs. The Union, he stressed, was a national organisation and one whose most important work was seeking out new clubs for affiliation and fostering the movement in different areas. These objectives would disappear if the Union was simply confined to matters which pressed upon the clubs in the capital. Furthermore, he did not want any reform which drove out



the Honorary members. Such men had performed many valuable services for the movement and it would be a sad loss to the Union if they were excluded from the Council. (15) These views represented the opinion of all those who while not opposed to change did not want it to go too far. The first issue was important but off the point. The concern for provincial representation had never been an issue under the old Union. There was no reason to doubt that a reconstituted Union would be as eager for provincial growth especially as its income would depend upon the affiliation fees from the clubs. Moreover, Dent and other London clubmen were adamant that the Union had to be a national movement not the preserve of a clique of London artisans. The issue of representing the provincial clubs, except for those in the home counties, would be difficult but it was not an argument against reform. On the second issue Minet's point was again not at issue. No one doubted that the Union had been greatly assisted by the unpaid labours of several middle class friends. Such help would be needed even in the reformed Union, over such matters as help with library work, speaking up for the Union in Parliament and representing the views of the Union to other organisations, but such work did not have to be rewarded with a seat on the governing body. The Union had no wish to rid itself of all outside help. But the reformers wanted the government of the Union to be properly constituted not based upon considerations of philanthropy.

On January 5th the adjourned conference met again. The committee which had been elected had met four times to consider a revised constitution. As matters worked out the meeting had to

consider two reports, a majority report and a minority report drawn up by Judge and Pape. The difference between the two reports centred on what constituted membership of the Union which in turn affected the government of the organisation. The minority report placed the control of the Union under an elected Council which would be dominated by the clubs. The majority report hedged its appeal to democracy with various qualifying clauses which meant in practice that while the clubs would gain a greater say in the government of the Union they would not control it as proposed by the Judge/Pape scheme. The latter's report was warmly welcomed by a number of the delegates such as Ward (Carlyle) Morgan (St. James and Soho) and Collette (Bryanston). Tayler also stated that he would vote for it. But he noted that the adoption of the new Constitution would entail consequences of which delegates ought to be aware, the most important being that subscribers would immediately end their contributions. Solly thought that the question of propaganda work was being neglected by the current discussion. However the meeting failed to reach agreement and it was resolved to hold a further meeting on January 19th to consider the details of the minority scheme. <sup>(16)</sup> At the reconvened meeting the delegates began a clause by clause debate of the report. This meeting proceeded amicably to discuss many of the mundane details of the new constitution such as the minimum number of members that a club had to have before it was entitled to a seat on Council and the election of members of Council at the Annual General Meeting. <sup>(17)</sup>

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16. CIJ, 18 January 1884; Pioneer, 12 January 1884.

17. CIJ, 1 February 1884.

The final stage in the reform process was a special General Meeting held on March 8th at Westminster College Hall. Not every delegate was happy with the finer points of the reforms. Handover of the Cobden Club and Clayton of the Boro' of Hackney proposed one major change in the new rules. They wanted the minimum number of members required for a seat on Council increased from 50 to 100. They feared that under the new constitution the large clubs would be swamped by the smaller clubs. They were opposed by every other delegate. Their amendment was lost. Mr. Weeks from the Hampshire Union of Clubs raised the difficult question of the representation of the provincial clubs. Under the new Rules they were entitled to send a representative to Council. Considerations of distance and expense, however, made this practically impossible. He suggested that the only way to give provincial clubs a voice was to have District Unions represented. All speakers agreed that it was a difficult question and one which they had discussed many times in their own deliberations. For the moment they asked that the matter be left to Council to inquire into the representation of country clubs and report back when it was ready. After this issue had been discussed the new Rules were voted upon and carried unanimously. The Union was now in the hands of its constituent clubs. (18)

On June 15th the first meeting of the democratically elected

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18. CIJ, 14 March 1884. For many London clubmen the celebration of their victory was muted by the death of the popular President of the Boro' of Hackney Club, James Lowe. His funeral was attended by some 4,000 clubmen marching under the banners of the Boro' of Hackney, Tower Hamlets Radical and Stratford Radical. In the evening there was a memorial meeting and the following week a benefit night for his wife and children. His old friend and close associate in the club movement, Pape, wrote a short and deeply felt tribute, see CIJ, 29 February 1884; see also CIU, Annual Report, No.51, (1914), Appendix 2.

Council was held. Some 50 representatives of the 70 elected attended this meeting. It was decided that Executive meetings were to be held weekly at a time convenient to the members and Council meetings were to be held on the first Saturday of every month at 4 p.m. even though this would mean some delegates giving up their half-holiday. (19)

The "revolt" had been carried through peacefully. There were no public threats of resignation and no immediate exodus of subscribers following the change. There were some who felt that the full implications of the reforms had not been comprehended by the club men. But all expressed themselves satisfied that the matter had been dealt with in fairness and goodwill. The actual manner and immediate background of the revolt remains shadowy. There was no Solly to collect relevant documents for later examination. (20) The only source which remains is the Club journal and that simply tells the flat story of constitutional change. It does not offer clues to the character of the revolt, to the personalities involved, or to the wider forces which prompted the transformation, except to note the rift which produced two reports.

One point, examined already, which clearly contributed to the relative smoothness of the transition was the parlous financial state of the Union. An organisation which was racked by debts and poor administration was ill-equipped to resist successfully any demand for change. There was no large subscriber who could have

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19. CIJ, 20 June 1884.

20. It is a great loss to social history that Hodgson Pratt did not keep or leave materials relating to the many reform organisations with which he was associated.

acted as a rallying point for those patrons opposed to the change. Only Brassey as a generous donor and President could have provided an anchor for dissidents but to have done so would have split the Union altogether. The Union was increasingly dependent on the clubs for its day-to-day income and the growing strength of the clubs would have registered in the Union regardless of the revolt. These points do not minimise the importance of the change, but they indicate that the forces of resistance were likely to be weak. The personnel involved in the reform also have to be noted. Many of the key figures were well-known to each other and had collaborated together in other organisations. Pratt, whose illness prevented him from taking a more active role in these years, had worked with Dent in the Guild of CoOperators. The issue of the revolt was the first important matter to engage the attention of Dent as Union Secretary. He had the background necessary to win the support of the radicals in the club movement having been Secretary of the Combined Chelsea Clubs, while his work for the progress of his club, the Eleusis, meant that he was familiar with the case being made for reform by the representatives of the more social clubs. (21)

Judge had been brought into the club movement via his contact with Pratt and the two worked together in the free Sunday campaign. Little is known of the relationship between Judge and Pape. Pape's club, the Commonwealth, was one of East London's leading radical centres and had affiliated to the Union in the early 80's as had a

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21. In addition Dent brought further links with the co-operative movement. Besides his work in the Guild he was Secretary of the Chelsea Co-Operative Society and Hon. Sec. of the Southern Section of the Co-Operative Society, Metropolitan District; see, Co-Operative News, 16 June 1883; and the portrait in CIJ, May 1901.

number of other radical associations. (22) Pape was a member of the British Federal Council of the International and part of the general circle of advanced radicals in the metropolis. (23) Many of the other figures pressing for reform were well-known in London club land and had been the representatives of their clubs in district unions and other inter-club organisations. Moreover, the demands for reform made in 1882 did not mark some break with previous procedure. Although the final proposals were to go beyond anything which the Union had envisaged, the initial idea - to make the Union more representative - was one which Council members and club men had long debated. The decision to allow representatives from the metropolitan clubs to attend monthly council meetings which was taken in the early 70's was the first step in the road to self-government. In August 1880 an important conference had been held at the St. James and Soho which was attended by some 20 delegates representing social and political clubs. One of the issues raised by the Conference was the duties of the representative members of Council. During the debate Fishbourne argued that the Union should be reformed in order to give clubs greater power in its administration and reliance on outside donations should be curtailed. Despite protestations from Pratt that in debating such matters the delegates ought to confine their remarks to metropolitan issues most of the working class delegates concurred with Fishbourne. It was decided

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22. See the description of the club written by Pape in CIJ,. The club was founded in 1876 in Bethnal Green Road. In November of the same year the members began their political work by working for the return of Mrs. Fenwick Miller for the School Board. Mrs. Miller was successful.

23. Documents of the First International, 1870-1871, Vol.4, (Moscow, 1964), pp.235, 240, 246.

to examine the ways in which the Union could be made more representative of the clubs. (24) So before the "revolt" commenced the leading London clubs were pressing for reforms in the structure of the Union. The decision to sell drink had given the overwhelming majority of clubs a secure financial base for their expansion so that as the Union became financially weaker the constituent clubs were, in the main, becoming more prosperous and therefore able to contemplate financing the Union out of membership fees. All these factors, finance, good relations between key figures, absence of a backwoods rump to rally any opposition to change, and financial buoyancy of the clubs, must be given some consideration in discussing the nature of the revolt. It must also be stressed that while the role of the subscriber was circumscribed by the change, in other respects there was much continuity between the old Union and the reformed one. The Union was still to remain neutral in all matters of religion and politics, there was still a strong commitment to the Union as a national body, even though it would now be governed by men mainly from the metropolitan clubs, there was no intention that the propaganda function of the Union should be diluted, that is the stress in the new Union was on the growth of the movement, the office of Vice-President was to be retained, and finally there was a continuity of ideology regarding the purpose of the club movement. Partly this was due to the presence of Pratt in a commanding position in the new Union but many of the new figures in the Union, such as Fishbourne shared that concern with "tone" and improvement which had been the mark of Solly and Pratt. There was still the belief that

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24. House and Home, 21 August 1880.

the club movement should offer to its members something more than the prosaic amusements of billiard table and vocal concert. Education was, if anything, given more attention in the reformed Union than the old one. Finally there was the belief that the Union knew best when it came to matters of club life. This meant strong resistance to any measures to check or remove the privileges of the club movement, especially those which obtained from its right to supply strong drink without a license.

If these factors affected the character of the revolt it is also necessary to say something about its timing. By the early 80's the metropolitan clubs were of two kinds, social clubs and political clubs. Most social clubs of any standing were affiliates of the Union. Some like the St. James and Soho or the Bryanston were among the largest and best run of the Union clubs. The Union also had a number of political clubs affiliated such as the Boro' of Hackney and the Commonwealth. There were also a large number of political clubs which stood outside the Union. Their affiliation in the early 80's strengthened the forces pressing for change in the Union. Radical clubs were hardly likely to tolerate membership in an organisation which depended upon charitable doles for its existence. Such financial constraints compromised the concern for independence which was a cornerstone of radical ideology. They were naturally disposed to press for change and to pursue those policies which fostered self-government. Of the 19 members of the constitutional committee seven came from radical clubs while Dent had served his political apprenticeship in west London's leading radical club, the Eleusis. The increasing number of radical clubs seeking entry to the Union reinforced the pressures for change.



Radical clubs flourished in every part of the capital though in certain parts they achieved a prominence and importance in local politics and social life which few other clubs could match. Chelsea had the Eleusis Club, Southwark the Southwark Radical of which Soutter was the Secretary. Deeper into south-east London there was the Hatcham Liberal Club (New Cross) and the Peckham and Dulwich Radical of which Ben Ellis was a prominent member. In the east and centre of London there were concentrations of these democratic bodies. In East London could be found the United Radical, which started with 18 members and soon grew to 800 and which became one of the most vocal London radical clubs of the 80's. <sup>(25)</sup> Also in the east were the Tower Hamlets Radical, Boro' of Bethnal Green, Hackney Radical, and Hackney Wick Radical. Just north of the central areas were the Patriotic and the John Bright Radical.

In the 1850's and 60's there had been a number of meeting places, usually in pubs, where men (and occasionally women) of advanced opinions could meet and debate the political questions of the day. But these clubs were not just places for the exchange of opinion; their members also took an active part in a variety of schemes to assist the emancipation of the working class. One such meeting place was the "Three Doves" in Berwick Street, the meeting place of former Chartists and old O'Brienites. Like the later Reform League and the London Working Men's Association, members of this group were to be found in the van of every radical cause from the

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25. CIJ, 5 September 1884, for a short account of the United. It began when members broke away from a social club, the Clifden, to form an independent radical club.

International to the earliest socialist groupings. (26) Indeed, many of the leading radical clubs of the 80's owed their origins to the agitation for the Second Reform Bill. With the successful passing of the Bill many former members of the Reform League formed clubs and societies to press forward the claims of labour. The Eleusis was an example here. Formed in the aftermath of the Reform agitation the club, sited in the Kings Road, Chelsea, quickly became one of the leading radical centres of the metropolis and was a member of the Chelsea Working Men's Electoral Association which was formed in April 1868 and claimed the support of 24 trade societies. (27) As other clubs in the environs of Chelsea were established in the 70's so they combined for electoral matters with the Eleusis to form the Combined Political Council of the Chelsea Clubs which by 1884 consisted of 43 delegates. (28) Official Liberalism was forced to acknowledge the power of the radicals. In the 1880 Parliamentary election for example, the candidate, J. Firth, was selected by the Political Council not the local Liberal Association. (29)

The radicalisation set in motion by the reform question was maintained and expanded by the republican agitation of the early 70's. Collie estimates that between 1871-74 some 84 republican

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26. S. Shipley, Club Life and Socialism in Mid Victorian London, (Oxford, 1971), Chapter 1, passim, is a fine evocation of the ideas and activities of these plebeian radicals. See, K. Robinson, "Karl Marx, The International Working Men's Association, and London Radicalism, 1864-1872," (Ph.D. Manchester Univ. 1976), pp.184-86, and Appendix II.
27. Howell Collection, Reform, Vol.IV.
28. Echo, 20 February 1884.
29. Radical Leader, 4 August 1888.

clubs were founded in England. (30) In 1875 republican clubs were at work in Bath, Leeds, St. Helens, Heckmondwicke, and Kidderminster. (31) The Westminster Republican Club, founded in 1874 had over 200 members in 1880. Subscriptions were 2d per week and the club was proud of its well stocked bookstall which carried a variety of literature explaining the republican cause. (32) Other advanced campaigns which aided the formation of clubs were the land agitation, secularism, and the Irish question, particularly opposition to the policy of coercion. (33) Disillusionment with the weaknesses of official Liberalism also prompted many thoughtful working men to join in the work of these associations. (34)

The clubs' known sympathies for the cause of freedom in Ireland inspired Hyndman to try to use them as the base for his Democratic Federation. (35) But the clubs, critical of the socialist drift

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30. E. Collieu, "The Radical Attitude Towards the Monarchy and the House of Lords, 1868-1885," (B.Litt Thesis, Univ. Oxford, 1936), pp.82-90 and p.148. On republicanism see also A Working Man, "English Republicanism," Fraser's Magazine, Vol.3, June 1871; R. Harrison, Before the Socialists, (1965), Chapter 5, passim; D. Tribe, President Charles Bradlaugh, (1971), Chapter 6; N. Gossman, "Republicanism in the Nineteenth Century," International Review of Social History, Vol.7(1), 1962, pp.51-55.
31. Republican Chronicle, April and May 1875.
32. Republican, 6(9), December 1880.
33. The republican activist George Standring, reflecting on these years, thought working men's clubs to have undermined the work of the free-thought halls by taking away their audiences. In the 70's and 80's he had thought the clubs to be a complement to other forms of radical agitation, see The Reformer, 1(1), 15 March 1897.
34. Conservative interest in the use of working men's clubs also revived during this period. For a short note on the Conservative Working Men's Club, see below, Appendix B(1), pp.712-14
35. Radical, 18 December 1880.

of the Federation and suspicious of Hyndman's ulterior purpose soon broke away. Hyndman believed that the clubs had been led into this action by the Liberal "wire-pullers." (36) Thereafter he had little love for the radical clubs while many clubs always treated the Social Democratic Federation with reserve, an attitude which they thought vindicated by the "Tory Gold" scandal of 1885 and the bitter sectarianism which characterised the S.D.F. in the mid 80's. (37)

A number of these clubs had commenced their existence by breaking away from other clubs where the social element predominated or where the presence of the local clergyman was not to their liking. Many were forced to establish themselves in independent premises because they were refused the chance to meet in the local pub or were turned out by the publican who disliked their radical sympathies. Clubs thus became the major meeting place for working class politicians where the members could enjoy freedom of action and freedom from external interference. (38) One of the most popular means

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36. Mill-Taylor Correspondence, Vol.XVIII, Item 28.

37. On the early Democratic Federation, see M. Wilkins, "The Non-Socialist Origins of Britain's First Important Socialist Organisation," International Review of Social History, Vol.4(2), 1959; C. Tsuzuki, Hyndman and British Socialism, (1961). Hyndman in his memoirs characterised the clubs as "beer-swilling, gin-absorbing [sic] political centres," H. Hyndman, The Record of An Adventurous Life, (1911), p.344; and pp.247, 293-95. There were a few club men who were also "SDFers". Among the more prominent were Ben Ellis, of the Peckham and Dulwich Radical and Harry Quelch who in the mid 80's was the Secretary of the Political Council at the Southwark Radical.

38. The Tower Hamlets Radical, the Eleusis and the Patriotic were examples of clubs which came into existence when members were harried from pubs. On the evolution of the Patriotic see, A. Rothstein, A House on Clerkenwell Green, (1966), Chapter III. For descriptions of radical clubs see, Radical, January-March 1881, Echo, February-May 1884; Radical Leader, August-October 1888.

of gaining political experience was participation in local campaigns and struggles. The School Board, for example, provided an important training ground for the club politicians. Firth, as has been noted, was supported by the Eleusis in his 1876 campaign. The Chelsea clubs also gave their support to Dr. Aveling in his bid to obtain election in 1882. They canvassed on his behalf and held meetings to rally support in the club halls. (39) Obstructionist tactics adopted by the House of Lords to delay the Third Reform Bill prompted clubs to give support to Morrison Davidson's "People's League for the Abolition of the Hereditary Chamber" which was founded in the autumn of 1884. (40)

These radical clubs in alliance with the leading social clubs had played a crucial role in the "revolt." They successfully raised the cry "Dent and Democracy" and through shrewd constitutional reform placed the government of the Union under the control of the constituent clubs. In the years immediately following the revolt the number of radical clubs founded and joining the Union multiplied. By the end of the decade over 150 radical clubs were affiliates, over half of which had been founded between 1884-1888. (41) Most clubs founded in these years declared their purpose of combining sociability with political activity by titling themselves "Liberal and Radical Clubs." (42)

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39. National Reformer, 2 July 1882.

40. Our Corner, Vol.4, October 1884; Democrat, 29 November 1884; Collieu, op.cit., pp.208-10. For examples of the Club's work in support of the Third Reform Bill, see, Justice, 8 March 1884.

41. CIU, Annual Report, No.28, (1890), Appendix IV.

42. Annual Report, Chief Registrar of Friendly Societies, 1885, P.P. 1886, lxi, pp.27-28.

For the first fifteen months after the revolt matters inside the Union proceeded amicably. Delegates to the monthly Council meetings busied themselves with the minutiae of everyday matters which constituted the major items of decision making in the organisation. Delegates had to consider, such matters as the financing of the CIJ, the problem of provincial representation and the formal requirements for election into club membership. In August 1885 came the first real test of the unity of the movement. Pratt announced that he had been informed that some delegates at the next meeting of Council intended to propose Bradlaugh for election to the office of Vice-President. He was anxious to alert delegates to the difficulties which might follow from this move. He had been told that some members of Council, several Vice-Presidents and even some clubs would leave the Union if Bradlaugh was elected. The objection seemed to derive not from Bradlaugh's atheism but because he was associated with the birth control pamphlet The Fruits of Philosophy. Pratt wanted to caution the delegates at all costs to avoid dissension in the Union (which would also bring in its wake unwholesome publicity). His defence of Bradlaugh was weak. The grounds for withholding the post from Bradlaugh were tenuous. Stating that some donors were opposed to Bradlaugh was certainly an inducement for some delegates to vote for him. More importantly, there were very strong reasons, not even mentioned by Pratt, for electing Bradlaugh. He was one of the most active friends of the metropolitan clubs and had often spoken in their favour. Only a few months previously he had appeared at the Hackney Club to give a special lecture in order to raise money for the ailing Poplar club.

The clubs had also given support to Bradlaugh. During the trial of Fruits of Philosophy clubs such as the Eleusis had campaigned on behalf of Bradlaugh and Besant and helped to raise money to pay for their defence. (43) Bradlaugh had done as much, if not more, for the prosperity of the club movement than many of the other figureheads who enjoyed the office of Vice-President. The decision to confer the honour upon him was in many ways a natural one for the men who now controlled the Union. London was one of the centres of secularism and the Union numbered many free-thinking working men among the membership including Dent. (44) At the Council meeting the motion to admit Bradlaugh came from Mr. Hopes (John Bright Club) who in proposing the motion dwelt on the many services the atheist (and M.P.) had rendered the movement. Mr. Tongue seconded. Support for the motion came from Fletcher Pape and Mr. Copp while the opposition was led by Minet, Pratt and Nash, who spoke of the "crisis in the Union." Surprisingly support for the Pratt camp came from Fuller of the Patriotic and Bennett of the Eleusis. Both believed the election of Bradlaugh would not benefit the Union. Fuller, in particular, thought that Bradlaugh "had received fully as much benefit from the clubs as they had from him, if not more. There was no necessity for his election to this office ... his time was already fully occupied; and he could do nothing more to specially assist the club movement." After much discussion the motion was carried by one vote. (45)

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43. National Reformer, 6 May 1877.

44. CIJ, 7 August 1885.

45. CIJ, 14 August 1885.

Over the next few weeks the journal conducted a lively correspondence on the issue with Pratt again stressing that no good to the Union would come from electing Bradlaugh. He believed it was the consequence of the metropolitan dominance of the club movement which caused them to forget the wishes of the provincial clubs. Had they thought of the club movement as a great national movement they would not have contemplated or persisted with their present policy. (46)

At the September Council meeting delegates heard from Bradlaugh. His letter was a polite rejection of the office. He was too concerned that his name might bring odium to the movement. The assembly also heard that the Hon. Sec., T. Nash, had also resigned because they had voted to make Bradlaugh a Vice-President hinting that by so doing the Union had entered upon the "crooked and dusty path of politics" which would impair its worth. (47) Peace was not to be restored so easily. In protest against the Bradlaugh proposal Brassey together with a number of Vice-Presidents resigned their posts. This was followed by the decision of the clubs to abolish the office of Vice-President. The worries aroused by the issue was the trigger for the secession of the Worcester Union from the CIU. The issue also troubled the Kent Union which in 1888 also removed itself from the Union. (48)

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46. CIJ, 21 August 1885.

47. CIJ, 11 September 1885.

48. B. Hall, Fifty Years, pp.102-03. This did not mean that all clubs in Kent left the Union. Many of the larger clubs such as the Victoria, Sheerness stayed in. The Kent Union was really a union of rural clubs and small town clubs usually run on patronage lines.



Pratt and others who cautioned the Council with proceeding with Bradlaugh's election acted in a manner inappropriate to the behaviour required in a democratic organisation. Their warnings that subscribers and others might leave if the atheist was elected did them no credit. The abolition of the office of Vice-President had little practical effect upon the Union. Few, if any, Vice-Presidents actually attended any meetings and their ceremonial function was no longer necessary to a democratic body. With the passing of the honorary post the last vestige of the era of patronage was removed. The "revolt" was now completed.

Following the Bradlaugh incident matters in clubland returned to normal. Most of Council's time was occupied with dealing with the large number of requests for affiliation which were coming in from the new radical clubs of the metropolis. These had to be proposed and examined at every meeting. The Council also had to deal with the growing threat to the club movement coming from the licensed trade and from the temperance movement. Criticism of the clubs' privileges regarding the use of excisables was moving from vocal attacks to practical moves to obtain legislation against the clubs. Council was thus fully occupied with coping with the problems which accompanied renewed growth and increasing popularity.

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For the political clubs, new and old, the three years after 1884 were heady days of political activism. The advanced radical movements of the 1870's provided the basis for the revival of

socialism in the early 80's. (49) Although the radical clubs warily eyed the projects being proposed by Hyndman there were few political campaigns in the metropolis which did not include representatives of the clubs.

To co-ordinate the political activities of the clubs and to set out the political programme of club land the major radical clubs came together in 1886 to form their own political organisation, The Metropolitan Radical Federation. (50)

Over 90 delegates attended the inaugural meeting of the Federation held at the Hall of Science on 24th March 1886. W. Cremer took the chair. They agreed to a preliminary programme which included many traditional radical demands including payment of members, shorter parliaments, abolition of the House of Lords, reform of all laws relating to land and Home Rule for Ireland. Only the issue of adult suffrage provoked any disagreement. One representative wanted the vote to be restricted for the present to adult males as he was reluctantly forced to the conclusion that if women were enfranchised they would constitute a reactionary force. He was strongly opposed by Mrs. Ashton Dilke (Peckham and Dulwich Radical)

49. For the social and intellectual background to the revival of socialism see, S. Pierson, Marxism and the Origins of British Socialism, (1973); W. Wolfe, From Radicalism to Socialism, (1975), Chapter 3, passim; P. Thompson, Socialists, Liberals and Labour: The Struggle for London, 1885-1914; W. Lincoln, "Popular Radicalism and the Beginnings of the New Socialist Movement in Great Britain, 1870-1885," (Ph.D. Thesis, Univ. London, 1977).
50. On the background to the formation of the M.R.F. see, Democrat, 6 February 1886; Republican, 11(11), February and 12(1) April 1886; Weekly Dispatch, 17 January, 24 January, 7 February and 28 March 1886. Tims, later Secretary to the Federation had been pressing for such an organisation for the previous two years, see, Democrat, 29 November 1884.

who argued for adult suffrage. Upon being put to the vote only one member voted against Mrs. Dilke's motion. (51) No mention was made in the programme, however, of the old radical demand for the abolition of the monarchy. (52) The formation of the MRF was welcomed by Standring who thought that it would provide much needed "political strength for the promotion of common objects." (53) This addition to the progressive forces in the capital was also the object of some scorn. Such groups it was thought were always being formed by working men eager for some office. Once established they could be relied upon "to accept Mr. Gladstone's latest doctrines, reserving to themselves the privilege of propounding ... still more extravagant notions." (54) It was the hope of the Federation that all political councils would affiliate to it thereby giving new energy and direction to local and national politics. Effective political organisation would help to dislodge the Tories from control of the metropolis.

The first step taken by the Federation into the world of practical politics came in September 1886 when it issued a manifesto to parents whose children were attending board schools. It called for them to withhold school fees after the 1st of November and to

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51. Republican, 12(1), April 1886. Why Dilke's sister in law had been chosen to lead the radicals of this part of south-east London has not yet been discovered.
52. See also the programme debated in the Eleusis Club, Herald of Health, 1 June 1880; for the programme of the Portsmouth Radical Club formed in 1887 see, Radical, 1(6), February 1887.
53. Republican, 11(11), February 1886.
54. Saturday Review, 3 April 1886.

attend a demonstration to be held in Trafalgar Square on October 3rd. (55) Over 32 clubs answered the call to march to the Square where they were joined by members of the Social Democratic Federation and the Socialist League. The demonstration marked the first real public display of club power as each club, led by its band and banner, marched into the Square. Three platforms were organised from which speeches were delivered. Radical clubmen occupied the chair at each platform, Hart of Hackney Radical took charge at No. 2 while Soutter (Southwark Radical) and Cottrell (Boro' of Marylebone) shared the chair at No. 3. The meeting passed two resolutions. The first called for education to be free. It was proposed by Pike (Boro' of Hackney) and seconded by Morris. The second protested against the inquisitorial policy of the school board in persecuting parents who were unable to pay the school fees. It was moved by Standring and seconded by Mr. Poole (Patriotic Club). Despite some problems at the start of the demonstration with speakers who could not make themselves heard above the noise of the bands entering the Square the protest was a great success. The entry of the clubs onto the wider world of metropolitan politics seemed to give a new boost to the radical forces. (56)

The school board question was also debated at the January M.R.F. Council meeting when a motion to provide all board school children with one free meal paid for from taxation was discussed. The discussion was followed with some interest as this was the first

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55. Radical, 1(2), October 1886; Weekly News and Clerkenwell Chronicle, 2 October 1886; Weekly Dispatch, 17 October 1886.

56. Radical, 1(3), November 1886.

time the Federation had discussed an issue "directly affecting the principles of socialism." (57) It was thought that the Federation could act as a bridge between the radicals and socialists and dispel some of that hostility and mutual suspicion which existed between the two movements and diminished their potential power. (58)

By the end of the year the appeal was being made to all radical clubs to affiliate to the M.R.F. Under the direction of its secretary, James Tims, of the Battersea Radical Club, the Federation had become "a thoroughly democratic and independent body. It had no President, no Vice-President, and no officers other than those elected by the representative council." (59)

Some measure of the swift rise to popularity and prominence enjoyed by the Federation was given by the speeches at the first Annual Dinner held at Foresters' Hall, Clerkenwell in February 1887. Over 200 club men attended and distinguished guests included Bradlaugh, Firth and Foote. Tims, responding to the toast "The M.R.F.," stressed that the clubs had yet to realise their full power and potential. He was also careful to stress that it was the intention of the Federation to maintain its independence. Other speakers suggested work which the organisation ought to take on. Foote told diners that they had to struggle against privilege as represented by "the Lords, the Church and the Landlords," while Firth urged the rads to campaign for "Home Rule for London." "London Radicals,"

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57. Radical, 1(5), January 1887.

58. See the speech by Besant to the Hall of Science in October 1886, Radical, 1(3), November 1886.

59. Radical, 1(4), December 1886. Tims was later to become a Committee member of the Labour Union, see Labour Union, Programme, (1889).

he said, "should absolutely refuse to recognise as a leader any man who was not prepared to give them municipal reform." (60)

The Federation had had a productive first year. Its existence demonstrated that the politicians of the clubs could not be ignored. Its first action, on the School Board, continued a tradition of interest among London Clubmen in this area of local government. A number of clubmen had sat on the local school boards from the mid 70's, Lowe and Pape, for example, for Hackney. So the 1886 School Board contest indicated a continuity of political concerns.

For the radical clubs 1887 marked the high point of their political activity. They directly organised a major demonstration which placed them at the centre of advanced politics in the metropolis. To some extent the criticisms later entered against the clubs regarding their supposed lack of interest in political matters were implicitly based upon the expectations aroused by the enthusiasm of club politicians in this year. The year saw the rads hard at work. The M.R.F. drew up a pamphlet criticising the junketing surrounding the Jubilee and joined with other sections of radical and socialist opinion in condemning the action of the London Trades Council in sending a delegation to Sandringham to present to the monarch the best wishes of the workmen of England. (61) The M.R.F. also considered the feasibility of setting up a Parliamentary Representation fund. (62) The most important work concerned the

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60. Radical, 1(6), February 1887.

61. CIJ, 8 January 1887. #

62. CIJ, 26 February and 5 March 1887.

Irish question. Resistance to the coercion policy and the wish to give practical expression to the abhorrence felt by substantial sections of radical working men to the crushing of liberties in Ireland was discussed by M.R.F. in the early part of the year.<sup>(63)</sup> After a number of delegate meetings it was resolved to send working men representatives to visit Ireland and to report back to the clubs on the impact of the coercion policy and how the Irish people were responding. Members appeared enthusiastic in support of the policy. Eleven names were put forward for election and the five chosen were:<sup>(64)</sup>

|         |                               |
|---------|-------------------------------|
| Ellis   | (Peckham and Dulwich Radical) |
| Pike    | (Boro' of Hackney)            |
| Page    | (North Hackney)               |
| Soutter | (Dulwich)                     |
| Nelson  | (Boro' of Battersea)          |

Clubs, such as the East Finsbury, passed resolutions pledging the membership to raise money every week to defray the expense of the visit.<sup>(65)</sup> In early October the Irish National League informed the Federation that it would take charge of the delegation when it arrived and would do all it could to assist them in their work. It was also announced that sufficient money had been raised to pay

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63. The Irish question and the struggle for free speech in the metropolis constituted the most important radicalising influences among London working men in the 80's, see, A. Hutt, This Final Crisis, (1935), pp.106-09; B. Bax, Reminiscences and Reflections of a Mid and Late Victorian, (1918), pp.76-77. For examples of local anti-coercion demonstrations see, Weekly Dispatch, 3 July and 28 August 1887. The background to the Irish policy and its effects upon domestic politics are explored in L. Curtis, Coercion and Conciliation in Ireland, 1880-1892, (Princeton, 1963) and T. Heyck, The Dimensions of British Radicalism, (Urbana, 1974), pp.58-59; 66-67.

64. CIJ, 24 September 1887.

65. CIJ, 1 October 1887.

for the trip. In order to begin the process it was decided to send the first two delegates as soon as possible. <sup>(66)</sup> Just as the working men arrived the leading figure in the resistance to coercion, William O'Brien was arrested and despite a weak constitution he was placed on a diet of bread and water for refusing to wear prison garb. This incensed the clubs. They had been organising local initiatives against the Conservative policy all year. They now resolved to hold a monster demonstration in Trafalgar Square to press for the release of O'Brien. The day chosen was 13 November. Every radical and socialist body was invited to attend. Sir Charles Warren, Police Commissioner, responded by placing a ban on any organised demonstration approaching the Square. <sup>(67)</sup> For the past two years the centre of the capital had been the scene of numerous demonstrations. Warren was determined to end the liberties of the demonstrators. His military background made him unsympathetic to appeals regarding the right to protest. He saw the issue as one of public order. Unemployed demonstrations, anti-coercion demonstration, and Home Rule demonstrations had interfered with what he regarded as proper policing. To protest against the inhuman treatment being meted out to O'Brien did not meet with Warren's approval. The clubs and associated groups were unlikely to obey the directive of the "police tsar" as he was now called. <sup>(68)</sup> For the past two years the clubs had campaigned in their respective localities for the right of free speech and whatever the differences

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66. CIJ, 15 October 1887.

67. Pall Mall Gazette, 10 November 1887.

68. Weekly Dispatch, 13 November 1887.



between radical and socialist both had co-operated to maintain the right to hold and address public meetings in the district. (69)

Thus 13 November became a two issue protest: for O'Brien and for Free Speech. Representatives from the M.R.F. continued to try to obtain an audience with Matthews, the Home Secretary, to try to get him to rescind Warren's order. But to no avail. On the 12th at a meeting at the Patriotic it was decided to go ahead. The following day the predicted confrontation took place. Peaceful marchers led by their Presidents and accompanied by their bands tried to enter the Square. A strong presence of policemen (with the military held in reserve) kept them out. In a police operation which harkened back to Chartist days the radicals and socialists were taught a brutal lesson in the right of freedom of assembly. (70)

Ordered by their superiors to disperse the marchers as they approached the Square from their different assembly points the constables waded in with their truncheons. In the late afternoon Burns and Cunningham Graham were arrested. Just after 4 p.m. the military arrived ready to clear the Square if necessary. The marchers had not got to the Square. Their contingents had been bloodily dispersed. Press estimates of casualties were some 400. (71)

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69. See, for example, demonstrations organised by the Hackney Radical and the United Radical, Justice, 25 July and 19 September 1885. For a first-class analysis of public order in London in the mid 80's which provides the necessary background to the events of 13 November see, V. Bailey, "Social Disturbances and the Urban Magistracy," (Ph.D. Thesis, Univ. Warwick, 1975).
70. Over 1,500 constables were present in the Square according to Supt. Hunt, see, "Reg. V. Burns and Cunningham-Graham," Times Law Reports, Vol.4, 1887-1888. For Warren's defence of his actions, see "The Police of the Metropolis," Murray's Magazine, Vol.4, November 1888.
71. For the events and aftermath of "Bloody Sunday" see, for example, Weekly Dispatch, 20 November 1887; Reynolds News, 20 November 1887; Daily Telegraph, 14 November 1887; Times, 14 November 1887; Pall Mall Gazette, 15 November 1887; South London Chronicle, 19 November 1887; Our Corner, Vol.10, November 1887; see also, E.P.Thompson, William Morris: From Romantic to Revolutionary, (1955), pp.586-89.

On 16 November a special meeting of the Federation was held at the Patriotic to consider the action to be taken in the aftermath of "Bloody Sunday" as the incident had been termed. Mrs. Dilke put the case for the moderates. The clubs should hold a protest meeting in Hyde Park. She was adamant that the Square had to be preserved as a place of public meeting but she had no intention of urging men and women to return there the following Sunday for another dose of Warren's justice. She was supported by Littlejohn (Southwark) who was given a barracking by some of the more extreme delegates when he observed that the policy they were advocating was endorsed by Gladstone. Besant led for the opposition. She argued that the case was analogous to the 1866 Hyde Park disturbances. The men of '66 had not given way and their descendants should heed their example. A stand had to be made. Besant was careful not to argue for a march. Instead people should make their way to the Square one by one and if the troops were called out then the protesters should go home quietly and return the following Sunday. Shaw spoke against noting in particular the "fearful dangers of bringing people into serious contact with the police." The speeches went on, Aveling for the Square, Foote for the Park. Ellis told the meeting that if they were pledged to defend the cause of freedom in Ireland then they had to return to the Square otherwise they were reneging on their undertaking. After an exhaustive debate Dilke's motion was put and carried. It was agreed that the Executive would hold a meeting in the Park. Further resolutions were passed condemning the brutality of the police and the severity of the sentences ordered by the magistrates. (72)

At the Federation meeting of 7 December the delegates listened to a sub-committee report on the usefulness of obtaining a test case on the right of public meeting in the Square. It was stated that the Burns-Graham case had raised the question and until judgement was given there was little worth in the Federation pursuing another case. A number of the socialist members of the M.R.F. led by Ellis thought this to be a weak response. Ellis moved the establishment of a committee to prepare a demonstration, on Christmas Day if possible, to force an arrest. But few could be found to vote for the motion. Smith (Eleusis) put the majority opinion in his observation that after the demonstration the Federation had "attained a certain position" and they should attempt to keep it with dignity. Ellis lost the vote. (73)

The radicals experienced a dilemma over the use of the Square. Shaw expressed succinctly the choice the M.R.F. had to face. They voted to await judgements at law rather than follow the plan of Besant and Aveling to confront state power. Many delegates were probably persuaded of the correctness of the Dilke position by the pasting they and their fellow members had received in the Square. Injuries had been inflicted, banners torn and band instruments destroyed. The defence of free speech was a more fearsome business than had been expected. Individual clubs passed motions in the following week which clearly expressed their resentment at what had been visited upon them. At the John Bright and West Marylebone Radical, members passed a motion urging all working men in the capital "to completely isolate themselves from all policemen, and

refuse to acknowledge them as members of the working class." Clubmen at the East Finsbury called upon members and friends "to supply the names of trades people in the district who have volunteered for specials, as it was their intention to boycott them." (74) Resentment at the police formed the object of resolutions at the St. Georges Liberal (Southwark) and the West Kensington Radical. At the former a new by-law was added forbidding the police to enter the club either as members or guests. Any person who broke this rule by bringing a policeman as an associate would be expelled. At the latter club members considered withholding the police rate until Warren was dismissed. (75) The Federation had demonstrated the club men's commitment to the cause of freedom in London and Ireland. And if they seemed equivocal in their response to Warren's repression the tactical question they faced did not permit an easy solution.

In the aftermath of Bloody Sunday, however, one question began to receive more discussion - the proposal of certain leading radical clubs to leave the Union and set up a Union of radical clubs. Anger aroused by the events of 13 November revived this issue which had been troubling Union delegates for the previous year.

The trouble began in 1886. On 28 September a special meeting of club delegates was convened at the United Radical. Called by the executive of the host club, 17 clubs sent 37 delegates. It was put to the meeting that there was little benefit to be had from the CIU. The only advantage was that of affiliation and this could be realised in another organisation, one which, moreover, would cost

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74. CIJ, 3 December 1887.

75. Pall Mall Gazette, 17 November 1887.

less to run than the Union with the money saved used for political purposes. A motion was put to establish an "East London Social and Political Union." Dorrell, introducing the scheme, assuaged the fears of the smaller clubs by noting that the idea already had the blessing of the politically active clubs of Chelsea and he fully expected further declarations in favour of the new organisation from clubs in other parts of London. At the end of the evening a committee was formed to examine the practical issues. It had five members: Dent of West Ham Radical, Dorrell, Turner (Bethnal Green Radical), Tongue (Boro' of Hackney) and Eastlake of Cremer Radical. The union was not to be restricted to political clubs but was to include social clubs. Speeches made it clear that the dissentients had two areas of contention. One was the charges made for affiliation and associate cards; the other the long time it took to become affiliated. (76)

There was little response from the Union or from other clubs to this declaration to break-up the existing central organisation. One reason for the Union's inaction was not complacency regarding its work but the feeling that there was little of substance in the critics' charges. That spring and summer Pratt and Dent had undertaken a tour of Yorkshire, including speaking at a conference in Halifax, to explain the role of the Union and to attract the newly formed Yorkshire clubs to affiliate. (77) But the issue did not fade away. In mid-October a draft constitution was circulated to

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76. CIJ, 2 October 1886.

77. The Working Men's Club and Institute Union: What it is and Why It is Wanted, (n.d. 1886); paper delivered to the Halifax conference.

those clubs which had sent delegates to the first meeting. (78)

This move prompted defenders of the Union to call upon those members of clubs contemplating leaving the Union to make their opposition known to the respective committees. A strong letter attacking the scheme from Fuller caused Dorrell to write an equally strong defence. The tone of the letter indicated that if not the leader Dorrell was certainly one of the major figures pressing for secession. (79) If the move had simply been led by the United then the Union need not have worried overmuch. The club, despite its growing prominence, was still a newcomer to Union affairs. But the upstart was clearly being abetted in the campaign by the Boro' of Hackney. This club was among the most senior and well-regarded within the Union. Popularly known in club circles as "Mother" because of the numerous clubs which had been set up by its members in different parts of east London the Boro' was, along with the Eleusis, perhaps the most important political club in the CIU, and along with the St. James and Soho was one of the longest serving affiliated clubs. Opposition from the members of the Boro' had to be given serious consideration. The first blood, however, went to the Union when members of the Plaistow club passed a resolution expressing their satisfaction with the Union and their hostility to the idea of an East End Union. They were not alone for at the next meeting to discuss the idea, held at the United, a number of delegates told the gathering that many of their members were lukewarm to the proposition. (80) On

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78. CIJ, 30 October 1886.

79. CIJ, 13 November 1886.

80. CIJ, 20 November 1886.

December 4th the idea was given its first public debate at the Council meeting. Delegates received a special deputation from the clubs pressing for the plan. After a desultory discussion it was resolved to pass the matter on to the Executive for consideration. However, it was acknowledged that the East end clubs might have a legitimate grievance regarding fees so it was suggested that the Executive could explore the idea of setting-up a district union to allow the east-enders greater financial autonomy. (81)

But beyond that the Council would not move, a position reinforced by a special council meeting held at the St. James and Soho later in the month. Some 53 delegates representing 35 clubs mulled over the United plan. Most did not like it and pledged their support to the Union. (82)

The new year did not heal the breach. The secessionists now published the Rules of the new Union. They were signed by Harris Pike (Political Council, Boro'), Tongue (President, Boro'), Gibson (President, United), Dorrell (Secretary, United) and Eastlake (President, Cremer Radical). These men constituted the Provisional Committee. Despite their claims to want a political organisation the stated purpose of the new body was to be "defending our mutual interests, educating the members and extending the usefulness of, and strengthening the movement generally." (83) Many club men must have wondered why the new organisation was needed. The radical clubs had, in 1888, established a political wing, the M.R.F., and

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81. CIJ, 11 December 1886.

82. CIJ, 18 December 1886.

83. CIJ, 29 January 1887.

there were also local associations of like-minded political clubs which co-operated in matters of political action and strategy. The best known was the Combined Political Councils of the Chelsea Clubs which included the Eleusis, the Hammersmith and the Starch Green Radical. In the east the Hackney Radical Federation had been set up in 1886. This included the Boro', the United, the Kingsland, and the South Hackney. To demand some new political organisation seemed to make no sense. If the issue was really one of money then this was open to examination. The east London clubs paid no more than their counterparts of similar size in other parts of the capital. To argue that affiliation took a long time was a little short-sighted as a political tactic. It was the policy of the Union, inasmuch as affiliation was supposed to guarantee the bona-fides of a club, to investigate carefully every request for affiliation. This was made all the more essential as the issue of drink assumed a greater urgency. If some clubs failed to supply the correct details to the Union in order that their request for admission could come before a monthly council meeting (where such decisions were made) then this was a fault of the club not the system of affiliation. To many club delegates the scheme seemed to have little objective merit. Rather it was seen as an attack upon the Union led by a club of some standing and aided by men with little real knowledge or experience of the movement. But the issue would not be decided by being ignored by the pro-Union majority on Council. To signal the seriousness of its case the United Radical removed its delegate to Council in February. However, the Union could take comfort from the news that more potential renegades were declaring for the status quo.



By a large majority members at the Carlyle Club voted not to send any further delegates to meetings to discuss a new Union. News also came from the South Hackney and Hackney Wick Clubs that there was no support in their clubs for the move. Talk of breaking away was said to reflect the ideas of an unrepresentative clique of leaders at the core clubs. (84) But 16 delegates still turned up at the Boro' on 17th February to give further thought and planning to the radical union. They were told that the new body would enjoy the same legal privileges and identities as the CIU. The secessionists were particularly incensed by talk from union defenders of the "Union Charter" which was said to give them the monopoly of legal rights as a club organisation. The "charter" referred to the discussions held between the Union and Northcote on associate privileges and the rebels did not believe it conferred upon the Union a monopoly. Any bona-fide club organisation could enjoy the same rights as that currently held by the Union. (85) The talk continued. In May a three man deputation from the Boro' was given leave to address Council. Pike spoke stressing that there were grounds for reconciliation between the Union and its critics. He repeated the charge that the United obtained little for the money it paid into the Union, money which would have been better spent on the political causes supported by the club. Other delegates continually interrupted him for it was clear that many were now exasperated by the line being adopted by these two clubs. As a compromise it was agreed that the Executive would examine the possibility of establishing a District Union. (86)

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84. CIJ, 12 February 1887.

85. CIJ, 19 February 1887.

86. CIJ, 14 May 1887.

But it was a poor compromise for many delegates thought the argument ought to have been ended and the east London clubs left to do as they wished.

Compromise was then rejected by the Union at the June Council meeting. It was reported that if the Hackney clubs wished to form themselves into a District Union they were free to do so. But there would be certain consequences to such action. The most important was that they would constitute a separate section of the Union and would thus be disbarred from all the other activities and benefits conferred upon metropolitan clubs as an entity. The district union would be responsible for financing the undertakings currently borne by the Union using income derived from its affiliates. A fairly bitter discussion followed. Gaston, though a Boro' man was no supporter of rebellion, yet he alleged that his brother clubmen, especially those in the west, looked with disdain upon their members in the east. (87)

There was one positive consequence to this bickering. Supporters of the Union did recognise that the association seemed remote from the concerns of the ordinary members. Many new affiliates had only a hazy notion of what the Union stood for and what the club movement had achieved. It was agreed that the Union also had to carry out a publicity exercise in the capital if it was to deal effectively with the challenge raised by the rebels. Following the 1887 Annual Meeting a special conference was held to explain the workings and advantages of the Union and to consider ways it could be made still more useful. Papers were given by Dent and Hobson which discussed perennial problems such as financing as well

as ways of enlarging the Union's work. (88) The campaign against the CIU made it aware of its deficiencies and forced it to consider again the centrality of propaganda work. It was not enough that the Union had been reformed, it had to continue to go forward. Moreover, the developing campaign against the drink-selling clubs was giving the Union a role as defender of club interests which it had not used until then. Teetotalers and licensed traders were binding the Union and its constituents into a closer relationship. But before these points could be acted upon the secession issue had to be resolved. To the Union's chagrin the rebels continued to press their case. At the July meeting of the Hackney Radical Federation, Dorrell spoke on the question of disaffiliation from the CIU. He told delegates that the issue was now to go before the M.R.F. Others supported this action arguing that the justice of their case was simply dismissed by the Union. While they remained in the CIU money was being wasted in supporting social clubs. (89) Later in the month the Hackney Federation returned to the question. Correspondence hostile to Dorrell seemed only to have made him more intransigent on the issue. He moved from a defence of the rebels' position to an attack upon Union clubs stating that many social clubs harboured vices that no low public house would allow. Wain (Boro' of Hackney) said his members were considering separating from the CIU in October. This support was not matched at other clubs. Moss (Hackney Radical) sadly admitted that his members were much less enthusiastic. However delegates were cheered to

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88. CIJ, 2 July 1887.

89. CIJ, 16 July 1887.

hear that Tims had given his support to their scheme. To promote their case it was agreed that lecturers should be sent to the clubs to explain to the ordinary members what was intended. (90)

On 4th August the M.R.F. considered the question. Harris of the United made the novel but sensible suggestion that the Federation should form itself into a radical club union. His speech supporting this motion went over the familiar ground save that he concluded by noting that many radical clubs took exception to the continued patronage in the form of subscriptions which the Union accepted. In the previous year these had amounted to over £180. He did not, on the other hand, consider how the Union would be financed if this small but still useful sum should be cut off. If the radical clubs were squealing regarding the amount they already paid to the Union then they would have even more complaint if those fees were increased. Linton, of the Boro' seconded. Fuller (Patriotic) adopted the role of peacemaker. He spoke of the work done by the Union, especially the growing defence of the club movement being undertaken. He also stressed the importance of the "revolt" and what had been achieved. This selflessness he contrasted sharply with the present action contemplated by some clubs. Tims suggested the appointment of a committee to examine the feasibility of transforming the M.R.F. The comments of other delegates showed that clubland was being broken apart by the issue. Some were in favour of Tim's suggestion, others wanted Harris's motion acted upon, and others such as Fuller told the meeting that were the motion to be passed then his club had instructed him to withdraw from the Federation. Just as the London radical clubs were beginning to act in unison brought together by

shared political concerns and a desire to do something of practical value for the Irish cause, the issue of the split was dissipating that potential unity. Tim's motion was put and accepted. A committee of seven members was elected. (91)

To counter the charge that the Union had grown distant from its affiliates, handbills had been published and distributed to every club giving a summary of the Union's work and why it was worth retaining. While the Union was rallying support the position of the secessionists became more confused. A meeting of the Hackney Radical Federation in early August considered a report on the need to establish a new union. What unity there had been was shown to be disintegrating. Some clubs were for dropping the idea altogether, some wanted to stay in but wished the various charges levied upon the clubs lowered and the United Radical, or rather Dorrell, were firmly for withdrawal. His criticisms of the Union were no longer confined to social clubs. He now attacked clubs such as the Patriotic which had shown themselves hostile to separation. (92) Letters berating the United's secretary came from every section of the movement. Pratt, for example, expressed his distaste at the language of class exclusivism adopted by the critics. Members of the Boro' of Hackney such as Dallas and Gaston finally declared opposition to their committee's position. (93)

In early September the matter came before the M.R.F. again.

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91. CIJ, 6 August 1887. The members were: Harris (United Radical); Corbett (Peckham and Dulwich Radical); W Smith (Eleusis); Flint (Tower Hamlets); Harris (West Kensington Park); Catt (West Ham Radical) and Banner.

92. CIJ, 13 August 1887.

93. CIJ, 20 August 1887.

Tims proposed that the committee's report be accepted and a radical union set up. Much of the discussion was of a technical nature concerning the rights of affiliation. It was clear, however, that most delegates would only accept a radical union if their clubs could remain within the CIU. Given the growing confusion - for what need was there for a radical union if there was the M.R.F? - the debate ended inconclusively, the matter being again referred to the November meeting. Matters were favouring the Union. The longer the question remained unresolved the stronger grew the forces in favour of staying. Many delegates were uneasy at the legal implications of founding another Union. It was also clear that while the delegates were sympathetic to a new body the mass of the membership was loyal to the CIU. But the men from the United Radical were not dissuaded by such faint-heartedness. At the next meeting of the Hackney Radical Federation they suggested not only a new Union but launching their own radical journal as well. (94)

There was little time to consider the separation issue at the November meeting of the M.R.F. as most of the evening was given to discussing the aftermath of "Bloody Sunday." Five clubs, including Solly's old haunt the Artisans', were in favour of the plan providing that affiliation fees were low, while six were against. But once again a final vote was deferred. (95) If support for the new Union was slowly slipping away Pratt's letter to the press expressing

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94. CIJ, 17 September 1887.

95. CIJ, 12 November 1887. Those for were: Boro' of Battersea; United Radical; Pimlico Radical; Artisans' and North Hackney. Those against: West Marylebone; Woolwich; West Kensington Park; Patriotic; Boro' of Marylebone and Lambeth Progressive. The Eleusis abstained.

little sympathy for the members who had marched upon the Square worked to the benefit of those opposed to the old guard. Ellis demanded to see the "charter" which the Union was always alluding to. The December Council meeting was noisy and argumentative. The failure to resolve the issue and heal the breach was beginning to erode old friendships and accusations of patronage and counter-accusations of manipulation were souring relations between the clubs. (96)

The year ended with the matter still open. It was agreed that the Union was facing some kind of crisis but nobody seemed able to bring the matter to a conclusion. It clouded the balance sheet of the year's work in the clubs which in other ways was to the clubs' credit. The east end clubs, through the agency of the Hackney Radical Federation, had staged an impressive Anti-coercion demonstration in Victoria Park in mid-summer. Thousands of copies of the M.R.F.'s anti-jubilee tract had been distributed throughout London clubland and the clubs were beginning to become a powerful force in the "free Sunday" agitation. There were, however, a number of problems and tensions which this activity masked. Despite the revival of republican sentiments in the clubs few could be found to give support to the revival of the republican agitation through the agency of a regenerated British Republican League. (97) More importantly there was an undercurrent of antagonism between the radical club men and the socialists, at least those of S.D.F. persuasion. Many club men were disillusioned with the Liberal Party and were

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96. CIJ, 10 December 1887.

97. CIJ, 27 August and 17 September 1887. The moving figures behind the League were Dalziel of the Walworth Club and Morrison Davidson.

vocal in their criticism of established Liberal organisations such as the London Liberal and Radical Union. But although disengaged from the official party they were very reluctant to commit themselves to the cause of socialism. There was also the issue of the relationship between the radical and the social clubs in the Union. One clear motive for the establishment of a new body was the idea that a well-organised and disciplined association of radical clubs would strengthen the progressive forces in London while if such clubs remained within the Union the political work would lose out to the "beer and billiards" faction. But besides this strong case there was little other rationale for leaving the Union. It was clear that secession would weaken both parties and damage, perhaps irreparably the integrity of the club movement.

The bickering continued into the new year. Pratt, in consequence of the criticisms made of his letter, tendered his resignation as president. The ranks of the rebels were increased when clubs such as the East Finsbury decided that the time had come to establish a new Union. The Council spoke for the Union, the M.R.F. for the secessionists. At each meeting the bodies would raise the issue, go through the arguments for and against and then vote to leave the matter on the table. Time was being wasted and the uncertainty was curtailing the progress of both bodies. Neither knew how long it would survive in its present form nor what the consequences of change would be. The Council, anxious not to lose Pratt, asked him to reconsider which prompted Dorrell to rebuke them for the decision. "Working men alone must manage the Union" he argued, "and they could find a man for President." (98) But Dorrell mis-

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98. CIJ, 10 March 1888.



read the substantial support commanded by Pratt and many found his repeated charges that the Union was still under the rule of patronage offensive and incorrect. After deferring the vote for nearly five months the M.R.F. balloted its members in May and June. Four clubs voted in favour, a few, like the Eleusis did not vote. The rest, as Table 9 shows were for the CIU. The talk of a separate Union ended. With warm expressions of fraternal good-feeling the radical dissenters were welcomed back into the Union. Although Dorrell and to a lesser extent Ellis would prove to be stinging and obdurate critics of Union policy they now took up the cause of the CIU with commendable fervour. The crisis of the Union was over. Full reconciliation was indicated by the 1888 Annual Meeting when among those who spoke for Pratt to be elected to the office of President was Gibson who in his remarks emphasised the good feeling that existed among all the clubs and observed that the need for a strong Union was greater than ever. (99)

The events surrounding the proposed radical union have been discussed for two reasons. Firstly, they show that the apparent unity which characterised the "revolt" of 1883-84 was shattered once that process was successfully completed. Considered in this way the bid for secession and its eventual containment should be seen as the last act of the "revolt." It was a bid to maintain the momentum for radical change which the cry of "Dent and Democracy"

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99. CIU, Annual Report, No.26, (1888), p.61. There was one ironic postscript to this internal revolt. One of the issues pressed for by the United Radical was the need to find new ways of financing clubs. Dorrell and others were insistent that the Union could do more to foster financial co-operation between its affiliates. Without such assistance many clubs would be forced to go to the brewers for loans in order to fit up their clubs. At the end of the century the United was forced to close as brewers foreclosed on the money advanced to the club.

TABLE 9 : The Vote for the Proposed Radical Union, 1888.

|           | FOR   |   | AGAINST   |   |
|-----------|---|---|---|---|
| MAY VOTE  | Boro' of Hackney<br>Boro' of Battersea<br>Peckham & Dulwich<br>United Radical | Members<br>1,700<br>235<br>270<br>1,550 | Woolwich Radical<br>North-east Bethnal Green<br>West Ham Radical<br>Boro' Marylebone<br>Gladstone<br>North Camberwell Radical<br>East Finsbury<br>Paddington Radical<br>Hackney Wick<br>West Marylebone | Members<br>500<br>560<br>400<br>780<br>360<br>120<br>300<br>330<br>80<br>180<br>3,210 |
| JUNE VOTE |   |   | Fawcett<br>Primrose Radical<br>Tower Hamlets<br>South Hackney<br>FINAL TOTAL  | 200<br>150<br>175<br>400<br>4,485   |

SOURCES: CLJ, 5 May and 9 June 1888.

had inaugurated which gave rise to the East End Union. The emergence of the rebels showed that there were a number of real grievances and antagonisms among constituent clubs which almost caused the Union to break into two. The debates which took place between 1886-88 were given little attention in the semi-official histories of the Union such events being at variance with the generally whiggish tone of these accounts. Hall mentioned the incident but accorded it little importance. Yet along with the campaign to restrict the supply of intoxicants in the clubs the secession bid represented a major crisis for the Union. This provides the second reason for considering the issue. The dissension showed that the reformed Union had in some cases lost touch with the aspirations of many of its affiliates. To the newer clubs, which knew little of the Union's history and achievements the case made by some radical clubs for a reduction in affiliation and other fees probably seemed compelling. The need for a central organisation was not a self-evident truth to be affirmed when queried but something which had to be tested and proved. The Union had to recognise that notwithstanding the political case for a new body the critics had touched upon a sensitive point of organisational growth. In the aftermath of the revolt it was possible to think that all difficulties had been resolved and that all that was required to advance the club cause was a little fine tuning from time to time. But the club movement, like any organisation, required more than that. Having carried through the democratisation of the association it was now necessary to foster the growth of new clubs, to defend the established ones and to make contact with the provincial clubs again. Dent began this work at the time of the secession. It was a job which

Hall was to make very much his own.

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The life of the club movement in the years 1886-88 was not all unrelieved gloom and dissension. Two events in particular indicated continuing progress. Firstly the CIU was invited to send delegates to the Co-Operative Congress and in return two delegates from the Congress attended the CIU Annual Meeting. It marked another stage in the increasingly friendly relations between the leadership of two movements. Old co-operators such as Holyoake thought only good could come from such intimacy although there remained a small body who were hesitant about the clubs especially when "drinking dens" were being exposed. The revival of contacts between club and co-op was led by Dent and Fuller who had given long service to both causes. One agency, the Guild of Co-Operators continued to use the clubs for propaganda purposes. Addressing the 1888 Annual Meeting Lord Ripon remarked on the good work that clubs could do in bringing the co-operative message to the attention of thoughtful working men. (100) Several club members also attended the Co-Operative Festivals. At the Ipswich Congress the Union was represented by Dorrell and Brown of the Bryanston Club. (101) Club delegates took an active part in the lively debate on co-operation and education at the 1898 Peterborough Congress, while at the Middlesborough Congress, 1901, a motion in favour of the nationalisation of railways was proposed by Benjamin Jones and seconded by Garrity for the CIU. (102)

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100. Co-Operative News, 5 May 1888.

101. CIU, Annual Report, No.27, (1889), pp.28-29.

102. Co-Operative Congress Report, No.30, (Manchester, 1898), pp.157-59; Ibid, No.33, (Manchester, 1901), p.190.

The result of this involvement was still very uneven. Pratt and Dent still wanted every club to serve as a forum for co-operative enlightenment. (103) Clubs could provide lectures, publicise meetings and bring the benefits of co-operation to a new audience. But they were troubled by the weakness of the clubs' response. (104) Few clubs systematically took up the work and those that did admitted that the bulk of their membership were often indifferent to the question. Clubs which went as far as setting up co-operative stores were even fewer. Neale thought that this was a temporary problem. Clubs he argued were still too much preoccupied "with large and resounding questions to put their hands to the humble work of store-keeping." (105) But there was little evidence that the desire to take up storekeeping increased as the movement progressed. The co-operative message made slightly better headway in the Manchester Association where clubs and co-operative societies could affiliate. By 1893-94 the Association comprised 70 clubs and 12 co-operative societies. (106) Ironically the only real success for co-operation in the clubs was to come after the first World War when the clubs in the north east established the first lasting co-operative brewery. On occasions there were glimpses of the antagonism between the co-operator and the clubman. At the 1891 Congress, in Lincoln, Webb in a paper discussing the most appropriate means of bringing co-operation to the benefit of the poorest of the population suggested that in villages, for example, clubs should be set-up and co-operation

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103. See, CIU, Annual Report, No.26, (1888), p.6 and No.30, (1892), p.65.

104. Co-Operative News, 28 January 1888.

105. Tower Hamlets Co-Operator, March 1888.

106. Manchester Association, Annual Report, No.17, (Manchester 1893-94), p.5.

should develop from the opportunities given for social enjoyment. Despite an able defence of Webb's argument from Dent many ordinary delegates disagreed. The Rev. Davies (Batley) opposed the idea that co-operation could be attained through smoking and drinking. (107) At the Huddersfield Meeting, 1895, Johnston (CIU) spoke to a motion recommending all co-operative societies to promote the formation of social clubs. He was in favour of such clubs taking on the appearance of "people's institutes" by admitting women and children. The motion was seconded by Holyoake. A number of speeches in favour of the proposition came from the floor including one from Mrs. Moore (Woolwich) who argued that she would rather have her husband drink at a club where there were "restraining influences" at work to control his behaviour than at a public house. But the vote was lost by a large majority. (108) Co-operative leaders such as Holyoake no doubt felt frustrated at the lack of enthusiasm for club work amongst sections of the membership. Pratt and Dent too must have been perplexed by the indifference of many clubs to co-operative missionaries. London continued to maintain its unworthy reputation as a graveyard of co-operation. (109) But the two movements continued to exchange representatives and were involved in a number of joint undertakings such as the Workers' Educational Association. They shared a mutual concern in their educational endeavours where both movements sought to instruct their members in the duties and obligations of citizenship and tried to set before the supporters ideals of corporate

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107. Co-Operative Congress Report, No.23, (Manchester, 1891), pp.14-16.

108. Ibid, No.27, (Manchester, 1895), pp.146-47.

109. Weekly Dispatch, 20 June 1886.

service and harmony as the ends of membership rather than the attractions of the billiard table or "divi."

The second event was the foundation of the Federation of Working Men's Social Clubs. (110) Its establishment did not rival or threaten the CIU for it was intended to be an association of teetotal and non-political clubs. The organisation had its headquarters in the Church of England Settlement at Oxford House Bethnal Green and marked their first real attempt to involve the working man in the work of the settlement. Most of its affiliates were also attached to church institutes or settlement houses. (111) A few years after its inauguration the Federation affiliated a number of social tea-shops oddly named "Tee-To-Tums" which had been the inspiration of a philanthropic tea-merchant and settlement worker, P. Buchanan. (112) At first the links between the CIU and Federation were rather desultory. The Union tended to ignore the social/religious clubs while the Federation was cool towards the Union because of the intransigent anti-clerical tone present in some of its leading radical constituents. By the end of the century, however, more cordial

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110. On the Federation see, Rules, Solly Collection, Vol.XV, Section 13(a); R. Woods, English Social Movements, (1892), pp.91-92; W. Reason, "Settlements and Recreations," in Idem, Universities and Social Settlements, (1898); R. Price, An Imperial War and the British Working Class, (1972), Appendix I.
111. See Federation of Working Men's Social Clubs, Annual Report, No.1, (1887); Oxford House Chronicle, Vol.10(1), January 1896; Oxford House in Bethnal Green, (1948). See Appendix B, below, for list of clubs in Federation in 1914 taken from Quarterly Newsheet, Federation of Working Men's Social Clubs, Vol.1(3), December 1914.
112. "Tee-To-Tums," Economic Review, Vol.2(3), July 1892; Woman's Signal, 10 October 1894; Club World, 28 July 1894. The Annual Sports Day of the Federation was held at the Tee-To-Tum grounds at Stamford Hill.

relations had been established and an annual meeting between representatives of the two organisations to debate current social questions had been initiated.

The subject of the first meeting, held in 1897, was the London Hospitals. In 1900 the Housing Question was the subject of debate. Resolutions passed at the conference included the demand that the municipal authorities do all in their power to increase the supply of accomodation available to working men. The only opposition to the speakers of the CIU and the Federation came from "one or two ardent socialists, who wished to express their complete distrust of private enterprise," preferring instead "to cast the whole burden of building working class dwellings on the municipalities." (113)

In 1904 the theme taken for discussion was "Free Trade and Tariff Reform," Speakers examined the relative merits of each policy in the august surroundings of the London Chamber of Commerce. However, most speakers irrespective of organisation, expressed themselves to be staunch free-traders. (114) The following year the working men discussed "Garden Cities" and in 1906 the topic was "Physical Deterioration." (115) The CIU and clubs in the east end also liased with Toynbee Hall. Barnett, as President of the Sunday Society, was well known to many prominent club men and both he and Henrietta often attended Union annual meetings and soirees. Toynbee Hall as

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113. R. Feetham, "Working Men's Conference on the Housing Question," Economic Review, Vol.10, October 1900, p.528; CIU/Federation of Working Men's Social Clubs, Notes on the Housing Question, (1900).

114. CIU, Annual Report, (1904), p.18.

115. CIU, Annual Report, No.43, (1905), and 44 (1906).



a centre for University Extension became a resort familiar to many members in pursuit of self improvement while many settlement workers such as Tawney and Beveridge joined working men's clubs in the area. (116)

Like the Federation clubs attached to the Hall were teetotal and predominantly social in character, though some of the men's clubs held regular debates and lectures on political questions to which brothers from radical clubs often repaired to enjoy and usually to take part in the discussion. (117) Like Oxford House Toynbeeites stressed the civilising and improving tendencies which accompanied club membership while their work for training in citizenship given by club government made the clubs of the settlements and the Union clubs almost indistinguishable. (118) On an individual level church club, settlement club and independent club entered into closer co-operation throughout this period. Yet figures in the Union such as Hall held that because the settlement type clubs were not self-supporting they were not true working men's clubs:

It may be said that practically all attempts to establish teetotal clubs have failed ... The great mass of the artisan and labouring class simply do not come to a place where they are debarred from the beer. Democracy is too big now, apparently, to be treated as a child, and refuses its countenance where such treatment is attempted. (119)

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116. E. Abel, "Canon Barnett and the First Thirty Years of Toynbee Hall," (Ph.D. Thesis, Univ. London, 1969), pp.271-72.
117. Toynbee Hall, Annual Report, No.2, (Oxford, 1886), p.35; Annual Report, No.9, (1893), pp.40-41; CIJ, May 1904.
118. Escott, Transformations, p.117; L. Nettleship, "The Settlement Rationale," (D.Phil Thesis, Univ. Sussex, 1976), pp.82-83.
119. B. Hall, "The Rev. H. Solly: The Harvest of His Work," Appendix to H. Solly, Working Men's Clubs and Social Institutes, (Second edition, 1904), p.178. See also C. Booth, Life and Labour of the People in London, Final Volume, (1902), p.76. The clubs in the Worcester Union were also teetotal.

At the end of the decade Union officials and supporters could note with quiet pride the renewed progress of the Union. Finances were strong and improving all the time. In 1889 there was another change in the Union's membership. Only clubs could now become members of the Union; individual membership was abolished. This was carried out by registering the Union as a "Society for Carrying on a Business" under the Industrial and Provident Societies Act. This also had financial consequences. To be a member of the Union a club or society had to hold 1-4 5/- shares in proportion to its number of members as well as pay to the Union's general fund an annual fee of 5/- to £1 again decided by size of membership. The Union also hoped that the Act could be extended to cover those clubs unable to register under the Friendly Societies Act or those who wished to raise money by issuing shares as a form of membership in the club. If such registration was possible then:

a great difficulty now encountered by many clubs in raising capital will be overcome, and an additional advantage will be gained from the fact that it will be possible to make every member a shareholder in the club. (120)

The number of clubs coming to the notice of the Union was increasing every year as were the number of affiliates. At the 1887 Annual Meeting the need for missionary work was stressed. "The country clubs and the metropolitan clubs," it was noted, "are not in touch with each other as they should be." (121) The duties of provincial

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120. CIU, Annual Report, No.27, (1889), pp.3 and 11. Clubs were granted this facility under the 1892 Industrial and Provident Societies Act. By 1907 affiliation to the Union required the purchase of two 5/- shares for each one hundred members or part thereof up to a maximum of 8 plus an annual fee of 10/- per 100 members up to a maximum of £2, CIU, Annual Report, No.43, (1907), p.244.

121. CIJ, 9 July 1887.

proselytism were slowly being taken up again. Conferences, for example, to explain the work and need for the Union were held in Bristol and Guildford in 1889-90. Provincial propaganda formed the theme of the work set before the clubs in the closing years of the century. Declared the Annual Report, "Never was it more important that club members in all parts of the country should be well organised." (122) There was a real need to strengthen the Union in order on the one hand to repel any aggression from external influences represented, for example, by the licensed trade, and, on the other, to re-affirm that the club movement was a national movement not a local one. (123)

In 1892 Dent left the movement. The intelligent, quiet and careful way he had discharged his duties as Secretary attracted the attention of Mundella who invited him to become a Correspondent in the newly created Labour Department in the Board of Trade. He had shepherded the Union through the most difficult and tense few years of club history. He had had to carry much of the work of administration, planning and leadership as Pratt, his mentor, was often absent for long periods seeking treatment and convalescence abroad. He was also extremely popular.. The young radical who had helped to build the Eleusis joined Pratt as one of the movement's elder statesmen. Council members had got on well with the highly capable but self-effacing secretary. When voting him a salary increase in late 1887 during the secession dispute all delegates praised him for his shrewd and energetic work on behalf of the club cause. He

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122. CIU, Annual Report, 28, (1890), p.47.

123. CIU, 11 April 1891; see also the editorial in Ibid, 27 February 1892.

had clearly been a wise choice. (124) But he left at a critical juncture. The Select Committee considering the Clubs' Registration Bill had just begun taking evidence and while serving out his notice Dent had to defend the Union before it. The campaign against the clubs exemplified by the Bill meant that the new Secretary would be plunged straight into the hurly-burly of Union work. He would have little time at first to find out how the Union worked, to make contacts and to establish a routine. Once again the Union was fortunate in choosing a man who was to serve it well. The choice fell upon Benjamin Thomas Hall, Assistant Secretary to the Seamen's and Firemen's Union, author of a Fabian Tract, Socialism and Sailors, and member of the Hatcham Liberal Club. (125) He had also been politically active having served as a Registration Agent for the Liberal Party before becoming a Fabian. (126) Although club literature gives the impression that Hall was a less likeable character than his predecessor - certainly he was more machiavellian in his approach to club issues - he was no less energetic or capable. He took on a burden of propaganda work which eclipsed even that of Solly,

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124. See the eulogies to Dent on his retirement expressed at the delegate meeting, CIJ, 11 February 1893. One small consequence of Dent's move to a government department was that statistics illustrating club progress were now included in the Annual Report of the Labour Department.

125. Some club delegates were a little troubled when he was first appointed that he was going to stand as a Guardian for Deptford. These duties, if elected, they believed would take him away from Union business. Happily for the Union he was defeated. See, CIJ, 14 April 1893; Fabian News, 3(2), April 1893.

126. By trade Hall was a joiner. He was also to act as Sidney Webb's election agent when Webb stood for the L.C.C. in Deptford. For a short biography see, Labour Annual, (1896), p.202.

wrote a number of first rate pieces on the history and character of the club movement, become a self-taught but well-regarded expert on club law and management, and expanded the movement well beyond the vision of its founders. By 1902 the Union was paying him £350 p.a. and with increments he could earn up to £500. It was also noted that in the year he was first paid the £350 in addition to his daily duties he had spent 238 evenings and Sundays on club and Union business. (127) If he shared less of the rhetoric of "tone" which distinguished the rule of Solly and Pratt and if he seemed a less attractive personality than Dent he became a well-known and respected figure in club land. An ebullient character, he could be seen in the clubs enjoying a drink with the members or a chat with the Committeeman.

Hall had two complementary tasks. Firstly he had to revive the provincial work. Despite verbal commitments to consider ways of involving clubs outside the capital in the government of the CIU little had been done to transform pious sentiments into democratic practice. In the late 80's the Council agreed to pay the expenses of one delegate from the Manchester Branch so that he might attend one Council meeting every quarter. But that constituted the limit of the London action. Hall would have to stomp around the country explaining what the Union was, what benefits would be conferred by affiliation, and how the club movement might be made still more useful to the working man. If the provincial work was neglected then there was a possibility of the formerly national CIU contracting to simply a metropolitan and home counties association. In the early

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127. CIU, Annual Report, No.40, (1902), p.9.

90's London still dominated the club movement with over 150 affiliates. Only Lancashire and Cheshire had more than 50 affiliates. The secession of some county clubs had weakened the presence of the Union in some southern agricultural counties and the organisation had yet to make a significant impact in Yorkshire. The increasing number of clubs coming to the attention of the Union indicated that the popularity of the club idea was undiminished. But unless carefully nurtured, other organisations might be created to claim the loyalties of the clubs outside the London nexus. Secondly Hall had to undertake the defence of the clubs against those interests anxious to place the movement under legal restraint. He would have to ensure that the club movement was brought to favourable public notice, to see that affiliates were alerted to the strength of the alliance working against them and rebut any charges made against the movement. As Hall realised the two tasks complemented each other. The campaign against the clubs showed the need for internal unity and a strong organisation pledged to speak for the clubs. The provincial clubs, by examining the Union's central contribution to the defence of the club cause, would realise what benefits membership of the Union would bring.

Hall's provincial tours soon began to bear results. In 1894 83 clubs were added to the Union's list. At the end of the year, in December, a branch of the Union was formed in Swindon to further the cohesion of the movement in Wiltshire. All clubs in the town and its environs were invited to join and within a few weeks the Branch reported that 12 clubs had joined with a total membership exceeding 4,000. The Council also began to demonstrate the seriousness of its concern with provincial representation by increasing the

number of Council meetings it held outside London. Meetings were held, for instance, at the Kingston Club (April), the Town Hall, Ramsgate (June) and the Ipswich Club (July). Besides propaganda work the Secretary took an active part on behalf of the Union in a number of popular organisations including the Sunday Society, the London Playing Fields Committee and the Emigrants Information Office. (128) Similar success attended Hall's efforts in the following year when towns visited included Huddersfield, Leicester, Ilkeston and Northampton. (129) The last named was proving to be one of the strongholds of provincial clubland. In the Northampton Working Men's Club the Union had a strong representative. Founded in the late 60's the club nearly foundered because it admitted boys and it allowed only "ginger" beer on club premises. Soon after the Rules were changed. The boys went and the beer came in and soon the club was said to attract "the cream of the working men" in the district and its finances made it independent. (130) Leicester was also thought to illustrate the benefits of provincial advance. It had many large clubs, "well-furnished, comfortable places ... the membership is high ... and the Oddfellows and other societies have their meetings in clubs not public houses as in London." (131) At the invitation of the North Wolverhampton Club Hall undertook a brief tour of the black country early in 1895.

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128. CIU, Annual Report, No.33, (1895), p.6, 10-12.

129. CIU, Annual Report, No.34, (1896), p.11.

130. CIU, Annual Report, No.11, (1873), p.11. See also the special meeting organised to lay the foundations for the new building of the Kettering Club, CIJ, 19 November 1887.

131. Club World, 20 October 1894.

After speaking at a number of clubs where he hoped to begin the process of affiliation he then moved on to Doncaster where he opened discussions with the local I.L.P. club concerning the affiliation of Independent Labour clubs to the Union. (132) The admission of the provincial clubs was now becoming a routine matter at delegate meetings. At the meeting of February 1898, for example, fifteen clubs were admitted to membership; two were in Leicester, two in Wiltshire, five came from Lancashire, and there was one each from Yorkshire, Bristol, Stalybridge, Cornwall and Worcestershire. The other one was a London club. (133)

The mid years of the 90's also brought one other signal of advance in that after being a financial burden for so long the journal was at last beginning to pay for itself. Throughout the 80's whenever the issue of the journal was debated at Council meetings there were always one or two delegates who, reluctantly, pressed for the closure of the journal believing that the money saved thereby could be better used. The main problem was its low circulation which meant that the Union was subsidising its publication. Most clubmen, however, conceded that the movement needed a means of communication and what was required was the commitment of the membership to purchase the paper. By the mid 90's it seemed that the membership had at last taken up the journal. Under the editorship of Richard Gaston, humourist, enthusiastic amateur thespian, and literateur, of the Boro' of Hackney Club the paper became a more lively publication. (134) By late '94 it was said to have a

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132. CIJ, March 1895.

133. CIJ, February 1898.

134. Hall in his biography of Gaston wrote:

"No man was better known amongst the London clubs...The clubs to him were the whole of his life. No other movement attracted his services...His epitaph might well record that he was a club man first, last and all the time." CIJ, December 1901.



(135)  
circulation of some 6,000 which allowed it to cover its expenses.  
Minor disagreement over the future of the journal, however, prompted Gaston to leave the editor's desk in early 1894. Gaston had been a strong critic of the building of the Union offices and believed the expenses incurred in that project exacerbated the financial problems of the Union. Early in 1894 the journal ceased publication for a few months and when it returned in the autumn Hall had taken over as editor. Gaston then started up his own paper Club World, a gossip magazine filled with chat from club rooms and tit-bits on personalities in clubland. The journal ran until 1899. It was replaced by Club Life, a similar type of publication. Both papers were useful complements to the more sober and official CIJ. So in a few years the Union had moved from being barely able to sustain one newspaper to possessing two journals which chronicled its happenings.

Gaston's worries about the finances of the Union were shared by a number of clubmen. The issue was raised by the decision to establish a Central Club and Union Offices in London. It had long been an ambition of Solly's to have some central, model club to show-off the best features of the movement to the wider public. Thanks to the generosity of some of the richer friends of the movement, especially Brassey, who guaranteed the mortgage, the Union opened its offices and Central Club in 1894. The cost of maintaining the buildings in Clerkenwell was a strain on the Union's income which some clubs, especially those in close proximity to the headquarters such as the Patriotic and the newly opened Mildmay Park,

thought unnecessary. Some claimed that having such a well-appointed and luxurious club so near to them made their own clubs unattractive by comparison. Thus their members often deserted them for the Clerkenwell building. But the building did allow the Union to further its ambition to strengthen its links with the world of organised labour. In addition to the Union clubs and societies which met there, the London Trades Council held its meetings there as did a number of trade unions including the National Union of Clerks, the Amalgamated Society of Coal Porters, and the Metropolitan Association of Operative Plasterers. (136)

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To many London clubmen the advance registered by the Union had to be set against the decline in importance and activities of the political club. In the mid 80's their potential was praised by Engels. Speaking of Aveling's reception in the east end clubs he suggested that the clubs provided a new organisational base for the establishment of a working men's party. At the clubs, he informed Laura Lafargue, a speaker "gets hold of the spontaneous working men's organisation and gets at the heart of the working class." (137) By the turn of the decade, the ageing revolutionary's enthusiasm seemed misplaced. The theme of most discussions regarding the clubs and politics was the decline of political work and the triumph

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136. Hall, Fifty Years, P.117; Tremlett, op.cit., p.46.

137. The Correspondence of Frederick Engels with Paul and Laura Lafargue, Vol.2, (Moscow, 1960), pp.31-32; Letter dated 21 March 1887. See also the comments of B. Bax, op.cit., p.73.

of social concerns. One indication of this atrophy was the ragged state of the M.R.F. After Bloody Sunday the Federation continued to occupy a position of some importance in the councils of London radicalism. In mid '88, for example, it helped to form the London School Board Committee, in association with the Educational Reform League and the London Liberal and Radical Union, to support the election of advanced radicals to the school boards. (138) In mid 1890 the Federation issued a new programme which included a labour section pressing for such reforms as municipal housing and the eight hour day. (139) Webb, who claimed to be the inspiration of this section of the programme, thought the new demands of the Federation was indicative of the progress of a broad "humanist collectivism" among the working class. (140) Given the importance accorded the eight hour day in the programme it is not surprising to discover that the M.R.F. was to the fore in the struggle for the legal eight hour day in the early 1890's. At the May Day demonstration of May 1892 the M.R.F. had two platforms where speakers pressed for the reduction in the hours of labour while the Executive of the Eight Hours League included Borgia (Finsbury Radical), Curran (Woolwich Radical), Shaw (Mildmay Radical) and Jackman of the Star Radical. Other clubs contributing to the League included Herne Hill Radical, Patriotic, and Fulham Radical. (141) Some critics

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138. London Liberal and Radical Union, Annual Report, No.2, (1889), p.2.

139. People's Press, 12 July 1890.

140. S. Webb, Socialism in England, (Baltimore, 1889), pp.69-70. See also, S. and B. Webb, Letters, Vol.1, (Cambridge, 1978), p.220, letter dated 17 October 1890.

141. Workman's Times, 19 March 1892 and 6 June 1890.

of the M.R.F. alleged that by the mid 90's it was tolerated by "the 'respectable' orthodox Liberals" because it offered a link which "binds the London working men to an ineffective Liberalism." (142) Certainly although the M.R.F. continued to meet, its deliberations seemed confined to local matters. By 1902 it contained 26 Liberal and Radical clubs and in 1906 issued a new programme. But its main force was now spent. (143) Besides the M.R.F. there were other channels for political work in the clubs. At the Mildmay members continued to carry out registration work in association with other Liberal and Radical Associations and sent delegates to the English Land Restoration League. (144) In late 1894 members of the North Camberwell Radical prepared for the forthcoming school board elections by organising meetings to campaign for the return of progressive candidates. (145) It was also suggested that the Progressive victory in the London County Council in 1892 owed much

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142. Labour Leader, 23 June 1894; See also, Workers' Cry, 22 August 1891; South London Chronicle, 5 November 1892; Labour Elector, 15 November 1888; Fabian News, 4(6), August 1894; Club World, 11 January 1896 for different views of the decline of the M.R.F. See also the comments of R. Price, Imperial War, pp.91-96.
143. Club Life, 15 February 1902; Reformers' Yearbook, (1906), p.76. The 1906 Programme contained the following points:
1. Payment of members' election expenses..
  2. No breakfast table duties.
  3. Old Age Pensions.
  4. Taxation of land values.
  5. Home Rule.
  6. Universal suffrage.
  7. Registration reform.
  8. Second ballot.
  9. Free, secular and compulsory education.
  10. Abolition of the House of Lords.
  11. International Arbitration.
144. Club Life, 28 January 1899.
145. Club World, 29 September 1894.

to the active work carried out by the clubs and associations. (146)

At those clubs which took their name from Gladstone such as the Holborn Gladstone and the Bermondsey Gladstone political work and social intercourse were combined in the annual dinners held to celebrate the birthday of the grand old man. Usually such clubs would be decked out for the occasion with portraits of the leader surrounded with white flowers. (147) During the birthday dinner at the Boro' of Shoreditch in 1894 the menu card bore a picture of Gladstone and during the meal the club band played "Today He's 81." The evening ended with a speech from Professor Stuart. (148) Whatever reservations some clubmen held regarding the revolutionary socialists the Fabians were very much part of the club movement. Members of the Lee and Lewisham Club in March 1884, for example, listened to a debate between the club secretary and J. Stapleton, a Fabian and member of the club, on the private ownership of property. Stapleton spoke eloquently against capitalism aided by Bland and Keddall, also of the Society. After strong views had been expressed for and against the vote was 2:1 in favour of the Fabians. (149) Members of the Society were urged to seek out clubs in their areas and obtain membership. Permeation should then be concluded by seeking election to the political council. (150) The policy had

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146. London Liberal and Radical Union, Annual Report, No.5 (1892); p.18. Radical Review, 7 May 1892.

147. Club Life, 17 May 1902; CIJ, 6 January 1894. Gladstone's portrait was also prominently displayed in the club building, Club World, 13 May 1893.

148. CIJ, 3 January 1894.

149. Justice, 15 March 1884.

150. Fabian News, Vol.1(4), June 1891. See also, A. McBriar, Fabian Socialism and English Politics, 1884-1918, (Cambridge, 1966), pp.177-79; 235-38.

many successes. At the South Norwood Club the President and six of the seven members of the political council were all Fabians. (151)

The Boro' of Strand club also had a Fabian, Mr. Fraser, as their President. (152)

Fabians were also among the most active, popular and successful of the lecturers who swarmed in the clubs in the 1880's and 90's. (153)

Part of the Fabian appeal lay in their strong support for and commitment to the kind of political action already undertaken by the majority of club politicians, that is, the centrality of local campaigns and local issues. This theme was applauded and endorsed by leading Fabian speakers when addressing club audiences. Webb, for example, consistently stressed the potential which existed in the clubs for influencing local politics and for developing policies to the benefit of the surrounding community. These notions of municipal collectivism harmonised with the ideology of citizenship to produce a powerful rationale for the pursuit of local office. Observers noted the success of the coupling of Fabianism with clubability. As a result of Fabian penetration, it was noted, the political spirit of the clubs had been transformed, from that of "negative radicalism to one of constructive evolutionary socialism." ((154) This conclusion was also reached by Woods who argued that the Fabians' main efforts had been

to get working men enlisted for a series of immediate practical reforms ... rather than to persuade them of the correctness of theoretical socialism. (155)

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151. Fabian News, 2(1), March 1892.

152. Ibid, 4(6), August 1894.

153. See Chapter 5 below.

154. Encyclopaedia of Social Reform, (New York, 1897), pp.420-21.

155. R. Woods, op.cit., pp.56-57.

There was a strong degree of co-operation between the Society and the Federation. They worked together in a number of campaigns and both withdrew from the World's End Free Speech campaigns in the early 90's because of disagreements with the marxian socialists over tactics. (156) To those seeking confirming evidence of the decay of politics there were various signs which could be used to support their position. For example, in April 1900 the members of the Boro' of Hackney Club voted to abolish the political council thus bringing to an end organised political work in the club. (157) Reports from the Registrar-General of Friendly Societies also gave indirect indications that interest in political matters was on the wane. Of the 56 clubs registered in 1892 only 10 had any specified political connection and of the other 46 three took their title from particular trades and two were brass band clubs. (158) A year later registrations included five liberal, two radical and one constitutional from a total of fifty-one registrations. (159) But there was also evidence that while the prominence given to political affairs in the clubs may have diminished there was still much activity going on in individual clubs. Against the experience of the Boro' of Hackney can be set the example of the Leytonstone Gladstone which in July 1894 voted to form a political council. Its first

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156. Norkman's Times, 5 December 1891; West Middlesex Advertiser, January-February 1892. See also McBriar, op.cit., pp.337-39.
157. Club Life, 21 April 1900. On the issue of the decline of politics in the clubs see, Club World, 26 March 1898; Reynold's News, January-March 1900.
158. Annual Report, Chief Registrar of Friendly Societies, 1892, P.P. 1893-94, xxxiv, p.26.
159. Ibid, 1893, P.P. 1894 lxxix, p.44.

work was to co-ordinate the school board campaign. (160) Club political activity became very much a local affair. As has already been seen, from the 1870's there had been much interest in campaigns concerned with local democracy. A number of prominent clubmen were vestrymen or school board officials or had helped to secure the candidacy and election of others to these offices. It was a practice which was expanded in the 80's and 90's. By 1894, for example, thirteen members of the Boro' of Bethnal Green Club were members of the vestry. Those elected included the President, Vice-President and Bar Steward while six members, a daughter of the trustee and the wife of the treasurer were serving as guardians. (161) The holding of local office was regarded proudly in the club movement and the Union regularly published information on the distribution of political offices held by members. (see Table 10 below). It is difficult to know in general terms what causal factor was at work. Did men seeking political office join clubs in order to obtain ready access to a vehicle which would promote their political ambitions? Or did clubmen having come to understand the importance of citizenship seek office as part of the expression of that commitment to political activity? In most cases the reasons were complementary rather than alternatives. The kind of men who would join and become actively involved in their clubs were the kind of men who would be active in local politics so the two approaches were mutually reinforcing. Some men might have come to the club solely seeking political advancement, but they would have to have served the club

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160. Club World, 28 July 1894.

161. Club World, 29 December 1894.



**TABLE 10 i Members of Working Men's Club Occupying Public Positions.**

| OFFICES HELD.  | 1901(a)    |              | 1907(b)      |            | 1912(c)      |               |
|--|------------|--------------|--------------|------------|--------------|---------------|
|  | Met.       | Prov.        | Total.       | Met.       | Prov.        | Total.        |
| Member of County Council                                     | 45         | 122          | 167          | 40         | 189          | 229           |
| Member of Town or Borough Council                            | 155        | 529          | 684          | 93         | 678          | 771           |
| Member or Chair-District Council                             | 49         | 327          | 376          | 41         | 679          | 720           |
| Member or Chair of Parish Council or Chair of Parish Meeting | 12         | 440          | 512          | 12         | 752          | 764           |
| Member of School Board/School Authority or School Manager    | 46         | 401          | 447          | 59         | 750          | 809           |
| Member of Board of Guardians                                 | 66         | 314          | 380          | 43         | 490          | 533           |
| Justices of the Peace  | -          | -            | -            | 51         | 459          | 510           |
| Mayors and Aldermen  | -          | -            | -            | 2          | 20           | 22            |
| Various Other Offices  | 37         | 220          | 257          | 22         | 143          | 165           |
| <b>TOTALS:</b>   | <b>410</b> | <b>2,353</b> | <b>2,763</b> | <b>363</b> | <b>4,160</b> | <b>4,523</b>  |
|  |            |              |              |            |              | <b>5,107.</b> |

Note: (a) 493 clubs making returns.

(b) 793 clubs making returns.

(c) 1,007 clubs making returns

SOURCES: (a), CIU, Annual Report, No. 39, (1901), Table VII

(b), CIU, Annual Report, No. 45, (1907), Table VII

(c), CIU, Annual Report, No. 50, (1912), Table VII.

and the community well before they would be put forward as a candidate. Moreover the posts usually sought - school board, vestry, guardian - required great diligence and devotion to mundane detail to be effective. These were hardly the posts sought by someone simply seeking self aggrandisement. Probably most clubmen who obtained office did so on the basis of their club work. Usually they would have been committeemen whose record of work as secretary, treasurer, president or council member would have encouraged them to seek public office while their administrative abilities fostered in the clubs would have fitted them for the duties which had to be performed by a local official. Whatever factors prompted men to seek office the success of the club members was something loudly proclaimed by the Union. If asked what good was served by the club movement, club ideologues usually pointed to the numerous men serving their communities who had been trained in citizenship by membership of a club. The changing role of politics in club life in this period was thus a more complex matter than the simple assertion that politics had died would indicate. Clubs, to be sure, never became that vehicle for the mobilisation of an independent working class political initiative that Engels and others had hoped for. There was a gradual displacement of liberalism in the clubs in favour of support for labour. News of the Party and its members were a regular feature of the club journals by 1914. But while Liberalism declined Gladstone remained a popular political hero. Collectivism along the lines of the Fabian Society probably constituted the major ideology of club politicians although there remained enclaves of socialism of a more marxist kind in different parts of the country. Politics, too, had to some extent

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been displaced by less serious pursuits. Given that most political work was carried out during free-time the rise of other institutions and interests bidding for the leisure time of the working man was a direct threat to political activities. Political organisations were often forced to compete therefore with other bodies for the limited time of the working man. If in the clubs politics was having to come to terms with amusements then that problem was also present in the socialist organisations as well. Clubs loyal to the I.L.P. and the S.D.F. were often thought to have undergone a weakening of their political purposes once leisure activities were included as part of the programme of work. A recent study of the evolution of labour organisations in the Colne Valley has shown how the labour clubs which came into existence in the mid 90's had to take care that their social functions did not come to dominate to the exclusion of their declared political objectives. (162) Certainly British socialism responded unevenly to the question of amusements. Apart from demands for municipal playgrounds the needs of the worker in his time after work received little systematic treatment from many of the socialist groups. Socialists almost seemed to be embarrassed by people enjoying themselves. The nonconformist background of the I.L.P. made it difficult for members to give serious thought to the needs of leisure. The strong puritan cast of the Party, indicated by the teetotal militancy of a number of its leaders made it almost impossible for them to consider provision for the workers' free-time.

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162. D. Clarke, "The Origins and Development of the Labour Party in the Colne Valley, 1891-1907," (Ph.D. Sheffield, 1978), pp.131-37, 171-73; 466-75. See also D. Cox, "The Labour Party in Leicester," International Review of Social History, Vol.6(2), 1961.

In pressing for the legal eight hour day many socialists hoped that the workers would spend this new freedom elevating cultural pursuits. But towards the working man's usual pursuits most socialists adopted a critical and haughty tone. The vulgarity of taste displayed in the music hall worried them as did the popularity of comedians in the clubs. Even those socialists who tried to adopt a more balanced, less perjorative, view of working class leisure were often saddened by the lack of discrimination in popular culture. (163) If amusements were not corrupting their indulgence detracted from the serious business of the class struggle. Questions of culture were either expressed in terms of the need to elevate working class sensibilities or were dismissed as questions which could only be resolved after the revolution. By not taking popular amusements seriously socialists and their allies were not just ignoring an important dimension of working class life and ideology but also leaving an area of working class experience to be catered for and controlled by the rising entrepreneurs of the emergent capitalist entertainments industry. Disdain at the coarseness of working class taste was not just patronising it was politically myopic. It made leisure and politics mutually exclusive options, the success of one entailed the diminution of the other. The one exception to this process was provided by Blatchford and the Clarion. His concern to combat the drabness and misery of industrial England and to produce activities which would demonstrate that socialism was fellowship led him, through the Clarion movement,

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163. See, A. Besant, "How the East End Amuses Itself," Our Corner, Vol.9, August 1886; F. Howe, "The Municipalisation of the Music Halls," Socialist Review, Vol.5, July 1910. See also the remarks in D. Kynaston, King Labour, (1976), Chapter 6.

to develop a range of free-time activities which, while not establishing a socialist culture, gave members of the various cycling clubs, clarionettes, rambling associations and the like a sense of shared enjoyment and mutual solidarity. (164)

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The weakening of political activity did not detract from the continued advance of the movement. Nor did the strains involved with fending off attacks upon the movement lessen the Secretary's enthusiasm for provincial touring. To assist him in the missionary work other Union figures took to the road. In 1901 Mr. Stroud toured Durham, which, after being a desert of the club movement for the previous forty years, was at last springing to life, while Jesse Argyle took the Union message to Hertfordshire and Northamptonshire. (165) In 1906 towns visited by Hall included Swindon, Hull, Bacup, Tonypany, Leicester and Leeds. (166) The Union's association with other organisations was also broadening. By 1904 the Union had representatives on the Passmore Edwards Settlement, the International Co-Operative Alliance, the Co-Operative Wholesale

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164. On Clarion theory and practice see, L. Barrow, "The Socialism of Robert Blatchford and the Clarion, 1889-1918," (Ph.D. Thesis, Univ. of London, 1975), pp.266-310; J. Fincher, "The Clarion Movement: A Study of a Socialist Attempt to Implement the Co-Operative Commonwealth in England, 1891-1914," (M.A. Thesis, Univ. Manchester, 1971), pp.149-70; D. Prynne, "The Clarion Clubs, Rambling and Holiday Associations in Britain since the 1890's," Journal of Contemporary History, Vol.11(2-3), 1976. See also A. Ainsworth, "Aspects of Socialism at Branch Level, 1890-1900," Bulletin, North West Group for the Study of Labour History, No.4, 1977, pp.29-32.

165. CIU, Annual Report, No.40, (1902), p.11.

166. CIU, Annual Report, No.44, (1906), pp.10-11.

Society, the Co-Operative Union, it held shares in North Wales Quarries (a society established to provide work for those men who were thrown out of employment by the Penrhyn strike) and gave financial support to the Workmen's Cheap Trains Association. (167) To ease some of the administrative burden upon Hall an Assistant Secretary was chosen in 1903. The successful candidate was W. Berry of the Essex Club. He had served in the club movement for some 12 years and had gained considerable organisational experience in his work for the Co-Operative Wholesale Society. (168)

One consequence of the success of the propaganda thrust was the formation of branches. In 1904, for instance, the Wakefield Branch was inaugurated with 52 clubs and a branch in South Yorkshire containing 50 clubs was also set up. (169) By the early twentieth century the Swindon Branch had 21 clubs affiliated. (170) Branches in Leeds and Bradford came in 1906, followed by Durham County in 1907 and in 1908 the Colne and Burnley branch was formed. (171) Between 1905-1910 the growth of the branches and the increase in

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167. CIU, Annual Report, No.42, (1904), pp.20-21.  
The support for the Penrhyn quarry men was not atypical. Clubmen had a reputation for great generosity towards any workers engaged in labour disputes. Many strikers and their families were helped by benefits organised in the clubs while a number of clubs held whip-rounds for contributions to the strike funds of those in dispute. During the London carpenters and joiners lockout of mid 1891 many clubs gave to the funds, for example, the Bow and Bethnal Green Liberal and Radical (8/-), the Deptford Liberal (9/3d), the Kennington Liberal (6/-) and the St. George's Liberal (11/-); Workman's Times, 14 August 1891.
168. CIU, Annual Report, No.41, (1903), pp.24-25.
169. CIU, Annual Report, No.42, (1904), p.13.
170. Victoria Country History: Wiltshire, Vol.IX, (1970), p.143.
171. Tremlett, op.cit., pp.52-53.

affiliations provided the Union with the means to consider and enact further re-organisation. A reform of structure would make the Union for the first time a truly national organisation and by giving the provincial clubs a real and effective share in the government of the movement the democratic character of the club cause would be maintained. It was especially pressing that the Union investigate the question of representation as the metropolitan clubs were now being overtaken by the number of clubs outside the capital. For the first time the club movement was dominated by clubs of the midlands and north; in the capital and its hinterland club formation was slowing down. The distribution of clubs in association with the Union is shown by Table 11.

TABLE 11: The Distribution of CIU Clubs, 1889-1909.

| DISTRICT.                | 1889 | 1899 | 1909 |
|--------------------------|------|------|------|
| Metropolis               | 154  | 153  | 159  |
| Home Counties            | 28   | 64   | 89   |
| Wales                    | 2    | 7    | 42   |
| West Midlands            | 11   | 34   | 84   |
| Ireland                  | -    | 3    | 1    |
| South Western            | 7    | 18   | 18   |
| Southern Counties        | 6    | 76   | 74   |
| Eastern Counties         | 10   | 16   | 14   |
| East Midlands            | 17   | 77   | 112  |
| Lancashire & Cheshire.   | 68   | 129  | 211  |
| Yorkshire                | 26   | 99   | 341  |
| Northumberland           | -    | 2    | 46   |
| Durham                   | -    | 2    | 125  |
| Cumberland & Westmorland | -    | 3    | 6    |
| TOTALS                   | 529  | 683  | 1322 |

SOURCE: CIU, Annual Report, No.47, (1909).



In 1908 in a move to secure a more broadly representative Executive a sub-committee of the Union was appointed to examine ways of achieving provincial representation. They reported that the Executive should be composed of delegates elected from the different regions which would be grouped into special electoral districts based upon the number of clubs in different counties. (172) Using the Committee's recommendations the Union reorganised its structure and in June 1910 the first elections under the new system were held. The new executive would be composed of delegates from the six electoral districts shown in Table 12.

TABLE 12: The Electoral Districts and Delegates of the Union, 1910.

| ELECTORAL DISTRICT.                    | No. OF DELEGATES. |
|--|-------------------|
| Metropolis and Home Counties           | 6                 |
| West Midlands/Wales/Ireland/South West | 2                 |
| Southern Counties                      | 1                 |
| Eastern Counties/East Midlands         | 2                 |
| Lancashire and Cheshire                | 2                 |
| Yorkshire                              | 4                 |
| Northern Counties                      | 3                 |
| TOTAL                                  | 20                |

SOURCE: G. Tremlett, The First Century, p.56.

It was fitting that this further measure of democratisation was carried through prior to the fiftieth anniversary of the Union. Delegates attending the Jubilee dinner represented clubs in every part of the country and it was clear that the future of the movement would be in the control of clubs from the north, and the midlands.

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172. Tremlett, op.cit., p.56

The character of the movement they were inheriting is indicated by Table 13 (below).

The Union as its golden anniversary approached was stronger and more popular than any of the philanthropists present at its birth might have anticipated. It had become an established feature of life for substantial numbers of working men in towns and villages throughout the country. The Union's character in those years of development had been changed from benevolent undertaking to democratic organisation. The membership was numbered in thousands and representatives of the major club organisation sat on the Councils of a number of important working class bodies such as the Workers' Educational Association. If there remained problems of finance then they seemed to be ones capable of solution. Problems of growth and democratic government had largely been overcome. What remained at issue was the quality or as it was more popularly expressed the "tone" of the movement. In the remainder of this study the internal aspects of the evolution of the club movement are considered and analysed through an examination of three key aspects of club life - the provision of intoxicants, the educational work carried out in the clubs, and the contribution made by the clubs to the cause of rational recreation. By studying the problems and achievements associated with these areas of clubland some assessment can be made of the contribution of the club to the quality of social life for an important section of the male working class.

TABLE : The Union in 1912, ...

| DISTRICT.              | No of Clubs. | No. supplying excoisables. | No. supplying: Sunday lectures | entertainments. | No. having Libraries. |
|------------------------|--------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|
| Metropolis             | 179          | 162                        | 43                             | 115             | 127                   |
| Home Counties          | 90           | 75                         | 4                              | 4               | 59                    |
| Southern Counties      | 95           | 91                         | 8                              | 5               | 47                    |
| South-western Counties | 19           | 15                         | -                              | -               | 13                    |
| Eastern Counties       | 20           | 19                         | 3                              | 1               | 12                    |
| East Midland Counties  | 99           | 99                         | 45                             | 38              | 61                    |
| West Midland Counties  | 97           | 95                         | 22                             | 25              | 68                    |
| Lancaster and Cheshire | 232          | 226                        | 84                             | 80              | 116                   |
| Yorkshire              | 400          | 392                        | 148                            | 182             | 227                   |
| Northern Counties      | 222          | 220                        | 56                             | 34              | 179                   |
| Welsh Counties         | 58           | 55                         | 14                             | 5               | 49                    |
| <b>TOTALS:</b>         | <b>1,511</b> | <b>1,449</b>               | <b>427</b>                     | <b>489</b>      | <b>958</b>            |

SOURCE: CIU, Annual Report, No.50. (1912), Table I.

PART II: ASPECTS OF THE INTERNAL ECONOMY OF THE  
CLUB MOVEMENT.

CHAPTER 4: 'A MENACE TO SOBRIETY?': THE DRINK  
QUESTION AND THE WORKING MEN'S CLUB,  
1862-1914.

The club where drink is sold is, whatever be its title or claim... amongst the most menacing of the agencies which foster our national intemperance. (1)

A great curse to England has been the waste, misery, and degradation fostered by the drink traffic. The club movement was started for this object, among other things, to render men independent of beer-shops and gin-palaces. (2)

The popular club movement marks a protest of the ordinary man against the paternalism of the licensing system and a determination to drink under conditions which he wishes, and not under those which the squirearchy, magistracy or other pastors or masters think proper for him. (3)

A public house takes all and gives nothing in return. We never hear, in connection with such places, of benefits for the unemployed and distressed workmen and their wives, and roast beef dinners given to hard-up members as is constantly being done at my club. No, the publican fattens on the failings of others, and despises those who contribute to his wealth, even being against them in politics. (4)

One of the most important sources of support for the club cause came from the temperance movement. Clubs were hailed as a new and powerful ally which would help to free the working man from the thralldom of strong drink. Yet within a few years enmity had supplanted amity as the dominant relationship between the two movements. Hostility was created by the Union's decision to reverse its policy on the exclusion of intoxicants from club rooms. Thereafter the majority of clubs opted to include the provision of alcoholic drinks as one of their facilities.

1. G.E. Winterton, The Case for the Drink-Selling Club Examined, (n.d. 1913?)
2. H. Pratt, in CIU, Annual Report, No. 27, (1889), p. 84.
3. G. Catlin, Liquor Control, (1931), p. 173.
4. Richard Gaston, CIJ, 8 January 1886.

This chapter explores the pressures which prompted the Union to execute a volte-face on the policy of prohibition and then analyses the consequences for the Union and for the popular image of the club of the decision to sell alcohol.

Of all the problems which beset the club movement in its first fifty years none was so threatening to its integrity or so intractable of equitable solution as that created by the decision, taken in 1866-67, to go "wet".<sup>(5)</sup> Few teetotallers could forgive, or comprehend this decision; many members of the usually moderate Church of England Temperance Society thought the admission of beer to be the toleration of too great an evil.<sup>(6)</sup> On occasions a lone temperance voice defended the club, arguing that the conditions under which working men imbibed in the clubs were very different from those which obtained in the local beer-shops and public-houses. Thus clubs could still render sterling service in aiding the labourer to attain greater sobriety. For the majority of pledge-signers, however, such notions were exercises in casuistry. A sound rebuke was administered to Sir Edward Sullivan for his heinous observation that working men required a club where they could smoke and enjoy "a glass or two of ale". Irrespective of the supposed wants of members moderate drinking at the club was considered to kindle inevitably the base appetite for something stronger; glasses of ale would all to soon be exchanged for glasses of spirit.<sup>(7)</sup> Beer had to be excluded from the club because the working class had shown repeatedly that they had little control over themselves in the use of it. To allow alcohol on club premises would entail drunkenness and disorder among the membership.<sup>(8)</sup> It was also alleged that all clubs were more dan-

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5. B. Hall, Our Fifty Years, (1912); Idem, The Working Men's Club and Institute Union : Its History, Its Basis, and Its Clubs, (1902), pp.29-31; Tremlett, op. cit.

6. "Beer in Working Men's Clubs" Church of England Temperance Chronicle, 1 September 1873.

7. Temperance Record. 17 December 1870.

8. T. Bastard, op. cit., p. 688

gerous than public-houses because they fostered "the habit of surreptitious hard drinking. Many a man who would be ashamed to be seen drinking too much in the brilliantly lighted bar of the public-house finds a seductive pleasure in drinking long and deep in the back room of his club where only his cronies can see him."<sup>(9)</sup>

These arguments, paternalist and patronising, held little sway in the Union after 1867. Each club was left to decide for itself on the propriety of offering strong drink. Most voted for beer. For the majority of the temperance movement this made the club worse than the lowest public house. Because clubs did not have to purchase a licence in order to sell excisables they were not subject to the licensing laws; they could chose their own hours of opening and closing and, unlike licensed premises, they were not subject to police entry without a warrant. Consequently, the Union was branded heretic. Thenceforth the considerable leverage and organisational capability of the temperance movement was to be deployed to denounce, to harry and to seek to rid the nation of the menace of the drink-selling club. To achieve these ends it was even willing to countenance the un-natural act of working in concert with the licensed trade.<sup>(10)</sup>

Solly was the first for the club officials to accord the drink question significance. His remarks on the issue cannot be read "innocently", especially as allegations regarding malpractices in the use of drink in the London clubs were to be the cause of his final severance from the Union. Nonetheless, they do provide some insight into the processes which prompted the Union to abandon its initial prohibitory policy.

His acceptance of the right of clubs to sell liquor, if they so wished, was a lengthy, faltering conversion, a change of heart which, he later admitted, went against his "strongest predilections."<sup>(11)</sup>

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9. "Public House Reform", Positivist Review, 1 June 1897, p.115

10. D. Fahey, "Drink and the Meaning of Reform in Victorian and Edwardian England", Cithara, Vol.13(1), 1974, p.49.

11. Evidence to the Commissioners Appointed to Inquire into Friendly and Benefit Building Societies, Second Report, Part II, P.P.1872 xxvi, Q.8355.



In part the decision was forced upon him by organisational exigencies. If the movement was to prosper then this concession to articulate working class opinion supported by a number of patrons would have to be made. Clubs would never be made self-supporting, nor would the movement attract a mass following, if "only total abstainers and youths felt at home in them"<sup>(12)</sup> Besides the imperatives of corporate stability Solly was also influenced by the attitude of his mentor, Lord Lyttelton, who was not opposed to clubs selling drink. Lyttelton maintained that if the often invoked analogy between the gentleman's club and that proposed for the working man was to retain any force then clubs, patrician or plebeian, ought to be allowed to make the choice of whether or not to supply intoxicants. The sobriety commonplace amongst the upper classes was attributed to the beneficent effects of club membership where the drunkard was a shunned figure. There was no a priori reason to assume that a similar transformation in moral bearing would not be wrought by the admission of beer to the working man's club.<sup>(13)</sup> At the first Annual Meeting of the CIU, Lyttelton observed that the "great reform in manners had taken place during the last fifty years among the higher classes was... due entirely to the establishment of numerous clubs which drew gentlemen away from the taverns."<sup>(14)</sup> If the Union continued to legislate for its affiliates in this matter then it would show them that it did not believe the members capable of sound government. Such paternalism would diminish, if not damn, the standing of the Union with respectable working men. During discussions on the drink question Lyttelton told Solly that if the Council adopted a policy of prohibition he would not consent to remain a Vice-President. Solly regarded this as crucial for if the noble Lord quit the movement then other influential friends might be expected to drop away like "autumn leaves."<sup>(15)</sup>

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12. H. Solly These Eighty Years, (1893), Vol. II, p. 250. Weekly Record 18 July 1863; P. Bailey, "'Rational Recreation': The Social Control of Leisure and Popular Culture in Victorian England, 1830-1885," (Ph.D Thesis, Univ. of British Columbia, 1975), pp. 223-24

13. "Club House Sobriety," Cornhill Magazine, Vol. 9, April 1864, pp. 181-83; Escott, Transformations, pp. 117-18.

14. Nonconformist, 15 July 1863.

15. H. Solly, Eighty Years, Vol. II, p. 230

In later years, when it came to defending the drink-selling clubs, Solly and his successor Pratt were concerned to stress that the "tone" present in clubs operated against any tendency to excess, that the discipline and self-respect of the members would expunge any elements that threatened good order, and that the club rooms were free of drinking customs — "standing treat", "tossing for pots", — prevalent in the pub. He also recognised that the privileges enjoyed by the clubs vis-a-vis the use of alcohol had generated much antipathy. Some, indeed much, criticism could be discounted as **incorrect**; the outpourings against the clubs found in the papers of the licensed trade could be put down to commercial envy. Nevertheless, at times, Solly intimated that he rued that such irrevocable step had been taken, believing that the development of the Union would be tempered by encounters with those bodies and individuals pledged to work either for clubs to be deprived of the drink or to be circumscribed by new laws intended to diminish their growth. (16)

A recent scholarly discussion of the formative years of the club movement has given recognition to the drink issue as an integral aspect of the Union's evolution. Price characterises the controversy surrounding the introduction of intoxicants as a clash of class ideologies:

The official disapproval of alcohol in the early years was seen by the working men for what it was: the self-righteous imposition of middle-class morality. (17)

This argument, although consistent with Price's adoption of a social control model to illuminate the nature of the early club movement, over-emphasises the degree of class polarisation over the drink question. The implication of Price's statement, that patrons opposed the introduction of drink while the working class membership eagerly pressed for

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16. Ibid, pp. 296-99; MSS Lecture, "Coffee Public-Houses", (n. d., ca. 1879/80?), Solly Collection, Vol. 14, Section 12, Item 9.

17. R. Price, Victorian Studies, p. 146

it, is improbable, underestimating the complexity of ideological cleavage on the issue of temperance. Some patrons, to be sure, were cautious over the admission of beer, nevertheless a good number eventually supported it, if only for the pragmatic reason of checking falling membership, thereby assuring organisational survival. On the other hand, there was a strong current of working class opinion, within and without the clubs, hostile to the reversal of Union policy. Temperance was not solely reducible to middle class morality. For many labour leaders a working class which remained a slave to the drink could never be free. Sobriety was essential to an assertive and confident labour movement. Men such as Lovett or Hardie did not adopt teetotalism simply as a badge of respectability, but as an essential step towards the emancipation of labour. <sup>(18)</sup> There is a further qualification to Price's account, in that he neglects the attendant mythology that came to mark the drink selling club, which produced an image of the club movement as composed of working men anxious to obtain a drink after hours free from the prying eyes of the police.

Price's contribution is invaluable reminder that the leisure problem in England has to be located within the context of class relations. But in this particular instance the couple of middle class values/working class resistance is too schematic to provide full understanding of the issues involved. Drink, in common with other campaigns concerned with moral reform, was an issue which did not fit tidily into categories derived from objective class position. <sup>(19)</sup> In a complementary study

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18. See, B. Harrison, "Teetotal Chartism," History, Vol. 58 (193) 1973; I. Wood, "Drink, Temperance and the Labour Movement," Bulletin, Scottish Labour History Society, No. 5 March 1972; J. Young, "Totalitarianism, Democracy and the British Labour Movement before 1917," Survey, 20(1), 1974, pp.139-145.
19. B. Harrison, Drink and the Victorians, (1971), pp.128-29; Idem "State intervention and Moral Reform," in P. Hollis(Ed), Pressure from Without in Early Victorian England, (1974): P. Corrigan, "State Formation and Moral Regulation in Nineteenth Century Britain," (PhD Thesis, Univ. of Durham, 1977). Chap.4 Passim.

Bailey generally concurs with Price's judgement. What he adds is the realisation that drink sales generated, for those clubs in which they were permitted, a regular and generally reliable source of revenue. This assisted many clubs to advance quickly to financial independence, a process which greatly eased the transition from patronage to democracy in the early 80's.<sup>(20)</sup> Of the opposition to beer in the clubs he makes little mention, nor does he discuss campaigns to promote the licensing and registration of clubs as these fall outside his period which terminates in 1885.

Hardly had the members of Council been introduced to each other, handshakes given, pledges of mutual support and good-will exchanged, than they took issue with each other over the wording of the formal prospectus to be issued by the Union. No club would be allowed to affiliate, it was originally proposed, if it sold intoxicants. Lushington and Hastings led the opposition to this; for them the decision was one which properly belonged to the clubs themselves. To avoid a possible impasse and consequent bad feeling Neill and Solly put forward a compromise. The Union should "earnestly recommend" the exclusion of alcohol. While this indicated the Union's judgement, based upon experience as well as considerations of what was prudent, at the same time it did not commit it to "a stipulation which savoured of dictation."<sup>(21)</sup> Compromise took the day the amended paragraph being inserted into the prospectus.<sup>(22)</sup> A short correspondence hostile to the Union ensued. One subscriber urged the Union to re-think its position; if its present line of conduct was maintained then the great object for which clubs had been established would be defeated. He was supported by Edward Stephens, secretary of the Duck Lane Club, who reported that his members were strongly of the opinion that the Council's via media had

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20. Bailey, op.cit., pp. 240-41; See also, G. Slater, The Growth of Modern England, (1932), p. 452.

21. Weekly Record of the Temperance Movement, 10 January 1863.

22. Weekly Record, 20 December 1862; The Builder 27 December 1862.

tainted fundamental principles. To restore its moral worth and good standing the Union must adopt the prohibition policy.<sup>(23)</sup> As organising secretary it was incumbent upon Solly to defend the Union. Cherily dismissing the charge that Council had reneged on its initial promise to provide an effective, teetotal substitute for the public-house, he assured those troubled souls that the union did not intend to set on foot drink-selling clubs. But if such clubs were established, either by the men themselves or with aid from a benefactor, then it was surely sensible to permit them rights of affiliation for by so doing the Union would be able "to guide them to a wiser course."<sup>(24)</sup> No one accepted this; nor did Solly win friends for the Union by scorning Temperance concern with the sale of stimulants. Tea was a stimulant, he archly observed, and nobody was going to infer from this that tea should be forbidden in the clubs, so why the fuss about beer?

The controversy was not academic. Some clubs established prior to the formation of the Union had sold beer, while at Hanley Castle, a club had been provided for young men which permitted members to send out for beer to be consumed in the club.<sup>(25)</sup> For teetotalers there was the natural fear that a Union in which beer-selling clubs were in the ascendant would not take seriously the discharge of its counter-attractionist duties.

The disagreement was ended not by the force of Solly's powers of reasoning and conciliation but by the confident belief of the abstainers that no club could be established which retailed drink without taking out a licence. In such circumstances a club would be transformed into a public-house. As the Union did not intend to affiliate public-houses the issue did not need to be pursued further.<sup>(26)</sup>

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23. Weekly Record, 27 December 1862 and 3 January 1863.

24. Ibid, 3 January 1863.

25. The Inquirer, 13 September 1862.

26. Weekly Record, 2 May 1863.

For over a year the issue seemed settled until a conference on the progress of the movement, at the Whittington Club, 10-12th May, brought the matter to notice again. It was not a happy meeting being marked by disagreement over a number of central issues. The drink question was the last item on the agenda. A group of Council members led by Lichfield and Packington, sought the adoption of a "local option" policy, while Clarke and De Fraine pressed for the endorsement of current Council policy. This now found less favour especially amongst the audience. Pratt, recently elected to Council, sided with them; he considered the exclusion clause to be "an interference with the freedom of clubs". Such Millite sentiments, however, failed to carry the day for after a fairly acrimonious debate the status quo was accepted by the slim majority of two.<sup>(27)</sup> The decision was heartily cheered in the temperance world for if a club "once committed itself to beer, it will find effectual supervision impossible, and will either fail altogether or degenerate into a mere public-house."<sup>(28)</sup> The devolutionists were less happy with this decision. Unless the Union divested itself of the exclusion policy the future prospects of the club movement would be irrevocably damaged. They did not give much thought to the implications of such a reversal of policy; they did not consider that it might bring in its wake new tensions in the clubs, in particular between those who had donated money to the clubs as teetotal agencies and the membership who might want beer. Bastard had spoken for many when he declared the right of those who gave aid to the movement to make conditions as to the running of the clubs.<sup>(29)</sup> It was this link between beer and patronage that made the drink issue such a delicate question to neg-

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27. Social Science Review, New Series, Vol. 1(6), June 1864. Lichfield and Packington were supported by Pratt, Marriott, Best and S. Taylor. Solly was ill and unable to attend. Clarke later came to support the drink-selling policy, see, CIU, Annual Report, No. 51 (1914), pp. 216-17.

28. Leisure Hour, 30 January 1864.

29. T. Bastard, op. cit., p. 687.

otiate internally. To devolve the resolution of the issue to the individual clubs was to challenge the rights of patrons.

After only two years of existence marked differences of policy had manifested themselves. Working class members of Council, with the exception of Paterson, were still campaigning for prohibition. Devolutionists were working in the opposite direction. Failure to come to an agreement jeopardised the extension of the Union's work.<sup>(30)</sup>

Pressure to settle the issue came from outside. From a number of clubs in the Midlands, especially those in Staffordshire, where clubs which had sold beer had enjoyed a brief existence in the late 50's, Leicester and West Bromwich, came the challenge to the Union's ruling. The club at Leicester proved the catalyst. Formed in late 1865, through the agitation of Samuel Walker, a shoe manufacturer, the majority of the provisional committee wished to opt for the sale of beer in the club.<sup>(31)</sup> They sought Council guidance as to the wisdom of this move. Solly wrote to them in December, 1865, and the Union published the letter in January 1866 so that all might have an authoritative statement of Council opinion. The paper showed that Solly was still very uneasy over the matter. He might later recall that by this time he was of the opinion that beer had to be allowed in but his writings reveal that his emphasis was still strongly behind exclusion, not just because he was a good official carrying out the duties of his position, but because all his labours on behalf of the working class up to this time, had been to provide them with resorts free from the drink. That was why he had become the organising secretary. The thinking and practice of most of his adult life were not to be lightly thrown over.<sup>(32)</sup> In his letter to the Leicester club he was willing to concede the use of beer in clubs

30. "Working Men's Clubs" All the Year Round, 26 March 1864, p. 154

31. Temperance Star, 16 February 1866.

32. For a succinct presentation of Solly's argument that teetotalism was essential for the development of self-control, see his lecture on temperance, Cheltenham Free Press, 26 February 1848.

where its consumption was limited to one glass at meal-times. Equally he was anxious to stress that the "hundreds" of working men he had spoken to on the issue only three were in favour of allowing beer into the clubs as a general principle. Moreover, the majority of working men whom he had addressed at public meetings on the ideals of the club movement had impressed upon him, privately, the necessity for clubs to exclude the beer. Most of these men were not total abstainers but were troubled that the club by allowing the use of intoxicants would sink to the level of a common beer-shop. They wanted clubs to stand for something nobler than this. To underscore his argument Solly drew attention to the experience of those clubs, seven in number, known by him to serve beer. In two the consumption was so low that the beer had gone sour before the barrel had been finished; in three the beer was restricted to meal-times, a practice made easy as the clubs in question were unusual in that they possessed dining facilities separate from the other club rooms. The remaining two had broken up in great disorder. These sad latter examples provided Solly with his duly pessimistic conclusion that while it might be possible to introduce beer into some clubs without endangering their success, it was more likely to encourage the membership of a class of persons whose behaviour would "damage an institution like a working man's club"!<sup>(33)</sup> Members might wish to disregard his forebodings and give the beer a trial. However, his remarks showed clearly that such a practice could only bring mischief to the club, could only hasten its demise.

Solly's paper was published and circulated just as the Leicester Club was holding a meeting in the Town Hall to explain its policy. Both members and prospective members were invited to attend. After hearing arguments for both sides the densely packed assembly threw out the Committee's proposal by a large majority.<sup>(34)</sup> A few days later the Secretary discovered that the result was not the triumph of reason but the consequence of gerrymandering by the teetotal faction

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33. CIU "On the Introduction of Beer into Clubs", Occassional Paper, No. 8 (January 1866).

34. The Working Man, 3 February 1866; Temperance Star, 16 February 1866.



in the town. The meeting had been packed with fraudulent prospective members and the most eloquent local speakers had been sent to speak against the Committee. Upon obtaining evidence of such ungentlemanly conduct those in favour of establishing a club with the beer reformed, set aside the vote of the public meeting, and began to look for premises for the club. In this they were aided by the support of a number of local worthies and a canvass of workshops which showed that a majority of the men would be willing to enrol in a club which sold beer. After much searching suitable premises were obtained for a club at which both beer and light wines would be available to members, subject to restrictions on consumption that the committee might think fit to impose. (35)

There was both support for and strong dissent from the committee's action. (36) Solly was unhappy at the cursory way the vote of the general meeting had been set aside. He believed the decision to be a "grievous mistake", suggesting that those opposed to this type of club should rally support in order to establish a teetotal one. It would then be possible to judge which had the greater support amongst working men. (37) On April 2nd the club opened with over 350 members and £100 given in donations. (38)

Solly's advice had gone unheeded. In the following month the process was repeated. At West Bromwich, on the 30th May, a quarterly meeting of the South Staffordshire Educational Union, of which Lyttelton was the President, was given over to a consideration of the club movement. Solly attended representing the Union. During an exchange of opinion on how to make the clubs more attractive to working men, delegates from Oldbury, Wolverhampton, and Birmingham complained that unless men could get a glass of beer at the club, few could be induced to join.

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35. The Working Man, 24 February, 1866.

36. Ibid, 7 July 1866; 27 August 1866.

37. Ibid, 3rd March 1866

38. Ibid, 5 May 1866.

Taking a glass of beer was customary at a number of manufactories, like the South Staffordshire ironworks where the work was done in great heat. Solly again opposed the delegates using the arguments from his original paper. While a glass with a meal might be allowed, all other drinking, except for non-intoxicants, had to be prohibited otherwise the club would become a tippling shop. The men he was now addressing thought him wrong. What they required was a place to meet where they could have a drink, if they wanted, yet removed from the pressures and inducements to excess common at the public house. Discussion reached no conclusions so it was decided to defer further contributions until the next meeting in June. (39)

Before the delegate meeting took place Solly tried for the final time to impress his views (and existing Council policy) on the dissentients. In a short piece, "The Introduction of Beer into Working Men's Clubs," Solly rehearsed the arguments he had made familiar. He trotted out the routine conjectures that introducing beer would draw into membership various undesirable elements, that the working men who had contacted him on the subject were vehemently opposed, and that the club would be subject to regular "policing" in order to prevent degrading drinking customs from entering the club. By introducing beer the principles of the movement would be fatally jeopardised; clubs should aim to raise the tastes of its members by providing a better class of amusements than those customary at the drinking shop. If beer was admitted that ambition would be treacherously destroyed. (40)

Solly was a "practical, capable" man and realised that the decision was almost out of his hands. Conferences were to be held at which the subject was likely to be thrashed out and it was foregone that the decision would be for the beer. Before the first meeting, at Oldbury, Solly recanted his former opinions, admitting that beer in the clubs need not

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39. The Working Man, 19 May 1866.

40. The Working Man, 16 June 1866.

entail the dire consequences he had foretold. He still wished to press for some restrictions on its sale and use, for example, it should be consumed only in the bar and not taken into any other room. As the Leicester experiment had been successful, he was now willing, albeit with extreme reluctance, to let other clubs make up their mind on the issue. (41)

During 1866 and 1867, a number of conferences considered the topic concluding with a meeting in London in January 1867, held at the Exeter Hall, which discussed licensing as a general issue. (42) The strength of opinion regarding drinking in the clubs was for local option. (43) Respectable working men, the core of the club movement, had indicated that when they came to the club after a day's work they wished to have the right to enjoy a glass of beer. If denied they would go elsewhere. Such a change in direction was not accepted by all. General hostility to the move was given little expression, although there must have been many who sympathised with the hecklers at the London Conference who interrupted the platform with cries of "Shame!" and "He does not want it!" when speakers were putting forward the case for beer in the clubs. (44)

So the exclusion policy was ended. Henceforth it was left to the clubs themselves, where the decision had not been pre-empted by a patron, to vote for or against intoxicants. To present the arguments for the shift in policy, Solly produced another Occasional Paper in 1867. After describing the causes which impelled the Union to re-consider its position, the paper concluded that the Union had been impressed by the

41. Ibid, 23 June 1866.

42. On the Conference. See J. Burns, Temperance History, (1891) Vol. 2 pp81-82.

43. Price, op.cit., pp.127-28.

44. Solly Collection Vol. 14 Section 12, Item 1; Bee-Hive, 2 January 1867.

number of earnest working men who wanted beer at the club. . . Better to let them have it there, under suitably controlled conditions, than at the public-house. <sup>(45)</sup> This was the new policy of the Union.

Recurrent debate and division in the Union on the propriety of, admitting beer indicated that the Union was unable to break away from a paternalist conception of its role. To discuss whether or not it was right for a working man to have a glass of beer at his club (a question not asked about the membership of a gentleman's club) or whether or not he could be trusted to behave himself if he was granted it, was to treat the working man as a child - an object to be legislated for, not knowing its own mind and incapable of mastering its emotions. Both Pratt and Solly recognised the force of these arguments. Clubs would never find much favour with the class for whom they were intended if beer was not allowed in. Concession was necessary; it would make the clubs more attractive while at the same time show the Union's faith in the good sense of its members that beer would be used moderately. <sup>(46)</sup>

The sensitive issue of drink was heightened by the resurgence of the movement for manhood suffrage which was coincident with the struggle for beer in the clubs. With the passage of the Second Reform

45. CIU, "Report of Various meetings relating to the Introduction of Beer into Working Men's Clubs. . ." Occasional Paper, No. 10, (June 1867). See also, the letters to the Times from Solly, Pratt, and Mulliner, 4-6 January 1872 and Athawes 10 January 1872. One benefit of club beer was that it would be free from the adulterations present in the beer sold in beer-shop and public-house.
46. See Evidence of Solly and Pratt to the Commissioners Appointed to Inquire into Friendly Benefit and Building Societies, Second Report Part II, P. P. 1872 xxvi; Inquirer 13 November 1869; See also, "Mr. Whelks revisited," All The Year Round, 16 June 1866, p. 50; 'The Journeyman Engineer,' Some Habits and Customs, (1867) pp. 131-34.

Bill the aristocracy of labour had been enfranchised. They could now vote, the basic requirement of civic duty.<sup>(47)</sup> At the same time, many of the same men were still being denied the right to choose to have beer in their clubs. The destiny of the nation partly lay in their hands, yet they were restricted on club committees to the government of trivia - how many bagatelle tables ought to be bought or the choice of programme for the "Penny Readings." The contradiction could not be retained; for Solly and the Union 1867 was also their "leap in the dark." The prehistory of clubs ended and their real history began.

Before the clubs could proceed to add beer to their facilities the legal position of the practice had to be clarified. Were clubs for working men to be treated as public houses, as confidently asserted by the Weekly Record, and thus compelled to purchase a licence to sell excisables? The answer from the Commissioners of the Board of Inland Revenue was negative. In 1866 and again in 1872 the Board set out the conditions under which alcohol could be obtained without contravention of the licensing laws. Liquor and cigars could be had only in those clubs which satisfied the Board that they were bona-fide. To qualify as a bona-fide club two conditions had to be fulfilled:

1. That the liquors, & c., sold should be the property of the club, and not of any individual; - that they should be supplied to members only, and should be consumed on the premises.
2. That membership should be real, and not nominal; that is to say, that members must be regularly elected and thereby sharers in the property of the club.

Using such criteria the Board maintained that it was possible to dis-

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47. F. Smith, The Passing of the Second Reform Bill, (Cambridge, 1966), Chapter 1. passim.

tinguish the respectable club from any sham counterpart set-up, in most cases, to evade the licencing laws.<sup>(48)</sup>

These guidelines laid down the basic rules to which a club had to conform if it was to have excisables on its premises. The major distinction was between a members' club and a proprietary club, a distinction which still holds today.<sup>(49)</sup> At the former excisables were permitted, at the latter they were illegal, although this point remained at issue until 1893 when in Bowyer V the Percy Club it was ruled that such clubs, if possessing liquor, were committing an offence against the Excise for selling without a licence.<sup>(50)</sup> As the law was to be the subject of considerable discussion during the thirty years after 1867 it is essential to set out and to clarify the implications of the Inland Revenue Board's ruling.

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48. Fifteenth Report of the Commissioners of H. M. Inland Revenue, P.P. 1872 xciii, pp. 32-33. Shipley has argued that it is erroneous to draw a strong distinction between clubs and pubs in this period. While it is true that the two institutions offered many of the same facilities and that for many of the opponents of the drink selling club there was little to choose between which was the more dangerous, the law distinguished very sharply between the two. See, S. Shipley, Club Life and Socialism in Mid-Victorian London, (Oxford, 1971) pp. 22-23.
49. See J. Josling, The Law of Clubs, (1975); Daly's Club Law (6th edn., J. Martin (Ed), 1970), pp. 2-3; Paterson's Licensing Acts, (80th edn., J. Martin (Ed), 1972) Chap. XIV, passim.
50. All England Law Reports, 2 Q. B. D. (1893), 154; Evidence of Highmore, Assistant Solicitor to the Inland Revenue, to R. C. Liquor Licensing Laws. First Report, P.P. 1897, xxxiv, Q. 497; Sir H. Poland, Ibid, 1137-38, who stated that "a proprietary club ought to take out a licence."; Halsbury's Laws of England, (4th edn., 1974), Para: 290.

Members' clubs, as a specific type of social association, were pioneered by the fashionable clubs of the West End. By the 1840's all the patrician clubs, with the exception of Whites and Brookes which remained proprietor's ventures, had adopted the co-operative model. The essential feature of the members' club was that all persons elected were deemed to be sharers in the property of the club.<sup>(51)</sup> Profits made from excisables were for corporate use. Strictly speaking members' clubs did not sell excisables. When a member asked for a glass of beer or a cigar he was seeking release "by the joint owners of their interests to the member supplied."<sup>(52)</sup> A member did not engage in a commercial transaction, but took part of his property in the club.<sup>(53)</sup> Proprietary clubs, that is clubs established for the profit of the individual proprietor(s), were liable to prosecution, by police or excise for selling without a licence. At law a proprietor's club was an unlicensed public-house; sales of liquor there defrauded the Inland Revenue.<sup>(54)</sup> This is what the authorities had to prove when they prosecuted a club either by showing that there were no formal membership requirements or by proving that the profits on excisables were not realised for the benefit of the members but went into the pocket of an individual. It must be noted that some proprietary clubs, Whites for example, had highly formal and exclusive procedures for membership yet were still illegal because the profits went to a proprietor.

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51. "Club Life," Chambers Edinburgh Journal, New Series, No. 94, 18 October 1845; C. Kent, "The Whittington Club: A Bohemian Experiment in Social Reform," Victorian Studies, Vol. 18 (1), 1974, pp. 31-32; B. Howe, "Clubs Culture and Charity: Anglo-American Upper Class Activities in the Late Nineteenth Century City," (Ph. D Thesis, Temple Univ., 1976), pp. 34-41.

52. Daly' Club Law, p. 42

53. For ease of presentation the term 'sale' is used throughout this chapter. Its use does not imply that the law was being broken except where the specific context makes this clear.

54. J. Wertheimer, The Law Relating to Clubs, (1888), p. 108.

The task of gathering evidence against a suspected bogus club was made difficult because the club, although having no formal standing at law, was treated as being analagous to the private house. Therefore, police had no right of entry without a warrant sworn before magistrates. In a public-house they could simply walk in. This was one privilege which all clubs were pledged to defend against all who challenged it. Their relative immunity from surveillance and inspection was continually railed at, by the police in particular, who claimed that it made it almost impossible to obtain evidence against a bogus club. Behind club doors all manner of nefarious and illegal things could be done, while the police were powerless to intervene, a complaint also made against the coffee houses. It was claimed that only by resorting to subterfuge and deceit, procedures unpopular with the public and alien to the tradition of policing in Britain, could the police, hope to check the spread of bogus clubs. (55)

Rules governing the use of excisables in clubs did not end all ambiguity completely. For example, the Board had stated that consumption was to take place on club premises. This was not the case at the West End Clubs where, for instance, members could take out a dozen of claret. For the working man's club this ruling was successfully challenged by the complicated case of Graff V Evans (1883), which ruled that a member in a bona-fide club could consume excisables obtained in the club off the premises. (56) There were two other minor omissions from

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55. See, Peacock, Chief Constable of Oldham, S.C. Clubs Registration Bill, P.P 1893-94 x, Qs: 411, 446-47, 592; E. Pratt, The Policy of the Licensing Justices (1909), pp. 50-51; R.C. Police Powers and Procedure, P. P. 1828-29 ix, Paras:112-19; R.C. Licensing Laws P.P. 1931-32, xi, pp. 106-07; Moriarty's Police Law (21st edn., 1972), p. 555. See also the quotation from the Metropolitan Police Commissioner cited in T. Critchley, The Conquest of Violence, (1970), p. 144.

56. All England Law Reports 8 Q. B. D., (1883) 373. This case, also known as the Grosvenor Club Case, became the foremost legal precedent in club law. It is more fully discussed below.



the Board's ruling that were to have implications for the growth of the bogus club. First, no mention was made of the suitability of premises for use as a club. Some wily sham club proprietors were to use a variety of buildings for holding their clubs. Second, no minimum number of members was required to set up a club. Subsequently, the police discovered some bogus clubs with as few as half a dozen members. (57)

The Union was well-pleased with the Board's statement. To show its good faith it suggested to its affiliates that in order to ensure full compliance with legal requirements rule books ought to contain a full statement of regulations concerning the sale and consumption of excisables. It was proposed that no member should be served whose subscription was in arrears, that any member found guilty by the committee of being drunk while on club premises or trying to enter a club while ~~the~~ <sup>he</sup> ~~is~~ <sup>is</sup> ~~drunk~~ <sup>drunk</sup> should be immediately expelled, and that a similar penalty should be imposed on any member who allowed his guest to buy liquor or cigars. (58) Enforcing such rules implied great vigilance on the part of the steward (if the club had one), the committee, and those members who acted as bar staff. They were probably inserted at the behest of Solly who was particularly anxious that drinking in the club should be adequately policed. While membership remained small it was possible for those at the bar to know the status of those who wanted serving. When membership increased and visitors became more frequent at the club, especially with the advent of the associate card scheme, it was an almost impossible task to check the credentials of those buying excisables if they were not regular members. To have carried out inspection of pass books at the bar would have taken up most of the barman's time. So

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57. Clubs registering under the Friendly Societies Act, 1896 had to have a minimum membership of seven.

58. C.I.U. "Sale of Excisable Articles in Clubs, Occasional Paper No. 11 (n.d. 1873?)

So laxity crept in, a fact of which both the police and excise were to take much advantage.

Generally bona-fide clubs either wrote these regulations into their rule-books or displayed them prominently in the bar of the club. Most clubs strictly enforced these bye-laws.<sup>(59)</sup> It was made clear to intending members that any offence reported to the committee would be speedily dealt with. Also the Union began to place great emphasis on formal procedures of membership. This was only partially the result of a greater desire for exclusivity; election was seen to be the most important way of affording respectability to an individual club.<sup>(60)</sup> In many clubs election procedures grew longer as time was set aside after the proposal for membership to allow the committee time to vet the member before election, although few went as far as one church club which, in order to keep out the hoi polloi provided members with a special book "in which they could lodge their objections to those proposed for membership."<sup>(61)</sup> Of the 40% of the Union's membership making returns in 1890 the majority required one week to elapse before election, as the table shows.

TABLE 14

Numbers of Days Members must be Nominated Before Election

| No. of Days : | 0  | 1 | 2 | 3  | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7  | 14 | Totals |
|---------------|----|---|---|----|---|---|---|----|----|--------|
| Metropolitan  | 3  | 2 | 1 | 5  | 6 | 2 | 2 | 49 | 5  | 75     |
| Provincial    | 22 | 1 | 2 | 17 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 38 | 13 | 97     |
| Totals        | 25 | 3 | 3 | 22 | 7 | 4 | 3 | 87 | 18 | 172    |

Source : CIU, Annual Report, No. 29, (1891), Table 4.

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59. T. Peppin, Club-Land of the Toiler, (1895), p. 42.

60. WMCJ, 11 March 1876.

61. The Institute, 3(27), March 1890.; see also CIJ, 15 May 1885.

A similar pattern was shown by the 1912 figures:

TABLE 15

| No. of days of nomination      | Metrop. | Prov. | Total |
|--------------------------------|---------|-------|-------|
| Nil*                           | 5       | 31    | 36    |
| Not exceeding three days       | 16      | 281   | 297   |
| Over three not more than seven | 147     | 934   | 1081  |
| Over seven and not exceeding   | 10      | 73    | 83    |
| Fourteen                       |         |       | 17    |
| Fourteen                       | 1       | 16    |       |
| TOTALS                         | 179     | 1335  | 1335  |

\*Note \* indicated clubs where excisables were not supplied.

Source : CIU, Annual Report, No. 50 (1912), Table VIII.

The Union also took greater interest in the clubs applying for affiliation, many being visited by the Secretary or discussed at Council meetings before affiliation was given. Contrary to what critics of the movement of ten alleged, people familiar with it stressed that rules in respectable working men's clubs tended to be too strict rather than too lenient. Drunkenness was almost always punished by expulsion.<sup>(62)</sup> "To be expelled from the club," Peppin observed, "is a serious thing; the man loses his position in his own society, and it will be difficult, if not impossible, to join an affiliated club again."<sup>(63)</sup> This eschewal of heavy drinking in the club, mused one prize essayist, made the club a decent place to bring "a wife, sister or some more interesting female acquain-

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62. H. Solly, evidence to Commissioners Appointed to Inquire into Friendly... Societies, Second Report, Part II pp. 1872 xxvi, Q. 8415; H. Schneider, evidence to S.C. House of Lords on intemperance, Second Report, P. P1877 x, Qs: 7646-50; A. Herzfeld, "The Drink Evil and Its Cure," Westminster Review, Vol. 147 April, 1897, p. 425; E. Barclay, "The Future of the Public House," Nineteenth Century and After, Vol. 65 (June, 1909), p. 1002. E. Howard, Clubs and Tied Houses, (1902), p. 4.

63. T. Peppin, Club-Land of the Toiler, p. 49.

tance. "(64) Lord Frederick Cavendish told the 1875 Annual Meeting of the Union that only one member of the two clubs with which he was associated in Barrow-in-Furness had exceeded the grounds of good behaviour by becoming intoxicated on club premises. The bouncer was treated by "his fellow members as any gentleman would be treated by his own club if he violated good taste: he was expelled. "(65) Membership of a club was held to have become so valued by the late 70's that men "who had formerly been regardless of decent behaviour and who indulged in drink to excess" now conducted themselves "with the greatest propriety for fear of being expelled. "(66)

Having established the principles upon which excisables could be introduced into the club, committees were now free to let members express their preference. Unless a patron had pre-empted free choice by forbidding alcohol to enter the club, a general meeting of members could vote beer in or out. During the first years of the new policy members were actually being asked on the propriety of having beer in the club. Few considered the admission of spirits. Of those clubs which sold spirits most were in London. The Bryanston Club was one of these. During its first year of operation members spent on average 2d per week on beer, 2/7 per year on spirits, in addition to consuming over 5,000 bottles of ginger beer. (67) By the mid 80's the Union declared that it saw no objection to spirits in the club contending that the members ought to be able to obtain there, all that was available at the public-house. (68) Those involved in setting up clubs in rural areas,

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64. R. Brierly, "Advantages and Disadvantages of Working Men's Clubs," WMCJ, 14 April, 1877.

65. Ibid, 24 July 1875. For the good order which prevailed in the clubs, see, Escott, Transformations, pp.123-24.

66. CIU, Annual Report, No.16 (1878); pp.22-23; the statement was made by James Lowe, popular President of the Boro' of Hackney Club. See also, CIJ, 24 September 1892.

67. WMCJ, 2 February 1878.

68. CIJ, 6 June 1885.

however, were not convinced. To make the club attractive to Hodge and his companions beer ought to be available, but spirits should be prohibited. (69)

Generally the transition from "dry" to "wet" proceeded peacefully, drink quickly becoming established as a common feature of club life. (70) Logsdon, writing in 1872, took it for granted that a club would sell ale, as well as food and tobacco, "out of which a weekly income of a lucrative nature could be relied on. (71) Income was a very important consideration. The revenue generated by the sale of beer allowed the Perseverance Club, Sheerness, to pay off debts in excess of £146. (72) It also underwrote the expansion of numerous Liberal and Conservative clubs in Lancashire in the early 70's. (73) Wimbledon Village Club, which introduced beer in 1880, did not fear the enmity of local licensed traders, even though bar profits financed a programme of attractions which increased membership. (74) The success of the beer-selling club inspired the members of the Cobden Club, true to the principles of free trade which had inspired the man from whom they took their name, to take over their club from the patrons. Founded in 1874 by clergyman the club was teetotal. Resenting this, the members replaced the patrons in 1876/77. Beer came, the parson went. Although the club was left in a parlous financial state, the sale of excisables soon made the club a flourishing one. (75)

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69. Charity Organisation Reporter, 22 January 1880.

70. Social Notes, 1 (8), 27 April 1878; M. Meggridge, "Reformed Public Houses," Macmillan's Magazine, Vol. 38 (October, 1878) p. 469.

71. R. Logsdon, Working Men's Clubs and How to make them self-supporting, (n.d., 1872?), p. 5.

72. Labour News, 20 February 1875.

73. P. Joyce, "Popular Toryism in Lancashire, 1860-1890," (D. Phil Thesis, Univ. of Oxford, 1975), pp. 324-25.

74. G. Parsloe, Wimbledon Village Club and Hall, (Wimbledon, 1958), pp. 29-30. The club's only problem was with a barmaid who was discovered diluting the spirits.

75. Echo, 3 April 1884; Paddington Mercury, 3 September 1881.

Not all temperance workers abused the club for having introduced beer. A small minority showed uncharacteristic tolerance of the beer-selling club. Joseph Dare, a temperance lecturer, established a club selling beer for the working men of Leicester.<sup>(76)</sup> Ellice Hopkins, too, thought temperance revulsion at the drink-selling club exaggerated. She was not perturbed when the members of her club opted for beer, believing that the sobriety to be found there would show the error of the temperance contention that the working man was incapable of restraint unless "bandaged up with pledges and restrictions."<sup>(77)</sup> Good Templars who rented rooms in the Neath Club continued to meet there after the admission of beer because they were of the opinion that "the step was both wise and safe."<sup>(78)</sup> Similarly, Mr. Farnhill, Secretary of the Batley Club, who had originally thought of resigning when he lost his campaign against beer coming into the club, decided to stay because he was "pleasantly surprised at the moderation of the members and the good order that prevailed."<sup>(79)</sup> The move also met with favour from the Rev. Hoare, who, in his address to the Church Congress at Brighton, informed the audience that beer drinking was "one of those innocent pleasures which it was fitting for the working man to enjoy." He praised those counter-attractionists who had been bold enough to permit beer into their reading rooms and clubs.<sup>(80)</sup>

Not all teetotalers proved so charitable or tolerant. When the West Bromwich Club, which had been founded by the Church of England Temperance Society, voted, in 1876, to bring in beer, the total abstainers in the club broke away to open a temperance coffee-house.<sup>(81)</sup>

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76. J. Simmons, Leicester Past and Present, Vol. II, (1975) p. 41.

77. E. Hopkins, Work amongst Working Men, (4th ed., 1882), pp. 176-79.

78. WMCJ, 22 May 1875.

79. Ibid, 26 January 1878.

80. Official Report of the Church Congress, (1874), p. 439.

81. Victoria County History : Staffordshire, Vol. XVII, (1976), p. 74.

Beer, by the early 70's, was seen as a powerful inducement to membership. It helped to sway the over-suspicious, hesitant working man into giving the club a try. The 70 or so members who promptly left the Morley Town End Club in 1881, when drink was introduced were soon replaced by new members who rapidly made the club self-supporting. <sup>(82)</sup> The same reasoning impelled Mr. Flowers, a prominent Battersea Liberal, to reconsider the bar he had placed on liquor at the club he had established on the Park Town Estate in 1879. Prohibition was lifted and by 1884 the club was flourishing, having over 300 members, all of whom were active in political work in the district. <sup>(83)</sup> Some clubs were unable to take advantage of the new dispensation. In many instances this was due to a patron who had made financial support for the club conditional upon the exclusion of alcohol, a practice made easier if the patron owned or guaranteed the rent of the premises in which the club assembled. For a few clubs there were other, unique, circumstances which limited their freedom. Such was the case of the club at Lowerhouses, Huddersfield. In 1874, there were only 18 members remaining at this formerly successful club, the others having transferred their loyalties to nearby clubs in which beer could be had. Lowerhouses could not follow their example because the rooms in which it met were licensed for preaching. <sup>(84)</sup>

Most clubs, after 1868, were established with beer. Rare indeed was the example of Stourbridge Club which, although founded in 1858, deferred voting on the drink question until June 1901. Here the vote went against, except for the billiards tournament when the members of the visiting team could be served with excisables. <sup>(85)</sup> There were even instances of clubs which began with the drink but later decided to

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82. Social Notes and Club News, 6 August 1881.

83. Echo, 6 March 1884.

84. Labour News, 11 July 1874.

85. H. Palfrey, The Story of Stourbridge Club and Institute, (Stourbridge, 1948), p. 51.

prohibit it, for example the Leicester Secular Society. This was the club to which Thomas Barclay brought his Catholic mother on a Saturday Night for a glass of Irish Whiskey, a visit which convinced her that secularists were not all beyond redemption. <sup>(86)</sup> All this changed when Gould was appointed Secretary. He was strongly persuaded that drink was handicapping the appeal of the Society to the citizenry of Leicester and moved that it be prohibited; if he lost the vote he would leave. After a heated meeting in June 1902, beer was voted out (and the Secretary in) by a large majority. <sup>(87)</sup>

The introduction of beer was no panacea; it could not magically transform a bad club into a good one, nor could it dissolve all obstacles which the clubs had to overcome. Even with drink, some clubs found the public-house a continued rival and threat. Committee men at Kettering, subsequently a stronghold of the provincial club movement, meanly attributed the fluctuating membership at their clubs to :

the unrestrained facilities that are presented by the public-houses and beer-shops for the indulgence of those gross and sensual appetites that are the result of ignorance. <sup>(88)</sup>

For Edward Hall the continued loyalty of the labourer to the pub was not surprising for the local club was often as "dirty, cheerless, and as badly-ventilated, foul-smelling and ill-provisioned as the common coffee-house." <sup>(89)</sup> What beer gave to the overwhelming majority of clubs was a new sense of financial security, a regular income out of which they could finance new activities and extend their comforts without having to go cap in hand to some local worthy for a few spare books for the library or a donation towards a new bagatelle table. Ironically, while temperance speakers denounced the working man for drinking

86. T. Barclay, Memoirs and Medleys : The Autobiography of a Bottle-Washer, (Leicester, 1934) p. 54.

87. F. Gould, The Life Story of a Humanist, (1923); pp. 88-89. I. L. P. News, Sept. 1902.

88. CIU, Annual Report, No. 9 (1873), p. 25.

89. Times, 13 January 1872.



because it curtailed his freedom, drink in the clubs was providing the cash to make independence possible. With a regular income the new clubs could be made more attractive resorts, a major improvement over the often cramped and rudimentary accommodation that had been offered at many of the pioneer ventures. A stable membership and an expanding income assured a sound base for future development. Just how many clubs immediately adopted the new policy is impossible to establish with any precision. A manuscript list in the Solly Collection gives the number having beer at May 1871 as 19, of which 16 were affiliates.<sup>(90)</sup> Of the 174 clubs making returns in 1874 44 provided excisables.<sup>(91)</sup> The proportion of clubs selling liquor grew rapidly so that by 1890 267 clubs in the Union had drink, the greatest concentration being in the capital where of 157 affiliates only 16 were teetotal.<sup>(92)</sup> In 1905 of 941 clubs in England and Wales which sold excisables, 138 were in London and 232 in Yorkshire.<sup>(93)</sup> For the 1,154 clubs affiliated in Jubilee year the distribution is given in Table 16 below :

TABLE 16

Distribution and Total Membership of Affiliated Clubs Supplying Excisables, 1912.

| District           | No. of Clubs | Membership     |
|--------------------|--------------|----------------|
| Metropolitan       | 162          | 44,905         |
| Home Counties      | 75           | 17,251         |
| Southern Counties  | 91           | 22,489         |
| S. W. Counties     | 15           | 2,979          |
| Eastern Counties   | 19           | 9,006          |
| East Midlands      | 99           | 26,490         |
| West Midlands      | 95           | 22,380         |
| Lancs and Cheshire | 226          | 48,761         |
| Yorks              | 392          | 137,242        |
| N. Counties        | 220          | 98,053         |
| Wales              | 55           | 15,664         |
| <b>TOTALS</b>      | <b>1449</b>  | <b>445,220</b> |

Source : CIU, Annual Report, No. 50, (1912), Table. 1.

90. Solly Collection, Vol. 6, Section 13(b), Item 1. The List is reproduced as Appendix C below.

91. CIU, Annual Report, No. 12 (1874), pp. 18-19

92. Figures taken from Appendix IV. CIU. Annual Report. No 28 (1890)

In addition to the Union clubs there were clubs affiliated to other associations and independent clubs in which members were supplied with excisables. Drink-selling clubs by the mid 80's were clearly in the majority in the club movement.

For those associated with the movement the change of policy had been accomplished with few difficulties. If there was an internal opposition to the change it did not make its presence strongly felt. There were hardly any protest from those who left the movement because of a principled object<sup>ion</sup> to drink; they did not write letters to the press, nor did they call meetings to build up wider support for their cause. Those who remained loyal were still strongly persuaded that clubs, if judiciously conducted, could continue and extend their contribution to the cause of greater sobriety in the nation. It was not thought that by selling drink, clubs had cut themselves off from the pale of respectable society. On the contrary, by attracting and retaining the allegiance of large numbers of working men who through membership could be guided into the way of moderation the club could give new impetus to the temperance cause. Solly, with all the zeal that befits a convert, told a meeting of the Social Science Association that clubs could do more to reduce drunkenness than the local option or the Permissive Bill.<sup>(94)</sup> A similar smugness characterised the reaction of the Secretary of the Batley Club to the secession of the teetotal members. He believed that the remaining members were "the real temperance reformers because, unlike the extremists, we lay hold of the masses of the people."<sup>(95)</sup> This paradoxical notion that the clubs were aiding temperance by selling beer was affirmed by other club men and regularly taken up by those who sought to defend clubs from the charge of encour-

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94. Transactions, N.A.P.S.S., (1883), p. 34.

95. CIU, Annual Report, No. 18 (1880), p. 22.

aging excess often levelled against them.<sup>(96)</sup> Speaking at the Anniversary Dinner of the Rochdale Club, Mr. Ashworth, the President, told the assembly that the committee after much heart-searching, voted to admit to membership a man who had gained local notoriety for his ability to consume 13-14 glasses of beer a night. After joining the club, he found there were so many other things to do that he lost his taste for drinking, the committee thus had no cause to regret their faith in him.<sup>(97)</sup> Allam, a Union official, observed that the working man came quickly to appreciate the benefits offered by the club and would not permit himself "to incur their forfeiture by a single set of wanton excess."<sup>(98)</sup> A lifelong abstainer, George Loosley, Secretary of the Berkhamstead Club, appealed to fellow temperance workers to give their support to the club movement for in the club, men drank "under the least objectionable circumstances" while the moral sense engendered by membership elevated all those associated with it.<sup>(99)</sup> On rare occasions Loosley's appeal was taken up in temperance circles. If the senses of extreme teetotalers were not blurred "by an extravagant belief in the invincible power of alcohol to subjugate and destroy human beings", complained an anonymous writer in the Church of England Temperance Chronicle, then "they would perceive that men may and do belong to political clubs and remain sober."<sup>(100)</sup> Similarly Howard called on teetotalers to join clubs and to stand for election to the committee so that the rules on intoxicants could be thoroughly observed.<sup>(101)</sup> In general, however, appeals to treat the drink-selling club with sympathy

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96. See, for example, the Earl of Carnarvon remarks in Common Good, 1(4), 30 October 1880, and those of the Marquis of Salisbury, in Temperance World and Blue Ribbon Chronicle, 26 January 1888.

97. WMCJ, 26 February 1876.

98. Labour News, 6 July 1872.

99. WMCJ, 26 February, 1876.

100. Church of England Temperance Chronicle, 14 January 1888.

101. E. Howard, Clubs and Tied Houses, (1902), p. 5.

met with little support. Clubs, for their part, took a declining interest in the criticisms of teetotalers, their remarks being summarily dismissed as "downright fanatical nonsense."<sup>(102)</sup>

For Pratt both club rules and the moral tone of the institution guarded against excess. By involvement with the elevating aspects of club life, such as classes, lectures, and savings banks, members grew to appreciate and to value "very different aims and ideas" than were possible as "long as he frequented the 'Marquis O'Granby' or the 'Blue Lion,'"<sup>(103)</sup> Working women were also said to be in favour of the new policy. Promoters of the Shoreditch Club, for example, were thanked by the wives of members for until the club opened they had never known their husbands to be sober on a Saturday night.<sup>(104)</sup> To curb those for whom self-restraint or "tone" were insufficient to repress the taste for strong liquors a number of clubs had conditions on the use of drink in the club. Hardly any adopted Solly's scheme of restricting drink to meal times, mainly because few clubs provided their members with meals. The most common form of restriction was rationing, either by limiting the volume consumed or by fixing the amount which could be spent on drink in an evening. This idea was first proposed by the Reverend Osborne in 1852. He was for allowing beer in the club but would limit it to a maximum of two pints per evening.<sup>(105)</sup> Typical of the regulations subsequently adopted in some Union clubs were those in operation at the Wickham Club where members were allowed three glasses a day and two on the sabbath.<sup>(106)</sup> Such restrictions were common in the early 70's. At the Handsworth Club for example members were limited to three glasses per evening.<sup>(107)</sup> Many members found these regulations

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102. Radical Leader, 4 August 1888; Star, 27 June 1888.

103. WMCJ, 20 November, 1875.

104. CIU, Annual Report, No. 11 (1873), p. 7.

105. S. Osborne, "The Beer-Shop Evil," In Viscount Ingestre (Ed), Meliora, (Rev. edn., 1852), p. 9.

106. Labour News, 6 March 1875.

107. CIU, "Refreshments at Clubs", Occasional Paper, No. 14, June 1870. Drink had been introduced into the club in order to prevent the frequent "slipping out of the rooms to get a glass at the public house."

irksome, an interference with the right of members. Members of Council, such as Pratt, were hostile to any notion of regulation which was an infringement of liberty and an implicit criticism of the good sense of the member. Others in the movement thought their retention lessened the self-respect of members and made working men suspicious of belonging to a body which treated its members in so paternalist a manner.<sup>(108)</sup> Lord Rosebery won much affection in the hearts of club men by vigorously attacking the policy at the Annual Meeting of 1875. "Each club should be altogether free," he told a cheering audience:

from all vexatious and infantile restrictions on the consumption of intoxicating drinks... -restrictions which tend to make these institutions moral nurseries rather than clubs intended for the use of the citizens of a great empire.<sup>(109)</sup>

As he had just paid off the Union's debt his remarks carried much force. Thereafter clubs which retained such restrictions were in a minority, being mainly confined to clubs in rural areas.<sup>(110)</sup>

Council officials, committee-men and ordinary members were aware that the drink-selling policy had brought in its wake new responsibilities and that great caution had to be exercised in this sphere of club work. Opposition from the temperance movement and the licensed trades was to be expected, although it was to come on a scale and with a vehemence that, perhaps, surprised the Union. The Union's first concern was on the one hand to defend its affiliates from ill informed criticism and on the other to ensure that the clubs observed the due proprieties for the supply of drink. This latter function was given added importance when Sir Stafford Northcote ruled that associate members could be served with drink on

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108. WMCJ, 20 May 1876; F. Coutts, Ventures in Thought, (1915) pp.186-7; Church Times, 19 January 1880; Echo, 10 March 1879.

109. WMCJ, 24 July 1875.

110. For example, the Southborough Club (Kent) which restricted members to 1d per day, and the Maidenhead Club where members were allowed three glasses per day; see CIU Annual Report, No. 18 (1881), pp.28-29; CIJ, 1 January 1886.

the same basis as ordinary members. This was a great achievement and advance for the Union. However, it urged on its members great care and vigilance in operating the associate procedure for it believed that close to every club were "a number of persons whose interest it is to break it up, and to whom the possession of one <sup>of</sup> four cards might afford the means of doing so." (111)

Other aspects of the drink question also gave some members cause for concern. Three issues in particular troubled a few clubmen. Firstly, the late hours of closing common at some clubs. Clubs were not required by law to open and close at fixed hours. Solly, amongst others, was worried that this freedom would be abused by some clubs who would keep open late into the night. thereby attracting to membership men whose sole interest was to obtain a drink after the public-houses were closed. (112) The same reasoning was applied to the second issue, the Sunday opening of clubs. A number of members pressed for the clubs to be open only those hours on the Sabbath that public-houses were also open. At times the Union sympathised with this suggestion and tentatively put the idea to the clubs. (113) Other members, such as Judge, were strongly opposed, seeing nothing wrong in clubs being able to choose their hours of closing on Sundays or weekdays. This freedom was granted to the patrician clubs, and ought to apply in those of the working men. (114) Finally the level of subscriptions at some clubs was held to be too low. In order to provide the club with a reasonable income drinking in the club had to be encouraged. (115) One member alleged that his club's balance sheet showed drinkers to be the mainstay of the club, and that without them the club would founder. (116) Few members symp-

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111. WMCJ, 5 June 1875.

112. Solly MSS Lecture, "Coffee Public-Houses," op. cit;  
WMCJ, 17 July 1875.

113. CIJ, 21 December 1883.

114. Ibid, 10 October 1884.

115. WMCJ, 13 August 1877.

116. Ibid, 24 February 1877.

athised with this charge. Figures of expenditure, often cited in club literature, seemed to demonstrate that clubs in which the bar ruled were in a very small minority. <sup>(117)</sup>

Solly, as was to be expected, had his own concerns regarding the possible abuse of drink in the clubs. When the successful prosecution of some bogus clubs in the early 70's showed them to have been public-houses transformed into clubs to evade the licencing laws, Solly was quick to warn of the dangers of publicans and brewers using the club as a front for their commercial activities. <sup>(118)</sup> For once Solly was not playing Cassandra. Brewers were to prove an occasional irritant with which the Union had to contend, and the public-house turned club only served to reinforce the image of the club as a public-house. His other worry was that public-house drinking customs would be transferred to the club. He was adamant that clubs must set their faces against these habits, a view echoed by others. Tolerance of these customs, thought one member, would lower the character of the movement, "rob it of all its great results, and deprive them [the clubs] of the co-operation of the best men among all classes. <sup>(119)</sup> There is little evidence that such a transfer took place. In all the voluminous literature on drink in the clubs, there was only one discussion of the issue concerned with treating in the clubs. <sup>(120)</sup> Broadly speaking, drinking customs were in decline in the latter half of the nineteenth century, the result of changes in work discipline, workshop practice, temperance agitation, and shifts in working class attitudes. <sup>(121)</sup> So clubs probably

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117. See the discussion of expenditure below

118. Solly, MSS Lecture, op. cit.; MSS Letter, April 1878, Solly Collection, Vol. 16, Section 13(b), Item 1.

119. WMCJ, 5 August 1876.

120. CIJ, June and August, 1901.

121. J. Ludlow and L. Jones, The Progress of the Working Class, 1832-1867, (1867) p. 253; D. Burns, Temperance in the Victorian Age (1897), pp. 18-20, 203; B. Harrison, Drink and the Victorians, (1977) pp. 56-57; W. Lambert, "Drink and Work Discipline in Industrial S. Wales," Welsh History Review, 7(3), 1975.

did not have too much difficulty in policing such practices. Solly's perspective derived from the 1840's when such customs were extensive and when failure to join in with them could lead to ostracism. (122)

By the end of the century while some clubmen were still concerned about late hours of Sunday opening few troubled about the sociable habit of offering to buy a round.

Most clubs had to allow some space in the building for the bar, although it was stressed by club officials that bar design should be as functional as possible in order to stop men congregating around it instead of having a drink and then going off to the hall, library or games room. At a busy club at the weekends, arrangements had to be made so that all members could be served swiftly and easily. At the United Radical Club in the late 80's the bar was described thus:

A long counter runs the entire length of the place, and perspiring barmen serve their customers as briskly as maybe. Near the bar is a miniature box-office, where on a busy night excited applicants call-out "one, " "two, " "four, " to a quiet man on the other side of the pigeon hole. He, in exchange for coppers, serves out tickets bearing a number corresponding with the amount of pence paid for them. Furnished with this, the member makes for the bar and obtains the liquid he desires. A glass of beer costs a penny, a glass of ale or stout three half-pence, and a "go" of whisky or gin, two pence. (123)

In the years immediately following 1867, the mood in the clubs was one of quiet celebration and self-satisfaction. A major change in policy had been accomplished with little internal dissent. Some members

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122. On drinking customs see J. Dunlop, The Philosophy of Artificial and Compulsory Drinking Usages (Greenock, 1836); T. Beggs, Three Lectures on the moral Elevation of the People, (1847) pp. 66-67; W. Shimin, Town Life (1858), pp11-12; W. Gutteridge, Lights and Shadows in the Life of an Artisan, (Coventry, 1893), p. 28.

123. W. Pett-Ridge, op. cit., p. 136.



had left, others had expressed their reservations on the wisdom of the move, but generally the transition had proceeded amicably. There were no threats of secession by individual clubs from the Union, nor any attempts to dissolve the Union. When Solly persuaded a number of nobles to assist him to found a Working Mens Social Clubs Association the cause of the split was financial, drink being of only marginal importance.

Needless to say the temperance movement was less happy with the Union's new dispensation, especially as the law seemed to look with such favour upon the drink selling club. The Union was ridiculed for its weakness as having conceded a principle of prime importance because of a fear that the working man might take offence. Jabez Inwards, veteran teetotaler, thought the clubs had now lost all value for once again working class recreation was inseparable from drinking.<sup>(124)</sup> His disillusion with the movement was shared by many others. Union statements that the clubs were an aid to sobriety and were therefore an adjunct to the temperance movement were curtly dismissed. Club drinking was held to make the practice more respectable, rather than to lessen consumption.<sup>(125)</sup> It was now the temperance movement's turn to ridicule the Union. They scorned the belief of nobles and others who thought that club beer was social beer and would not lead to intoxication. Opposing the opening of the Guards Institute in London, where beer was to be available, the Weekly Record rounded on those helping to establish such clubs for not being aware of the trap they were unwittingly setting for the working man. By allowing beer in the clubs they were whetting an appetite for liquor so that when a man left a club he straight way adjourned to the local public house "to finish with spirits, the taste for alcoholic excitement created by the beer."<sup>(126)</sup> What the Union naively

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124. Weekly Record, 2 November 1867; see also Ibid, 3 July 1869.

125. Temperance Record, 18 July 1871.

126. Weekly Record, 20 July 1867.

forgot, or overlooked in their defence of the moderation found at the clubs was that for the majority of the temperance movement moderation was of little consequence. It kept alive the appetite for strong liquors, which sooner or later, would demand to be satisfied. It was only a matter of time before the moderate drinker became a sot. The only group to retain sympathy for the idea of moderation was the Church of England Temperance Society. The Society was the most energetic of all temperance bodies in the promotion of counter-attractions to the public-house. Unlike other organisations, it never placed complete reliance upon total abstinence and pledge extraction as the only means of attaining true temperance reformation.<sup>(127)</sup> The Society was ambivalent over the use of drink in the clubs. There was a strong body of opinion which recognised why the step had been taken but were worried as to its effects on the movement. They would have been happier if the club had remained teetotal.<sup>(128)</sup> There was a smaller group who were generally in accord with the Union's policy. From this section came a number of clergymen, such as Robert Ellison, who were active in the movement and helped to establish clubs with the beer.<sup>(129)</sup>

The tolerance of the Church of England Society was atypical of the general temperance response which was overwhelmingly hostile. W. Caine, a prominent Liverpool temperance reformer who had founded a number of cocoa taverns in the city, completely opposed any club which sold liquor, as did H. Randall, who called upon all those who claimed to be temperance reformers or who wished to aid the working

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127. H. Wagner, The Church of England and Social Reform since 1854. (New York, 1930), pp. 72-80; L. Shiman, "The Church of England Temperance Society in the Nineteenth Century," Historical Magazine of the Protestant Episcopal Church, 41(2), 1972; G. Olsen, "The Church of England Temperance Magazine," Victorian Periodicals Newsletter, 11(2), 1978;

128. Church of England Temperance Chronicle, 1 September 1873.

129. CIJ, 1 January 1886.

class to harry the movement. <sup>(130)</sup> Clubs have become, he wrote, "a retrograde movement opposed to the progress and the raising of the intellectual condition of the working classes."<sup>(131)</sup> The old debate on clubs and their effect on home life was resurrected. As long as clubs did not sell beer home life and domestic comfort were held to benefit by the husband's membership of the club. Once that principle had been breached, club and pub competed with each other for the man's wages. The wife of a working man could see little or no difference between the two\_

the husband returns no sooner, his better nature has not been more fully aroused, and his purse remains as empty as in those days when he passed his evenings at the "Tom and Jerry. (132)

What made club drinking worse than tipping in the pub was that it was carried out in secret, free of those controls of police and public inspection found on licensed premises. <sup>(133)</sup>

The rise of the beer-selling club coincided with a revival of the temperance movement. After a decline in the 1850's the movement was regaining its militancy. Its propaganda was marked by a new aggressive edge. Partly this rebirth was the work of the United Kingdom Alliance, formed in Manchester in 1853 to work for prohibition, and which, in 1857 adopted the principle of 'Local Option' as its long-term strategy. <sup>(134)</sup> Many formerly moribund temperance societies were re-opened. There was a new willingness to co-operate with the various denominations which provided the backbone of the movement. In particular, there was a marked increase in local activity, especially at the time of the Annual

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130. Caine evidence to S.C. House of Lords on Intemperance, 1st Report, P. P. 1877 xi, Q. 804.

131. Temperance Record, 15 July 1871.

132. Temperance Star, 9 June 1874.

133. N. Buxton and N. Hoare, "Temperance Reform," In C. Masterman (Ed), The Heart of the Empire, (1901), pp.176-78.

134. B. Harrison, Drink and the Victorians, (1971), pp.106-97; D. Hamer, The Politics of Electoral Pressure, (Hassocks, 1977), Chap. IX passim

Brewster Sessions. Campaigns designed to bring pressure to bear on the sessions had commenced in the 1850's. By the early 70's the local temperance societies were using specially retained solicitors, petitions, press campaigns, and mass meetings to oppose the granting of justices' certificates which were necessary in order to obtain a licence from the Excise. Towns, especially in the North of England, were marked by a growing division on the drink question, with the licensed trade and the teetotalers contesting for control of local government offices such as membership of watch committees, and appointments to the magistrates' bench.<sup>(135)</sup> Who controlled these offices could exercise much influence over the facilities for obtaining liquor. The Secretary of the Liverpool Licensed Victuallers' Association, for example, complained bitterly of the prejudice displayed against the trade by the magistrates. He suggested that they would be better "serving at a tea party or a muffin struggle" than administering a great trade.<sup>(136)</sup> The onset of depression from 1875 gave renewed emphasis to the temperance cause.<sup>(137)</sup> If England was to fend off the challenge to its commercial and industrial pre-eminence from the newly industrialised nations of Germany and the United States then it must solve the drink problem.<sup>(138)</sup> Lack of sobriety was held to be enfeebling the nation, a theme later repeated by the movement for national efficiency and given much prominence in the literature of eugenics.<sup>(139)</sup>

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135. L. Shiman, "The Crusade Against Drink in Victorian England," (Ph.D. Thesis, Univ. Wisconsin, 1970), pp. 92-98; 206-08.
136. Morning Advertiser, 15 September 1883.
137. H. Ausubel, In Hard Times : Reformers Among the Late Victorians (1960), pp. 44-49.
138. T. Whittaker, The Drink System and Social and Industrial Problems (Manchester 1894), pp. 15-16; F. Maddison, The Working Class and the Drink System, (Manchester 1897), p. 2.
139. R. Armstrong-Jones, "Alcohol and National Efficiency," in T. Kelynack (Ed), The Drink Problem of Today in Its Medical and Sociological Aspects, (1916); Rev. G. Carpenter, "Alcohol, Hereditary and Environment," in Proceedings, 20th International Congress on Alcoholism, (1934), pp. 210-15; N. Buxton & N. Hoare, op. cit., pp. 168-69; R. Warner & H. Rosefelt, "The Effects of Drinking on Offspring : An Historical Survey of American and British Literature," Journal of Studies on Alcohol, Vol. 76(11), 1975, pp. 1403-06.

While clubs might rightly fear this new militancy, little of it was initially deployed against the clubs. Temperance attacks on the clubs were mainly confined to rhetorical skirmishes rather than a sustained campaign to seek legislative control. Partly, this was due to the low priority accorded the club problem in these early years. Between 1867 and 1871, the concern of the movement was with new legislation to control the licensed trade. Sir William Lawson, President of the UKA, annually introduced a Permissive Bill into the House of Commons. While none passed into law, it kept the issue before the public. For the temperance movement the first real breach of the licensed trade's position came with the Licensing Act of 1872, which, among other things, limited hours of opening and gave the police new powers of entry and inspection. <sup>(140)</sup>

There were other reasons why the movement was slow to rouse itself on the issue of the drink selling club. Firstly, they were still of the opinion that the problem was temporary, that left alone the problem would resolve itself. By deciding to sell drink, clubs had created a situation which would eventually threaten their integrity and well-being. Either the drink would have to go or the movement would dissolve itself. This view derived from the temperance argument that moderation was of little consequence. Although the clubs might start as institutions of moderation, they would soon become centres of excess. Once this happened, respectable working men would leave the movement, donations would cease, and the clubs would break up. <sup>(141)</sup> Secondly, not all clubs had switched their allegiance to beer. In the Worcester Union, for instance less than 25% of the clubs had opted for beer. <sup>(142)</sup> It was hoped that other clubs might follow Worcester's lead.

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140. For a discussion of the Act, see, B. Harrison, Drink and the Victorians, (1971), pp.264-67; 279-85.

141. Temperance Record, 1 August 1870 ; Weekly Record, 10 July 1869.

142. WMCJ, 20 May, 1876.

Clubs were still seen as a powerful inducement to draw men away from the public-house, provided that they were teetotal, as in the successful model clubs in Wisbech or that provided by Frederick Braby for his employees at Deptford. If attached to a mission hall or a settlement they could do untold good in providing a safe haven for the reclaimed drunkard or the man wishing to break the "tippling habit" as well as their role as social centres.<sup>(143)</sup> Clubs were no longer the sole agency for rational recreation. From the late 1860's numerous coffee-taverns, coffee-music halls, cocoa taverns and 'British Workman' public houses were opened.<sup>(144)</sup> The latter institution, begun in Leeds in 1867 by Mrs. Rebekah Hind-Smith, took counter-attractionism to its logical conclusion by providing public-houses but without the drink.<sup>(145)</sup> Besides these ventures, in which the Church of England was especially active, there were growing facilities for leisure and recreation within the temperance movement itself, symbolised by the rapid development from the 1870's of the local temperance hall in which entertainments, experience meetings and lectures were held.<sup>(146)</sup>

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143. L. Twining, A Few Words about Working Men's Clubs and Temperance Societies (1879); J. Adderly, "University Settlements and Clubs," E. London Magazine, 1(4), November 1890; A. Ingram, Work in Great Cities, (1896), pp. 138-51; Church of England Temperance Magazine 1 June 1871.
144. H. Short, "The Coffee-Tavern Movement as an Aid to Temperance," National Temperance Congress, 1889, (1890), p. 181; Lower House Convocation, Op. Cit., pp. 12-13; Appendix 5; G. Ferris, "Temperance Saloons," Social Economist, Vol. 3(4), 1892; W. Wilkinson, "The Development of the Public-House Without the Drink," J. Rae (Ed), Proceedings of the World Temperance Congress, (1901), pp. 334-40; Temperance Record, 26 February 1880; Church of England Chronicle, 1 May 1873; M. Elliott, "The Leicester Coffee House Movement," Transactions, Leicester Archaeological and Historical Society, Vol. 47, (1971-72).
145. H. Smith, "British Workman," Transactions, N.A.P.S.S., 1871 p. 591.
146. B. Harrison, "Temperance Societies," Local Historian, 8(4) 1968  
L. Shiman, "The Birstall Temperance Society", Yorkshire Archaeological Society J. 46 (1974).

Thus, the defection of a large number of clubs from the cause of temperance did not seem dangerous. Teetotal clubs still existed in good numbers in addition to these new departures. If made attractive enough, if managed properly, then the drink-selling club would soon find itself out of business. This was a triumph of hope over experience for the temperance movement did not recognise that many of these new counter-attractionist experiments had features which fatally weakened their appeal to working men, especially those in urban areas where more choice was available. Many resorts were dependent on the patronage of some Lord or Lady Bountiful for their financial security. The air of charity and 'good works' which pervaded many of them drove numerous working people away, they had no desire "to hear countesses play the fiddle or baronets singing comic songs."<sup>(147)</sup> If there was a committee of management on which working men could sit its powers were nominal rather than real, for example many of these agencies did not open on Sunday because the patron, either cleric or layman, would not allow the setting aside of his or her Sabbatarian beliefs. Working men were not encouraged by the hand of religion usually found in these places. Tea and tracts were an unattractive and indigestible bill of fare.<sup>(148)</sup> Furthermore the coffee tavern and the teetotal club rarely became self-supporting. Both had to raise money by admitting large numbers of hon<sup>or</sup>ary members who paid large subscriptions. Finally there was the not unimportant point that the beverages sold at the places were frequently as noxious and tasteless as the adulterated beer they were intended to replace.<sup>(149)</sup> Consequently these

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147. G. Sims, How the Poor Live. (1889), p. 79.

148. A. Parker, "Intemperance and the Licensing Laws," Edinburgh Review, Vol. 150 (July 1879), pp. 149-50.

149. R. Macnaughton, "The Question of Drink in England," Macmillan's Magazine, Vol. 52 (September 1885), p. 351.

constraints set fixed limits on the growth of such institutions and their potential for expansion. (150)

At this time, the temperance response was still overwhelmingly verbal. They were content to denounce the clubs. They did not as yet contemplate any mobilisation against them. Illustrative of the temperance ire at the clubs was the exchange between teetotaler and clubman in the town of Hyde. The virulence of their respective attacks should not be taken as indicative of the overall relations between the club movement and the temperance cause but they do give some insight into the deterioration of those relations after the clubs decided to sell drink.

One James Thornley was in favour of clubs selling drink as he believed that this would be a step on the road to temperance for many working men. To prove his point he offered to debate with the local Good Templars. Although the Templars believed that restricting the debate to local speakers was an unnecessary constraint they readily agreed. On 11 April, the debate was held in the Hyde Mechanics' Institution. (151)

Thornley, assisted by Mr. Hibbert spoke for the clubs and Mr. Higinbotham and Mr. McNab led for the teetotalers. It was not an enlightening debate. Hibbert and Thornley made the case, common in club literature, that clubs were not dependent on the drink and that in the club, those members who did imbibe, did so in moderation. Even formerly heavy drinkers found the tone in the clubs inimical to excess

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150. B. T. Hall, "Henry Solly : The Harvest of His Work," in H. Solly, Working Men's Clubs and Educational Institutes. (Rev. edn 1904) pp. 178-79; J. Dickie, "College Missions and Settlements in S. London," (B. Litt Thesis, Univ. Oxford, 1976) pp. 93-105.

151. Hyde and Denton Chronicle, 10 March 1874.



and the attractions of the club soon made them lose all taste for the beer. Higginbotham however, proved that in the use of language the teetotalers were anything but moderate and temperate. His speech consisted mainly of wild and unsupported allegations against local clubs. He charged, among other things, that at one club "men went there after leaving work on Saturday and remained there all Saturday night and all Sunday without even washing themselves." At another, he knew of a member who came away from the club drunk every Sunday for several Sundays in succession, and had beaten his wife shamefully whilst intoxicated-even when she was within a fortnight of her confinement." (152) It was a noisy meeting with all speakers having to cope with frequent noisy interjections from the audience-who clearly enjoyed a good fight. Wisely, the Chairman closed the meeting without summing up. An editorial in the local paper suggested that the clubs take seriously the imputations made at the meeting. Yet it was clear that the likes of Mr. Higginbotham were not to be convinced by rational debate, especially as in the weeks following the debate the orator was going around the town still insulting the clubs and making allegations of immorality and drunkenness against the local Independent Order of Grand Foresters. (152)

Clubs could only afford to treat the Hyde event as a low comic opera at their peril. Higginbotham was no doubt exceptional in his hostility to clubs. But his general line of argument was acceptable to many in the temperance movement. As the gerrymandering at Leicester had shown, teetotalers at the local level could do much to harass and worry the local clubs, especially if they controlled the Watch Committee.

Clubs paid little regard to the tone of hostility coming from the temperance movement. Apart from the Honorary Secretary of the Licensing Amendment League who wanted legislation to control the clubs, most other writers on the subject confined themselves to verbal abuse.

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152. Hyde and Denton Chronicle, 13 April 1874.

152. Hyde and Denton Chronicle, 21 April, 19 May, 26 May 1876.

Union officials still saw themselves as discharging their duties as temperance workers. The outpourings against them in the temperance press could easily be dismissed as the ravings of fanatics who had little understanding of the real working man nor much purchase upon his loyalties. There was no doubt that the clubs saw themselves as acting sensibly in adopting such a jaundiced attitude towards the temperance movement for they saw it as a deeply ambivalent phenomenon. As subsequent historians have stressed, it did bring a new humanity to the treatment of the drunkard, and a new understanding of the causes of excessive drinking.<sup>(153)</sup> It also provided a platform for both women and working men to gain experience in speaking and organising. For women, in particular, it was probably the most important movement before the rise of the suffrage campaign and organised feminism gave them a public position and voice.<sup>(154)</sup> It could also be a narrow movement which constrained and disciplined its followers. It was as alert as any official of the inquisition to the smell of heresy and its myopic focus upon working class recreation as reducible to indulgence in heavy drinking was rightly lampooned.<sup>(155)</sup> In some areas it also worked to further divide an already fragmented working class.<sup>(156)</sup> It was the narrow, intolerant face of temperance that was to be shown to the club movement. While clubs grew less and less sympathetic to any association with what they termed "teetotal fanatics."

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153. For a succinct statement of the positive role of temperance see, C. Binfield, "Temperance and the Cause of God," History, Vol. 57. (191), 1972; I. Sellers, Nineteenth Century Nonconformity, (1977) pp. 40-45.
154. See, P. Skidmore, "Crusading and Conforming: The Techniques of Temperance," Dalhousie Review, Vol. 56(1), 1976, pp. 95-101.
155. "The Great Drunkenness Discovery," All Year Round, 31 July 1869; T. Wright, "Whole Hogs," Household Words, 23 August 1851.
156. N. Kirk, "Class and Fragmentation: Some Aspects of Working Class Life in South-East Lancashire and North-East Cheshire, 1850-1870," (Ph.D. Thesis, Univ. of Pittsburgh, 1974).

Had the opposition to the club been confined to temperance circles then the issue might have died away to become an occasional irritant with which the Union had to contend but one which posed no real threat to the existence of its affiliates. It was not, however, to be that fortunate. The decision to sell beer, and being granted the right to dispense it under conditions which did not require the purchase of a licence or the right of the police to inspect and enter the premises, had aroused the wrath of the licensed trade. Here was an opponent worthy of the clubs. Boundless in its anger against all who tried to interfere with its profits and "no amateurs in the art of propaganda", the licensed trade from 1872 became the most implacable foe of the club.<sup>(157)</sup> History had seemingly worked against the clubs; their adoption of drink had coincided with a rebirth of temperance fervour on the one side and a desire for revenge for the humiliation of Bruce's Act by the drink interest on the other.

Prior to 1870 little, if any, notice had been taken of the clubs by the drink trade. If any publican had observed the opening of a club in his area he would probably have dismissed it as yet another generally fruitless exercise by the "ginger beer and cold tea" brigade to draw off his custom. They had been tried before with little measure of permanent success. Customers had left but they soon came back. If he had a pub a short distance from the club he may have even blessed the day its doors opened for Solly and others charged that the publicans increased their business after a club had opened as men were in the habit of slipping out of the club during the evening to get refreshment from the local.<sup>(158)</sup> Once there many stayed, cheered by the atmosphere of the pub against which the rudeness of the clubs could not compete. The cheering fire, convivial company, the welcome of Old Boniface, and the freedom to drink as and when one wanted seemed to many, more enticing than a few bagatelle tables, often indigestible coffee, and the atmosphere of earnestness which too often constituted the local club.<sup>(159)</sup>

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157. The phrase is taken from J&B. Hammond, The Age of The Chartists (1930) p.149.

158. H. Solly, p.4. Working Men's Clubs and Alcoholic Drinks, (1872); WMCJ, 20 May 1876; Daily News, 30 January 1866.

159. Bailey, op.cit., p.224.

The struggle against the licensing Bill was the turning point. While the respectable trade was to be subject to new and vexatious restrictions, interference from petty officials, calumny from the temperance movement and police inspection, the club was allowed to carry on revelling and carousing to all hours. No policeman could set foot there, no Act of Parliament determined the hours during which trade could take place. And all this was defended by noblemen, bishops, and philanthropists! Clubs were now held to be the curse of the trade. A club was free to do as it pleased, while a respectable business was subject to "all kinds of tyranny and annoyance."<sup>(160)</sup> Descriptions of clubs by licensed victuallers made the depth of their feeling clear. Harry Marks of the East London Licensed victuallers and Beer sellers Protection Society saw them as "common boozing dens, open to men, women, and children."<sup>(161)</sup> By the end of the century they were defined as "frequently sham public houses. The law contains no machinery for stopping...or regulating the sale of excisables therein."<sup>(162)</sup> This was perhaps less perjorative than an earlier description of clubs as places where "young lads are taught their first lessons in gambling and reputed prostitutes assemble and ply openly their shameless vocation."<sup>(163)</sup> Fortunately for the clubs the hostility of the licensed victuallers was generally confined to verbal exchanges, although occasionally and exasperated publican was forced to take more direct action to protect his livelihood, as one vicar in London discovered when he was visited by a publican who threatened to "smash him up" if he did not close the club he had just opened.<sup>(164)</sup>

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160. Brewers Journal, 15 January 1871.

161. Morning Advertiser, 17 January 1895.

162. "A. B. C. of Licensing," Licensed Victuallers' Yearbook, (1899), p. 274.

163. Licensed Victuallers' Guardian, 27 November 1875.

164. Charity Organisation Reporter, 8(296), 3 April 1879.

Licensed victuallers came to see the growth of clubs not as the result of action by working men aided by their friends, to provide places of rational recreation, but as a shrewd enterprise set up to evade the licensing laws. Clubs were little more than unlicensed, secret drinking dens which if allowed to spread unchecked would produce national degeneration and drunkenness on the scale not seen since the gin drinking epidemic of the eighteenth century. <sup>(165)</sup> They were a lineal descendant of the "hush shops", rooms in houses in working class districts used for illicit tipping, which had plagued some northern towns and the metropolis in the late 40's and early 50's. <sup>(166)</sup> Their existence made nonsense of the demands for further legislation against the reputable trade. For if legal drinking facilities were further curtailed and controlled it would only promote the underground growth of illegal shops and the ruination of the respectable trader. <sup>(167)</sup> This argument was also accepted by sections of the temperance movement who maintained that any further legislation to deal with the drink trade would also have to contain provisions to curb the growth of clubs. <sup>(168)</sup>

Delegates attending a national conference of licensed victuallers in Birmingham 1873 feared nothing from the local machinations of the teetotal faction. Good Templars, for example, attracted only young men who were drawn to the movement by the "tinsel of their regalia and the mysteries of a mongrel masonry." What disturbed and angered the delegates was the alarming increase in private tipping places said to have sprung up since the passing of the 1872 Act. Conference was asked

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165. Licensed Victuallers Guardian, 29 November 1884.

166. J. Wood, Board of Excise, evidence to S.C.H.C. Operation of the Acts for the Sale of Beer, P.P. 1850 x, Q:386; S.C. on Public Houses, 1852-53; P.P. xxvii, Q:4416-20.

167. Licensed Victuallers Gazette, 23 August 1873; Brewers Journal, 15 May 1871; H. Simmonds, Country Brewers Society, to N.A.P. S.S., Conference on Temperance Legislation, (1886), p. 37.

168. See, for example, Temperance Witness, 17(2), June 1906; J. Swinburne, Beneath the Cloak of England's Respectability, (1912), pp. 108; 128-36.

by spokesmen from Rochdale and Birmingham to consider what action could be taken against these "dens of infamy."<sup>(169)</sup>

The basic emphasis of the licensed victuallers' campaign was to change the law. What they sought was legislation of some kind to protect their trade and to arrest the spread of clubs. In common with the temperance movement, they too claimed to speak on behalf of the wives of working men whose husbands had deserted them for the clubs. Wives of members of the Patriotic Club, for example, were said never to see their husbands at home for they stayed out all night drinking at the club.<sup>(170)</sup> The moral issue was less emphasised by the drink interest. They were more concerned to persuade the state to intervene on their behalf. They did not want respectable men driven from the trade and forced to recoup their investment by opening up a club, which they alleged, was a frequent consequence of the 1872 Act.<sup>(171)</sup> Nor did they want their own trade ruined by "unfair competition" from the club. Although the trade often claimed that their business was being systematically undercut by the club the evidence is scant and contradictory. To be sure the fact that clubs could stay open when public-houses were closed meant that they could profit from their privileged position. On the other hand some licensed victuallers still thought the club a boon to custom. When asked about the United Radical Club one licensed victualler could only bemoan that one had not opened opposite him for if it did he would double his takings.<sup>(172)</sup> The Union also was of the opinion that notwithstanding the attitude of the Licensed Victuallers Association most publicans were glad when a club was sited near them for their profits would increase. This was especially the case in temperance clubs for in such clubs, although Bung was regularly denounced as a parasite who lived on the failings of working men yet the "members appear occasionally to have some-

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169. Report of a Great National Conference of Licensed Victuallers' Delegates, (Birmingham, 1873), pp. 65-67.

170. Licensed Victuallers Gazette, 16 August, 1873.

171. See, Licensed Victuallers Guardian, 30 October 1875; 11 September 1880.

172. Licensed Victuallers Mirror, 19 January 1892.

thing stronger than ginger beer, and the cause is that the 'Corner Pin' has been visited a number of times during the evening."<sup>(173)</sup>

Dencuncing clubs was an easy road to popularity at dinners and meetings of the various societies of licensed victuallers. It became something of a ritual, inserted between the loyal toast and reports on the state of trade. One meeting, in January 1879, decided that clubs were either "coddling establishments for effeminate men or political shops for disaffected citizens."<sup>(174)</sup> The theme of subversion was continued the following year when clubs were characterised as "political dens for the hatching of treasonable conspiracies."<sup>(175)</sup> All exciting stuff-shades of the Commune, club men coming forth brandishing the tricolour and demanding the heads of the aristos - but not descriptions which fitted the behaviour of clubmen either in Hoxton or, more importantly, in Pall Mall. What the licensed trade forgot or conveniently ignored was that the privileges of the working men's club to which they took such exception were also shared by the gentleman's club. To obtain legislation against the working man's club, one of two strategies would have to be adopted. Either a law which affected only the working man's club or a measure which affected all clubs equally. The problem with the first idea was that no government would support such an obvious example of class biased legislation which contradicted the principle of formal equality before the law. Moreover, both political parties drew much support from their respective club organisation which would be jeopardised if they were seen to give their assent to legislation against the clubs. While the second idea would pose no problems of legal philosophy it would be vigorously opposed by the elite clubs which had already demonstrated their capacity to subvert the ambitions of ministers when they exerted pressure on Gladstone to drop his proposed tax

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173. CLJ, 5 November 1892.

174. Licensed Victuallers Guardian, 1 February 1879.

175. Ibid, 8 May 1880.

on excisables sold in their clubs which he introduced when Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1863. He conceded and the tax was not introduced. <sup>(176)</sup>

Two other features of the club galled the licensed trade. First, and most obviously, was their immunity from police entry without a warrant. Prior to the passing of the 1872 Act publicans had complained that they were subject to systematic persecution by the police. <sup>(177)</sup> The new act gave the police greater powers and although Cross's amendment in 1874 reduced some police rights licensed victuallers continued to complain of the harrassment and espionage exercised by the local police against their businesses. <sup>(178)</sup> Second, licensed traders took umbrage at the freedom with which clubs could be established. Rules could be drawn up and sent to the local offices of the Excise and then the club could be opened. Clubs did not have to go through the harrowing experience of the Brewster Sessions where publicans could be reviled and attacked with impunity by teetotalers.

The drink interest was a far more redoubtable foe than the temperance movement. Both had strengthened their internal organisation in the 1860's. But while the temperance movement was still prey to fissiparous tendencies - clashes of personality, differences over aims, divisions between moral suasionists and prohibitionists - the struggle against the Licensing Bill had imposed a new unity and collective discipline upon the drink trade. <sup>(179)</sup> Members felt that they had been singled out for

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176. See, Fifteenth Report of the Commissioners of Inland Revenue, P. P. 1872 xviii, p. 32; For the debate on Gladstone's proposed tax see, Parliamentary Debates, Vol. 170, Series III, 27 April 1863, Cols. 838-46; 1395-96.

177. Licensed Victuallers Guardian, 18 June and 19 November 1870.

178. Licensed Victualler Gazette, 16 January and 20 February 1875; Brewers Journal, 15 March 1875.

179. See, D. Fahy, op. cit., p. 54; P. Mathias, "The Brewing Industry, Temperance and Politics," Historical Journal, 1(2), 1958, p. 113.



especially punitive treatment by the Liberal government thus unity was necessary if further deprivations were to be resisted. <sup>(180)</sup> Moreover they were careful not to present this struggle as prompted solely by the base motives of self-interest and profit. In Sheffield, for instance, the Licensed Victuallers' Association, formed in October, 1872 gave the reason for its establishment as the need to defend the hard won rights of working men to enjoy a drink after work. <sup>(181)</sup> Differences, of course, still remained. There were two trade defence organisations, the Licensed Victuallers' National Defence League which represented the provinces, and the Licensed Victuallers' Central Protection Society which covered the metropolis. Not until 1888 when the National Trade Defence Association was formed did the publicans act in a concerted manner. <sup>(182)</sup> Whatever the divergences between them, all sections of the retail trade were pledged to put down the clubs. Brewers were more ambivalent. Their trade journals occasionally carried articles hostile to the clubs and the editorials often pressed for new laws to control this menace. On the other hand some brewers had helped clubs with loans, for example in London, Stansfield and Co., and although the number of clubs formerly tied to brewers was probably small, many brewers found the clubs a profitable customer for their wares. <sup>(183)</sup>

To expose the threat of the drink-selling club the London Society commissioned in 1870 a report on the capital's working men's clubs. This was a powerful organisation to which nearly 50% of London 7,000

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180. See for example, the editorials in the Licensed Victuallers' Guardian, for 1873.
181. C. Read, "Middle Class Values and Working Class Culture in Nineteenth Century Sheffield," (Ph.D. Thesis, Univ. of Sheffield, 1976), pp. 430-32.
182. Licensed victuallers constituted the largest group affiliated to the Liberty and Property Defence League, see L. P. D. L. Annual Report, No. 2. (1893-94), pp. 16-17.
183. Clubs which were legally tied to a brewer could not affiliate to the Union. Any Union club found to be tied was immediately expelled.

licensed houses belonged. <sup>(184)</sup> Candelet, Secretary of the Society, hired Henry Mayhew to produce a document exposing these dens. Mayhew took his duties seriously, producing a 35 page report in 1872. The substance of his report was a description of a number of London Clubs which he had visited. He was careful to stress that all were "conducted with perfect decorum", and that although drinking was allowed he did not "witness a single case of drunkenness."<sup>(185)</sup> Clubs in the CIU were absolved from the charge of being unlicensed drinking shops. Mayhew remarked that at all the clubs he had attended which included the St. James and Soho and the London Artizans, he had been received with courtesy. Although he expressed his sympathy with the cause of the licensed grade, his report was not the general indictment which his paymasters had probably expected him to produce. The report was altogether too scrupulous and fair to the clubs to be good propaganda against them. Licensed Victuallers had expected something with which they could smite and confound their enemy but they had been given instead the judgement of a pilate. Candelet sent copies of the report to all Members of Parliament, but no action was taken. Thereafter the Report vanished, being referred to once during the 1893 expose of clubs as a file from the archives of the Licensed Victuallers.<sup>(186)</sup>

While Mayhew was preparing his Report the first prosecutions of clubs for infringing the Licensing Laws took place. For the Licensed Trade these cases served to confirm their suspicion that clubs were being used by wily individuals as a means of evading the 1872 Act. There was also much in the evidence to renew temperance complaints that clubs were no friends of their cause.

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184. S. C. House of Lords on Intemperance, IIIrd report, P. P. 1877.  
xi Q:1065.

185. H. Mayhew, Report Concerning the Trade and Hours of Closing Among the So Called "Working Men's Clubs" (1871)

186. Evening News and Post, 18 March and 20 March 1893.

First to come to notice was the Cobden Club in Bermondsey Square. Opened as club in 1870, it numbered over 1,200 members by April 1871, enjoying, for a short time, the patronage of Labouchere. While the Daily News was praising this example of mutual improvement to its readers, the local paper was reporting the resignation of the majority of the Committee. The cause of their departure was the revelation that the club was a proprietary institution. The Committee, while not opposed to the members having beer, were entirely against "numbers of men joining the club solely for the purpose of getting a drink during those hours in which the licensed houses were prohibited from selling it." (187) Prosecution took place in May 1871 during which it was revealed that the club was a former public-house, 'The Horns'. When the manager Charles Evans was refused a renewal of license he gave over the premises to be a club and for a short period the club was properly conducted. But then Evans returned and ran the club as a proprietary one. Police evidence showed that the club was open long into the night and on one occasion over 100 men and two women were seen to enter the club after the pubs were closed. The case against the club was proved and fines of over £200 were imposed. (188) Before the case came before the magistrates Pratt investigated the club, and finding the committee's allegations to be true had the club struck off the affiliate list. (189)

The next case involved another South London Club, the "Times Club" in Walworth whose manager Henry Dyer was found guilty at Lambeth Police Court of selling without a licence. He was given a small fine of £3 as he intended to appeal against the judgement. (190) The case was a complicated one. Evidence showed that in all respects except one the club was a bona-fide one; there was a committee, a min-

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187. Daily News, 9 May 1871; Bermondsey Advertiser, 29 April 1871.

188. Brewers Guardian, 20 May 1871; Brewers Journal 15 May 1871.

189. Temperance Record, 20 May 1871.

190. Police Service Advertiser, 23 June 1871; Temperance Record, 17 June and 27 July 1871. The fine was usually £50 or one month's hard labour for a first offence. See, "The Existing Licensing Laws," National Temperance Yearbook, (1881), p. 87.

ute book, and formal membership procedures. However, the profit on the bar went to Dyer thus it was illegal.<sup>(191)</sup> What troubled the club movement was that a working man's club had been singled out for this prosecution. The same type of club existed quite openly in the West End, Whites was an obvious example. Yet it did not have to deal with police becoming members in order to gain a conviction. A deputation led by Solly went to see Bruce to ask for clarification of the law and to press him to include clauses laying down what constituted a bona-fide club in his forthcoming Licensing Bill.<sup>(192)</sup> After several adjournments Mr. Ellison gave his judgement that Dyer had broken the law. If he wanted to sell drink he should have taken out a license. He tried to extricate himself from having to declare that similar clubs in the West End were also illegal by introducing a distinction between a bona-fide club and what he termed a "colourable club" which was a place for drinking, not for rational recreation. Delegates from the London clubs met at the Union offices on July 27th to consider the case and passed a resolution stating proprietary clubs to be "most pernicious to the interest of the club movement."<sup>(193)</sup> In that they were right, but this avoided dealing with the legal scholasticism of the judgement against Dyer. It was clear that the law was being operated in a totally class biased manner. The conventions set out by the Board of Inland Revenue made both White's and Dyer's club illegal. But the judgement against Dyer introduced an altogether new distinction, the 'colourable club'. This definition had no force in law, being introduced simply to absolve the proprietary club in the West End from any suggestion of illegality. If the clubs had not been suspicious of the rule of law before this case, then the judgement should have given them cause to reconsider their opinion.

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191. The Institute, 1 August 1871.

192. Brewers Guardian, 30 July 1872; Brewers Journal, 15 July 1872.

193. The Institute, 1 August 1872.

In July 1871 William Hubel of the German Club in Dean Street was summonsed to appear at Bow Street. Hubel, the prosecution argued, had opened the club after magistrates had refused to renew the license of the premises then known as 'The New Royalty Hotel.' Hubel successfully pleaded for an adjournment in order to bring evidence to the court to show that the club was properly conducted. When the case was re-convened, Hubel failed to appear. He was fined £120 in his absence. (194)

These prosecutions caused much anger and consternation. Solly's request for new clauses in the Licensing Bill was rejected by Bruce. (195) More ridicule was heaped on the founders of clubs for allowing beer into the clubs. (196) The tarnished image of the club movement in London was not helped by the summonses for assault which arose out of a fracas between women members of the Patriotic Club. One woman had called the other a prostitute as they were leaving the club, a fight then ensued. During the case, witnesses told the court that drinking and gambling went on in the club until 4 o'clock in the morning. (197)

These prosecutions were taken by licensed victuallers as confirmation of their suspicions that clubs were simply set up to subvert the new rigour of the Licensing Act. There was some scattered evidence that unlicensed drinking shops were springing up after 1872. In Liverpool for example, only 20 unlicensed drinking places had been convicted in 1867. By 1871 the number had risen to 130. The figures for London

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194. Temperance Record, 29 July 1871; The Institute 1 August 1871; See also the prosecution of the Alexandra Club, Peckham in Brewers Guardian, 15 May 1872.

195. See, C. Ribton Turner, The Licensing Question (1871)

196. Temperance Record 1 June 1871 and 22 July 1871; Brewers Guardian 30 July 1872.

197. Licensed Victuallers Gazette, 16 August and 23 August 1873.

showed a similar pattern. (198) This was probably the result of increased police activity to check any such evasion before it became entrenched as the figures for convictions showed a decline from the mid 70's. Licensed traders could also draw little comfort from the Reports of the Borough Magistrates on the working of the new Act. With a few exceptions most boroughs reported that the Act had not led to any increase in the number of premises used for unlicensed drinking. Only one borough, Newport, Isle of Wight, attributed the increase in illegal drinking to the growth of clubs. (199)

The police however, did not relax their vigilance and in late 1875 a number of clubs in Nottingham were prosecuted. The cases against the clubs were proved, the Raleigh Club, for example, being fined £25. Clubs of this type, it was alleged, "rarely saw a visitor until after midnight" when every room then became crowded and "billiards, cards, gambling of all kinds, drinking, and revelry were continued" until morning. (200) The Union was pleased that such vigorous action had been taken for the town had become a centre of bogus club activity which threatened to bring the respectable movement into disrepute. Members were called upon to do everything to dissuade anybody they knew who frequented to such "mutual degradation societies" from continuing their membership. (201) At the same time the Union was anxious that the outcry against the bogus club should not be used as cover

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198. Return given by Major Greig, Head Constable of Liverpool, to S.C. House of Lords on Intemperance, 1st Report, P.P. 1877. xi, Q:49; for London see, "Summonses against 'Drinking Houses," Annual Report of the Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis, P.P. 1897 xxix, Return 25.
199. Reports from the Borough Authorities... Relating to the Licensing Act 1872, P.P. 1874 liv.
200. Licensed Victuallers Guardian 13 February 1875.
201. WMCJ, 21 August 1875 and 15 April 1876.

to attack the movement as a whole. They saw in the actions of certain police officers "a determined effort... to break down our clubs", suggesting that those clubs able to meet the expense might follow the lead of certain London clubs who had appointed doorkeepers to keep out vexatious policemen, Excise officers, and publicans who were trying to pass themselves off as members. (202)

These prosecutions brought clubs to the notice of the police. Before proceeding to examine the complicated history of attempts to obtain legislation against the clubs it is essential to examine police club relations, to clarify the meaning of the term "bogus club", and to consider the impact of repeated prosecutions on the respectable club movement.

Police officers had long claimed that they did not possess sufficient powers to monitor and control working class resorts which fell outside the purview of the Licensing Laws. A case in point was the coffee-houses which were alleged to be major centres of mischief and misconduct, places frequented by the dangerous classes, but against which the police were powerless to act because they did not have the right to enter without a warrant. (203) Similarly, it was a misplaced logic which placed the public-house under greater surveillance while at the same time allowing the club to flourish immune from police supervision. In 1876 the Chief Constable of Nottingham, no

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202. Ibid, 15 May 1877.

203. Evidence of Supt. Becker, S.C. Gaming, P.P. 1844 vi, Qs: 355-56; R. Mayne, Chief Commissioner of Metropolitan Police evidence to S.C. House of Lords Operation of the Acts for the Sale of Beer, P.P. 1850 x Qs: 48-57; and Idem, S.C. Public Houses, P.P. 1852-53 xxxvii, Qs: 158-72.

doubt drawing on experience gained from the prosecutions of bogus clubs in the city the year previous, lamented that the clubs were nothing more than:

Places of resort when the licensed houses are closed, where drinking and debauch go on till any hour of the morning, to the ruination of individuals frequenting them, and what is worse their families. (204)

For the police, the solution to the club problem was simple - they should be subject to the same laws as the public houses. But the Union in common with certain other organisations, felt that the solution was in some ways worse than the problem.

The Union suspected that to place the clubs under the direct control of the police would in no way guarantee the movement's good name. On the contrary it would place all clubs under a new despotism. They arrived at this conclusion both from experiences in dealing with the police and from studying the policing of the licensing laws.

For the constable on the beat the inspection of public houses was a sensitive police duty.<sup>(205)</sup> It was a difficult function to discharge dispassionately and objectively because the constable was subject to intense and often contradictory pressures. . The composition of the Watch Committee could have a major influence on whether the law was to be applied laxly or strictly. W. Chadwick in his Reminiscences noted that in many small towns raids on licensed premises seldom took place due "in great measure to the increasing influence of the brewing trade upon the police."<sup>(206)</sup> In a number of towns the law went by default as

204. Temperance Record, 25 January 1877.

205. W. Miller, Cops and Bobbies : Police Authority in London and New York, (1977), p.135.

206. W. Chadwick, Reminiscences of a Chief Constable, (Manchester, 1901), p.120; See also, "Watch Committee and the Liquor Traffic," Temperance World and Prohibition Herald, 26 November 1896: Annual Report, Inspector of Constabulary in the Northern District, P. P. 1878 xi, pp.118.



the Watch Committees were dominated by the liquor interest. At Wigan the Chief Constable alleged that the brewers directly interfered with the Watch Committee, while the Leeds police were said to be casual in the administration of the law because a brewer and a publican sat on the Watch Committee while a brewer was Chairman of the Police Discipline sub-committee. (207) In these areas where teetotalers were in the ascendant the law was applied to the letter. Some policemen felt that this could make the discharge of their duties very difficult for to keep a constant watch upon public-houses tied up valuable manpower. (208) Besides influence exerted through Watch Committees the colour of the bench of magistrates at the annual Brewster Sessions could also indicate the emphasis to be placed on the licensing laws. It was ironic that one bench acted for its leniency in the administration of the law, because it was dominated by tories, was the Preston Sessions, the "Jerusalem" of teetotalism. (209)

Besides pressure from above, there were various local arrangements and understandings which affected the incidence of enforcement. In London and Manchester it was common knowledge that many policemen could get their beer for nothing due to the generosity of local publicans, in return for which the local officer would turn a blind eye to minor infringements of the law. (210) Despite outcries from public figures and the work of temperance agencies, police force drunkenness was still common, even at the end of the century. (211) Birmingham Watch Committee in 1875 was forced to issue handbills to licensed pre-

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207. For Wigan see H. Marsden, Evidence to R.C. Liquor Licensing Laws, Vol. 2. P.P. 1897 xxxv, pp.208-12; for Leeds, G. Hayler, A Peep into the Enemy's Camp, (Newcastle, 1899), p. 22.
208. J. Caminda, Twenty-Five Years of Detective Life, (Manchester 1895), Vol. 2, pp.494-95.
209. A. Gallagher, Thesis, op.cit, pp.13-15.
210. On and Off Duty, July 1885 & April 1887. See also Lower House of Convocation, op.cit, Appendix G; Meliora Vol.12 (47) 1869.
211. Evidence of J. Timewell, R.C. Duties of the Metropolitan Police, P.P. 1908 1, Vol.I p.88.

mises in their district setting out the penalties which could be imposed for the offence of corrupting police officers or the supplying of liquor to constables. They were driven to this by "the large number of constables who have been lately fined for drunkenness."<sup>(212)</sup> Within the force there were demands for stiffer penalties for those found drunk on duty as it was essential to preserve the "respectability and well-being of the force."<sup>(213)</sup> For the temperance movement the only effective remedy for police drunkenness was to make total abstinence a condition for membership of the force.<sup>(214)</sup>

Free drinks were not the only perks available to the police. Testimonials and gifts were also presented to retiring officers if they were thought to have "administered the licensing laws to the satisfaction of the trade in the district."<sup>(215)</sup> The Union was certainly not of the opinion that the publicans treated the policemen "from motives of pure and disinterested kindness."<sup>(216)</sup> They maintained that the police were under such obligation to local licensed traders that impartial discharge of their duty was impossible.<sup>(217)</sup> Some of the police animus towards the clubs was put down to the fact that the clubs did not contribute to police charities or give free beer to the local constable.<sup>(218)</sup> However, the Secretary of the Clerkenwell Club disregarded Union advice to keep clear of the police by giving the man on the beat free drinks, believing it was the best interests of the club that the police were "squared with

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212. Brewers' Guardian 5 October 1875; Licensed Victuallers Gazette, 11 January 1875.

213. Police Service Advertiser, 5 July 1872.

214. Temperance Record, 9 May 1895 and 4 July 1895; Temperance Chronicle, 13 October 1899.

215. L. Stileman-Gibbard, Licensing Administration: Possibilities and Difficulties, (n.d. 1902?), pp. 12-13.

216. Police Review and Parade Gossip, 11 April 1895.

217. CIU, Annual Report, No. 52 (1915), p. 11.

218. CIJ, August 1904.

their beer. "(219)

There was no doubt that policemen involved with public-house work were "peculiarly exposed to temptation." (220) However, licensed victuallers believed the stories of bribery and malfeasance were grossly overdrawn. They saw another side to police activity. Many complaints were made about the tyranny of the police especially plain clothes officers who tried to trap unsuspecting licensed victuallers into committing an offence. (221) An editorial in the Licensed Victuallers Gazette stated that numerous instances could be cited of:

attempts by the police to damage the character and reputation of publicans by bringing false charges against them... which it is often difficult, and frequently expensive to disprove. (222)

Paradoxically police action was making the club more attractive to sociable Englishmen who preferred the liberty of the club to the vexatious interference of the police while they were having a drink, although few police were as zealous as those in one town in the north west where it was alleged that it was the custom for:

plain-clothes policemen to go round the rooms of the public house and peer into the face of each customer to see whether or not he is really sober. (223)

Hostility towards the police was the only thing clubs and pubs seemed to share in common. The new police, in many areas did bring a new vigour to the prosecution of the law. Less tolerance was shown towards popular cultural pursuits, and there were sustained attempts to check and control

219. Social Notes and Club News, 27 August 1881.

220. J. Nott-Bower, Fifty-two Years a Policeman, (1926), p.135.

221. Brewers Journal 15 January 1876; Brewers Guardian 6 January 1880 and 27 April 1880.

222. Licensed Victuallers Gazette, 10 January 1880.

223. E. Pratt, The Licensed Trade : An Independant Survey, (1907), p.198.

working class leisure. <sup>(224)</sup> This did not entail the complete eradication of that most important element of everyday policing, the use of discretion; the decision whether or not to bring charges or make an arrest if an offence had been committed. <sup>(225)</sup> For reasons of administrative efficiency or leniency towards a first offender, for example, a policeman might overlook bringing charges. In the context of public house inspection a policeman might have shown tolerance towards a publican who kept open beyond permitted hours in return for information on criminal activity in the area. Drunkenness was another crime for which the police were known to have flexible standards. If a drunk could get home unaided then the police were likely to let him pass if he was causing no disturbance. They were also likely not to arrest him if they saw him just before they came off duty for that would mean giving up their rest in the day to give evidence against him. <sup>(226)</sup> Clubs being free from police control could interrupt and check effective policing.

The police, as an organisation based upon suspicion of their fellow man and the belief that his motives tended towards the criminal, always declared that they did not have enough powers to deal with crime. Criminals were always becoming more wily, more adept in evading detection. <sup>(227)</sup>

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224. See D. Philips, Crime and Authority in Victorian England, (1977) pp.84-85; R. Storch, "The Policeman as Domestic Missionary; Urban Discipline and Popular Culture, 1850-80," Journal of Social History, Vol.9(4), 1976, pp.485-90.
225. See M. Banton, The Policeman and the Community, (1964), pp. 128-42; D. Williams, "Prosecution, Discretion and the Accountability of the Police," in R. Hood (Ed), Crime, Criminology and Public Policy, (1974).
226. R. Wilkinson, "A statistical Review of Police Recognised Drunkenness in the Metropolis," Transactions, British Association for the Advancement of Science, (1865) pp.158-59.
227. Superintendent Bent, Criminal Life : Reminiscences of Forty Two Years as a Police Officer, (Manchester, 1891) pp.152-54.

What they wanted with regard to the club was the licensing of such places which would thus give them the same rights of entry and inspection they enjoyed over public houses.

There were two ways open to the police to deal with any suspected sham clubs in their district, one was to keep the club under observation and then to apply to the magistrate for a warrant. The premises could then be raided in force. The other was to gain admission to a club by posing as a member. Once inside, the officer would purchase excisables, that is liquor and cigars, then leave returning the following night with a summons for selling without a license, for the officer being a nominal rather than a real member had thus broken the second of the Inland Revenue Board's rules for a bona-fide club.<sup>(228)</sup> If during the prosecution case it was revealed that the club was a proprietary one, then this was an added bonus but it did not matter if it was a bona fide one for most magistrates were willing to convict on the evidence of the officer alone that an offence against the Excise had been committed.

The use of subterfuge was thought by clubs to be very ungentlemanly and totally unEnglish, a view shared by a number of police officers who thought the use of mufti objectionable.<sup>(229)</sup> Clubs were constantly warned to be on their guard against men who tried to gain entry to the club saying that they were members or were going to see somebody inside. In numerous instances these "members" turned out to be officers of the police or excise.<sup>(230)</sup> Suspicious and vigilant stewards were able to save their clubs from an expensive day in court by their timely appearance at the door. Some clubs, inevitably, were not so fortunate. The club at Stanford Rivers, for example, admitted a policeman disguised as a woodsman who said he was waiting for his friend, a known member to join him. While in the club a sociable member stood him a pint, a favour

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228. The practice is described by W. Crofield in his evidence to S.C. Clubs Registration Bill, 1893-94 x Q:12.

229. Reminiscences of Chief Inspector Littlechild, (1894), p. 76.

230. Republican, Vol II(8) November 1885, CIJ, 1 May 1886, Club World, 21 July 1894.

which the officer returned. The following night he came again, this time with a summons. Later the club was fined £12. (231)

Haymakers who entered the Waterfoot Club, Rawtenstall, and were served with beer then revealed themselves to be policemen. The club was convicted and expelled from the Manchester Association. (232) Sometimes the police went to elaborate lengths to get their conviction. Two policemen entered the Clayton-le-Moors Club, Accrington, early one morning and hid themselves in the loft. There they cut holes in the floor in order to keep watch on what went on in the club. They saw visitors admitted indiscriminately, the club was fined. (233)

London Clubs appeared more vigilant, or at least more difficult places to penetrate. Several unsuccessful attempts were made to gain admittance to the Hackney club which were foiled. By the early 90's members were cautioned that it was best to avoid policemen, especially at night. (234)

Almost all clubmen and officials were of the opinion that police supervision would be a danger to the club movement. When legislation was under discussion the Union proved immovable on the point that any legislation passed to benefit and protect the bona-fide movement must exclude the right of police entry. The Union made its case on three grounds. Firstly, that the police already had sufficient powers to deal with the bogus club movement; what was lacking was the will to use them. The police had the power to obtain warrants and organise raids. Instead, they preferred to entrap, often respectable, clubs into breaking the law. Secondly, in the context of the sour relations between clubs and police

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231. Ibid, 31 January 1891.

232. Ibid, October 1895.

233. CIJ, December 1895.

234. Club World, 21 July 1894.

the Union held that new powers would be used to harry the movement and to interfere with the management of clubs. The Union and its constituents did not see the police as impartial guardians of the law but thought them too often closely allied with the local drink interest which constrained their freedom of action. <sup>(235)</sup> Moreover, raids, when carried out, often harmed respectable clubs who found their liquor impounded and the club closed while the police completed their investigations. If these powers were extended then clubs would expect all kinds of vexatious persecution from the police. Thirdly, and most importantly, the clubs did not believe that any new laws would be applied, in practice, to all clubs. On the contrary the law would be the tool of class privilege. Policemen would be all too happy and ready to enter a radical club or a labourers' club, but little concern would be shown in the behaviour of members at a gentleman's club. Wood, Chief constable of Manchester, confirmed the Union's darkest suspicions in his evidence to the Royal Commission of Liquor Licensing. He pressed the Commission to give the police right of entry stating that he did not contemplate that this power would be used to send any officers into "any of the clubs in Pall Mall." He only desired new powers to "get at the worst." <sup>(236)</sup> By worst he was taken to mean working class.

The object of all this concern and fear was the sham or bogus club. These "Ishmaels of Social Institutions" as they were dubbed took a variety of institutional forms. <sup>(237)</sup> But they all shared one common denominator -

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235. There were also occasional allegations from the club movement that policemen persecuted the respectable movement while enjoying a warm relationship with shady characters who ran bogus clubs. "Anyone who knows the imposition of the force," declared one clubman, "can well understand why bogus clubs are not troubled by prosecution." For those who did not know he told them - "Serjeants of the police have been seen within gambling dens. CIJ, 25 March 1893.

236. R. C. Liquor Licensing Laws, P. P. 1897, xxxv; Q:13799. See also the comments on police partiality in exercising any law that applied to clubs in S. Reynolds and B&T Woolley, Seems So! A Working Class View of Politics (1911), pp. 61-62.

237. CIJ, 11 September 1886.

they were proprietary clubs in which the profits on the sale of excisables went to a proprietor who owned and supplied them. Many of these clubs were former public houses which had been refused renewal of a Justice's certificate at the Brewster sessions. The licensee, not wishing to lose his investment, turned the premises over to a club, usually taking the sensible precaution of changing the name at the same time. Apart from the change of name, business went on as before with the profit going to the publican, except now he could choose to be open and close when he liked. <sup>(238)</sup> In a similar way some publicans opened their pubs, now re-named clubs, in a bid to evade the stricter hours of sale set down by the 1872 Licensing Act. <sup>(239)</sup> The fear that clubs would simply become a device to subvert the licensing laws explains why the outcry against the sham club was not commensurate with the generally small numbers involved. If such clubs were allowed to spread unchecked then the whole of the licensing law would be set at naught and the best hopes of the temperance movement for making the nation sober run aground.

Towns such as Manchester and Liverpool had witnessed a mushrooming of clubs in the late 70's and early 80's when a vigorous police campaign against betting drove many bookmakers to adopt the term 'club' as a convenient cover for their trade. <sup>(240)</sup> Liverpool was particularly infamous for the number of gambling "hells" which blossomed there. The first crackdown had come in 1878 which cleared the town for a few years. <sup>(241)</sup> A series of raids were made again in the autumn of

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238. J. Squire, Inland Revenue, evidence to S.C. Clubs Registration, P.P. 1893-94 x Q:76.
239. G. Fenwick, Chief Constable of Chester, evidence to R.C. Liquor Licensing, P.P. xxxvi IIIrd Report, p.49.
240. M. Woods, evidence to S.C. Clubs Registration, P.P. 1893-94, x Qs: 724-25.
241. Argus, 23 March and 21 December 1878.



1883 which brought a number of bookmakers before the magistrates. (242)  
 Police action gained convictions against a smaller number in 1885. (243)  
 Bookmakers were not deterred and it took large scale raids in early  
 1890 to arrest the spread of these clubs. Over 25 clubs were brought  
 to book, 24 of which were run by a company of seven men headed by  
 Joseph and William Rickerby, figures "well-known amongst the betting  
 fraternity of Liverpool." (244) Heavy fines were imposed and the clubs  
 were closed, a matter which brought great relief to the city, such resorts  
 being:

a positive menace to society. They are frequented  
 by the worst of characters for the worst of purpos-  
 es, outcasts of society who make gambling and  
 trickery in every form their means of livliehood. (245)

Police in Manchester had kept watch on betting clubs in their district  
 from the 1870's. In May 1885 22 clubs were raided. All were convicted  
 and closed. (246) Betting clubs were not such a nuisance in London. Camp  
 aigns by the Excise occasionally brought a London betting club to court,  
 such as the "Clock Tower Club", Newington Butts, where 93 people were  
 arrested and charged with gambling. Over 150 policemen took part in the  
 raid, their haul included betting books, a tape machine, and the manager  
 who was found nearly suffocating "in a small cupboard." (247) Echoing

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242. Liverpool Review, 8 September, 15 September and 15 December 1883.

243. Ibid, 3 January 1885.

244. Liverpool Daily Post, 12 March 1890. There had been a series of  
 raids nearly a year earlier, see Liverpool Mercury, 20-25 May 1889.

245. Liverpool Courier 14 March 1890; Liverpool Daily Post, 13 March  
 1890, 15 March 1890; see also, S.C. Clubs Registration Bill,  
 Appendix 2 "Prosecution of Liverpool Clubs."

246. J. Caminda, op. cit, Vol. 1 (Manchester, 1895), pp. 451-61. Accord-  
 to the Chief Constable, betting clubs were still posing a problem for  
 the police at the turn of the century, see Select Committee of the  
House of Lords on Betting. P.P. 1902 v, p. 12 Q:262, Evidence of  
 Robert Peacock.

247. C.I.J. 17 Sept. 1887, see also the raid on the Travellers' Club, Echo,  
 13. Feb 1893. J. Hawke, Honorary Sec. of the National Anti-Gambling  
 League complained that gambling was widespread in the clubs. How-  
 ever, because the police were refused free entry it was difficult to  
 gain the necessary evidence to have them suppressed; S.C. House of  
Lords on Betting, P.P. 1901 v, p. 18 Qs: 199-204.

Solly's warnings the promoters of a group of clubs in Newcastle cautioned that clubs acted as a :

natural recruiting ground for the betting fraternity, who are most anxious to enlist the young men of saving habits who have money to spend, and the most stringent precautions are necessary to prevent any of this objectionable class becoming members. (248)

Greenwood, from experience gleaned by regular attendance at the police court, thought most clubs to be little more than gambling dens "to which simpletons with more money than sense were lured and fleeced." (249)

The authorities also alleged that immigrant groups were usually behind the setting-up of gambling clubs, though when summonsed the proprietors of these resorts usually pleaded ignorance of the laws rather than a pre-meditated plan to defraud the Excise as mitigation for their involvement with a bogus club. Immigrant clubs flourished in Central London, especially around Soho, and not withstanding evidence as to their illegal status, they were often left alone because they were held to do some good in "taking many of the worst characters off the street throughout the night." (250)

One group said to be energetic in the formation and support of the bogus club were brewers. As early as April 1878 Solly charged that in some areas brewers were behind the setting up of clubs. (251) The evidence is difficult to evaluate. Both the temperance movement and the retail section of the drink trade were agreed that brewers found the clubs "a very convenient and inexpensive channel for getting rid of large quant-

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248. H. Crawford-Smith, Social Clubs: Newcastle-Upon-Tyne Experiments, (Newcastle, 1900), p. 8.

249. J. Greenwood, The Prisoner in the Dock, (1902) pp. 217-18.

250. J. Hannay, evidence to the R.C. Liquor Licensing Laws, Vol. 1, P.P. 1897 xxxiv, Q:3743. For clubs in the Soho and Its environs, see A. Sherwell, Life in West London, (1897), pp. 138-40. On the general phenomenon and problem of working class gambling see, J. Ashton, A History of Gambling in England, (1898), pp. 149-51; R. McKibbin, "Working Class Gambling in Britain, 1880-1939," Past and Present, No. 82, February 1979.

251. MSS Letter, Solly Collection, Vol 16, Section 13(b), Item 1.

ities of liquor. "(252) There was no doubt that the late nineteenth century were boom years for the brewing trade, their profits increased and they expanded their production. (253) Although how much of this was dependant on clubs is not possible to estimate. Brewers were certainly generous in making financial advances to some London Clubs to pay for expansion of facilities; Stansfield and Co., in particular had lent money to many of the London radical clubs, which placed them in great difficulties in the early twentieth century when re-payment fell due. Many could not meet their liabilities, and a number of the most famous names in metropolitan club-land came to an untimely end, including the United Radical and the Leyton Progressive. (254). Of brewers directly running bogus clubs there is less record. Burnett, Chief Constable of Wolverhampton, told the Royal Commission on Liquor Licensing that the bogus clubs in his district were all set on foot by brewers. Few court cases seem to confirm this. One rare example of a brewery-run bogus club was the Mansfield Club, During a trial for illegal selling the prosecution showed that the club, which had over 600 members, was really controlled by the directors of the local brewery. (255) Given that bogus clubs were illegal it is not surprising that brewers would do all they could to conceal their involvement with them. The number of clubs directly owned or controlled by brewers was probably small. At the same

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252. Temperance Record, 5 December 1895; Licensing World, 7 May and 12 May 1898.
253. D. Knox, "The Development of the Tied House System in London," Oxford Economic Papers, New Series, 10(1), 1958)
254. CIJ, 21 May 1892; July 1901; October 1901; April 1904.
255. Sunday Closing Reporter, No. 89 June 1909.

time many brewers probably knew that the clubs they were supplying were of dubious legality, and that without their supply of beer the club would cease. <sup>(256)</sup>

Because the Inland Revenues conditions did not give any direction on the suitability of premises for the holding of a club, some of the bogus clubs which came to notice were rather small and primitive undertakings. During the raids on Manchester betting clubs Caminda discovered that the "favourite betting place for the wives of the working men" in one district was held in a room over a stable. <sup>(257)</sup> Another club, on the outskirts of Bradford, met in a small cottage. Nearly all the population belonged to the club, including village children, and it was found that on a Sunday the members disposed of "something like 40 dozen of bottled ale and stout." <sup>(258)</sup> The Wesleyan Methodist Council of Huddersfield described the bogus clubs in the environs of the town thus:

the premises in which these combinations pursue their calling are frequently of the most objectionable character. In some instances an old and dilapidated cottage is utilised, which is wanted in all sanitary requirements, and which, although unfit for the habitation of a family, becomes the daily and nightly resort of scores of people. In other cases the members are satisfied with a wooden shed erected for the purpose, and even a disused cow-house, and in another an abandoned pig-sty have been utilised for the enjoyment of this so called 'club life.' <sup>(259)</sup>

Yet Algernon Bourke, proprietor of Whites showed a patriotic disdain for the intricacies of the licensing laws when called to give evidence

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256. Temperance Chronicle, 11 Aug. 1899. On the shadowy role of the brewer in the club see the exchange between Dent and Bucknall, S.C. Clubs Registration Bill, P. P. 1893-94 x; Qs: 3021-45. By the early 1890's most Union clubs in London were supplied with beer by Bass & Co., (Club World, 20 April 1895.) See also T. Crosland, The Beautiful Teetotaller, (1907). Chapter 10.

257. J. Caminda, op. cit., Vol. I p. 453.

258. J. Thornton, R.C. Liquor Licensing. Vol. I, P. P. 1897, xxxiv, Q:2549.

259. Cited by Grice-Hutchins on in Parliamentary Debates, 4th Series, Vol. 10, 1893, Col. 786.

before the Royal Commission of Liquor Licensing. He was not aware that Whites was breaking the law; the club had not been visited by the police, nor did he expect them to. Clubs for the leisure class clearly seemed to enjoy a privilege under the law denied to the clubs of the toiling class.

Another feature of many sham clubs was that they had no formal election procedures for membership. All that was required to join the Manningham Cycling Club, for example, was to walk to the door and say "I am a cyclist" whereupon membership would be granted. (260) Amongst the respectable movement such places were christened "doorstep clubs" because a person could simply walk in and become a member. This practice was contrary to the policy of the Union and all other club organisations which constantly reiterated the necessity for keeping to formal admission procedures; members should only be elected at a meeting of the committee after at least one day had elapsed after the candidate had been proposed. Any affiliate which the Union discovered allowing "doorstep" admission was immediately expelled.

Clubs of dubious legality and morality were dubbed with colourful nicknames which denoted what respectable opinion thought of them. The Secretary of the Ancient Order of Foresters in Oldham informed the Select Committee on Clubs Registration that his members called the local Celtic Club the "Kill One A Week Club" because the liquors sold there were so outrageously bad that they killed one a week. (261) The Albion Club, Preston, where it was said a drunken member had died after falling down the stairs while leaving the club, was known in the town as the "Sots Opera Club." (262)

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260. J. Thornton, evidence to S. C. Clubs Registration Bill. P. P. 1883-94 x Q:2561.

261. A. Summersgill, S. C. Clubs Registration, p. 125.

262. Preston Herald, 20 May 1885.

Examples such as these were denounced by policemen, publican, teetotaler, parson, and philanthropist. They were the burden which the respectable club movement had to carry. They were not aimed at elevating the working class, on the contrary they established to promote drunkenness and debauch. Sham clubs, bemoaned the authorities, were a natural rendezvous for women of low character and a place for the local swell mob to assemble and conspire safe from the prying eyes of the police. Drink was their object and drink alone kept them going. But it was difficult to distinguish easily between the bona-fide club and its mock counterpart simply by reference to externals such as late hours of opening or Sunday drinking. All clubs were entitled to set their own hours of opening and closing and to keep open all day on the Sabbath if their members wished it. To many critics of the drink selling club such behaviour merited the odium with which working men's clubs were held by respectable opinion. This, however, was not the issue. A club could open late and keep the Sabbath "wet" without forfeiting its right to be considered, at law, a bona-fide club. For the Union many of the attacks on the club movement were wide of the mark because they did not keep in mind the legal distinction between the bona-fide club and a proprietary one. Often what was singled out for abuse was in keeping with legal requirements. This point was at least recognised by government spokesmen when being pressed by backbenchers and opposition for legislation against the club. Sir William Harcourt told one critic:

there are a great number of working men's clubs where working men can have refreshments without a license, and those are places which I do not think it would be desirable to interfere with; but as to there being sham clubs for the more purpose of improper drinking - I know that some people think that drinking anywhere except a public house is improper - I do not believe that such places exist to any great extent. (263)

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263. Parliamentary Debates, 3rd Series, Vol. 262 1881, Col. 1950  
 Added emphasis. See also the similar response of Ritchie, Ibid,  
 Vol. 324, 1888 Col. 35.

A teetotaler might dislike a club being kept open on Sunday or a publican a club open when he was obliged to close but provided that the profits on excisables were held in corporate ownership no law had been broken. <sup>(264)</sup> A clergyman might allege that a club in Staffordshire was a bogus club because it did not admit publicans, parsons, or policemen to membership. However, that in itself was not sufficient cause to suggest that the club was a sham one. <sup>(265)</sup>

The use of the bogus club as a device to call into question the respectability and worth of the whole working men's club movement compelled the Union to take an aggressive stance against opponents of the drinking den. No one more eagerly desired the extirpation of the bogus club especially as there was the danger of the practices of the sham club "contaminating" the respectable one. It also created prejudice against the ideal of clubs. <sup>(266)</sup> But the Union did not want the bogus club put down in a way which would entail the infringement of the liberties of the bona-fide movement. Moreover, the outbursts of the licensed trade though ostensibly directed against sham clubs were taken to be a cover for a strategy intended to place all clubs under more rigorous regulation and control. The Union saw elements of duplicity in many of the attacks upon illegal clubs. These clubs were being used as a pretext in order to convince public opinion that clubs in general required new laws to govern their establishment and organisation. Hence the attitude of the Union to legislation was ultra-cautious, based upon the suspicion that any proposal brought forward which did not bear its imprimatur would be unlikely to benefit the mass of the movement. The Union was correct to adopt such an equivocal stance towards the rule of law. The example of Whites was repeatedly alluded to to show that concern about the bogus club did not extend to "clubs of the idlers." When drunkenness was being

264. See, for example, the attack on Sunday opening in London City Mission Magazine, Vol.58(677), April 1893.

265. Temperance Chronicle, 28 December 1900.

266. Toynbee Hall, Annual Report, No.5, (1889), p.16; F.Foster, "Clubs and Club Life," Bermondsey Settlement, Monthly Record, Vol.2(1), January 1896.

discussed it was the club of the working man which was held to be at the root of the problem, although to be fair there were rare instances when clubs patronised by a more select clientele were charged with promoting excessive toping. (267)

If the law which held the proprietary club to be an unlicensed public house lacked clarity before 1893, the decision in the case of Bowyer V. Percy Supper Club made it clear that running a proprietary club was a risky business. Prior to this case there were two other judgements which confirmed the Inland Revenue's ruling. The first was the Times Club case which despite the invalid distinction it drew between the bona-fide club and a "colourable" one upheld the illegality of the proprietary venture if it sold intoxicants. (268) This decision was also confirmed by the case of Newall V. Hemingway where a purported members' club was shown to be a proprietary undertaking and thus illegal. (269) It was the Percy Club case which became the established precedent. The appellant was a visitor to a proprietary club, he was not a member. He asked for a glass of spirits and was immediately elected an Honorary member so that he could be served. The club had no license for selling excisables. The court ruled that the owners could be convicted for selling without a license.

On the question of the illegality of off-sales, however, the Inland Revenue was proved to be incorrect. In the original conditions, consumption was to take place in the club or else the licensing laws were infringed. This was not the case at the elite clubs where members were entitled to purchase liquor for consumption at home. Legal decisions were

267. For example, Mr. Handsley, a Burnley J.P. laid the responsibility for the increase in inebriety in the town at the door of local political clubs. "It is known in Burnley," he told a meeting of licensed victuallers, "that there are those who hold honoured places in congregations at morning prayer in right of their positions as churchwardens, who not infrequently get half-fuddled before reaching home, thanks to the political club," Preston Herald, 15 January 1881.

268. Licensed Victuallers Gazette, 3 April 1875.

269. For the case see, C. Rothera, A Practical Guide to the Licensing Act, 1902, (1903), p.73; Cox's Criminal Cases, Vol.16, (1890), pp.604-06.



to show that this facility extended to the working men's club as well. The first case to try this ruling was that of the Liberal Club, Primrose Hill, Huddersfield, which was summonsed in March 1875 for selling without a license. The wife of a member, a butcher, visited the club and obtained a jug of ale which she distributed to the men working in the slaughterhouse. Because she was the wife of a bona-fide member it was ruled that no sale had taken place. The case was dismissed. <sup>(269)</sup> A similar judgement was given in the trial of the Whitworth Club, Rochdale. These cases compelled Candelet, now Parliamentary Agent of the Defence League, to write to the Inland Revenue setting out the fears of the licensed trade regarding the continuance of this practice. He implored the Commissioners to declare off sales illegal; failure to do so would result in untold damage to his trade for managers of the clubs would feel themselves justified "in selling half barrels of beer and gallons of whisky, brandy and gin [sic]" to their members. <sup>(270)</sup> No action was taken. The issue was finally decided by the case of Graff V Evans also referred to as the Grosvenor Club Case. The club in <sup>Buckingham</sup> Palace Road, one of the most comfortable in London, was established through the munificence of the Duke of Westminster. It had over 1,000 members, including some licensed victuallers. It was licensed traders who were to be the cause of the club appearing before the court. George Evans, chairman of the Licensed Victuallers Society of Westminster and Pimlico took out a summons against the club for having served another licensed victualler, one Foster, a member of the club, with a bottle of whiskey and a bottle of beer which were then taken off the premises. The question at issue was had a sale taken place? Mr. Poland appeared for the local Society and Mr. Lewis defended. The judgement originally went against the club, although the magistrate reached this conclusion only after much hesitation as the prac-

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269. Licensed Victuallers Gazette, 3 April, 1875.

270. Brewers Guardian 23 November 1880; Licensed Victuallers Gazette, 4 December 1880. See also the unsuccessful prosecution of the Victoria Club, Dukinfield, Social Notes and Club News, 15 October 1881.

tice had operated for some years without interference for the Excise. As the trial was to test the law he imposed a nominal fine of 20/- (271) The clubs, however, raised money to appeal the decision which, when heard reversed the former judgement. It was now ruled that as Foster was a fully paid up member of a bona-fide club no sale within the meaning of that term in the Licensing Act had taken place. (272) The clubs right to carry on off-sales to paid up members had been vindicated. The immediate response of the licensed trade to this turnaround was to seek the advice of counsel. They thought the decision "very un-English" which could not "in any way be justified." (273) The Union, on the other hand, was content that their position had been upheld in the courts. (274) Beyond the technical question of legality, however, the Union was more ambivalent. It recognised that the privilege of off-sales was open to great abuse. Members sending agents bearing notes to the club asking for liquor would not help the image of the club movement. It was also a system easily open to manipulation by clever policemen. The Union would have been happier had the clubs decided that having won the legal principle they would outlaw the practice, and in campaigns against legislation the officials of the Union never took a strong position in defence of this off-sales right.

These judgements made the task of bringing the bogus club to book easier. There was now a clear statement of the rights of the bona-fide club and an equally authoritative ruling on the illegality of the bogus club. From the early 80's the police and excise were active in raiding the

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271. Social Notes, 2(46), 17 June 1881.

272. Social Notes and Club News, 16 July and 13 August 1881; Grosvenor Club Case, (1882); All England Law Reports, 8 Q.B.D. 373; Twenty-Fifth Report of the Commissioners of Inland Revenue, P.P. 1882. xxi, pp. 121-22.

273. Licensed Victuallers Guardian 11 March 1882, Licensed Victuallers Gazette, 4th March 1882,

274. House and Home 10 March 1882.

drinking dens. On occasions they entrapped a respectable club which had been lax in administering admission procedures, a moment of unguardedness for which clubs paid heavily. Delegates from the London Clubs met at the United Radical Club in August 1885 to discuss the Union's position on prosecutions. Some delegate called upon the Union to undertake the defence any affiliated club which was prosecuted and to form a guarantee fund to defray any expenses incurred. This resolution was passed. <sup>(275)</sup> The subject was debated at the next council meeting when the executive brought forward a similar motion for consideration. The meeting passed two motions. One committed the union to defend all affiliated clubs unfairly prosecuted. Members were of the opinion that in such cases a "great moral weight would result from the defence being undertaken by the Union." The second asked the union to examine and to draw up a scheme to meet the costs that any defence of the clubs might bring. <sup>(276)</sup> The real concern of the Union was to stop these prosecutions of respectable clubs brought about by police or excise men gaining access to the club in order to commit an offence. It did not undertake the defence of bogus clubs, nor did it pledge itself to defend those clubs which upon investigation by the Union were shown to be habitually cavalier in the administration of the rules governing excisables. In October 1881 the Union told its affiliates that it would no longer admit to membership any club which did not submit a printed copy of its rules to the Union which if it had excisables had also to contain a set of regulations governing their use. <sup>(277)</sup> The Union saw its task in addition to defending clubs from vexatious attacks as ensuring the proper observance of the guidelines on the use of intoxicants. In too many clubs, Pratt complained, rules were too lax, especially those relating to the admission of visitors. <sup>(278)</sup> It was not just the failure to obey the rules might result in

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275. CIJ, 21 and 28 August 1885.

276. Ibid, 11 September 1885.

277. Social Notes and Club News, 29 October 1881.

278. CIJ, 18 December 1885.

the costly business of prosecution. Clubs which appeared in court inevitably contributed to criticism of the whole movement. To allege continuously that it was police trickery which had brought the club into the dock would do the movement little good in the long run. Clubs had to be strict. It was not just their reputation that was at stake but the legal integrity of the movement which would suffer if stewards or other officials took little notice of who was coming through the door.

Prosecutions, notwithstanding the Union's repeated insistence on keeping within the law, continued to plague the respectable movement. It was this background of illegality which kept the pressure on the Union to concede legislation to curb the bogus club. Every year brought a fresh crop of clubs before the magistrates. Between 1886-1896 155 clubs were closed through action by the Excise or the police, 87 of them in London. (279) By the mid 90's the bogus club was on the defensive. Rapid action by the police after the Percy Supper Club decision seemed to mark the end of the sham club's heyday. Evidence taken before the Royal Commission on the Liquor Licensing Laws suggested that the problem was being contained. While sham clubs were still proving a nuisance in places such as London, Liverpool and Oldham, they had been extinguished in cities such as Bristol, Birmingham and Newcastle. (280) Clubs were no longer useful facades behind which to hide all manner of wrong doings; the police were too interested in them.

The law relating to clubs was a complex matter. Few understood it completely, although Hall became an expert in the by-ways of clublaw in order to defend the clubs from various predatory interests. The law, however, has to be understood in order to make sense of the campaign to get the clubs registered or licensed which gained much support from

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279. "Return of Clubs", R. C. Liquor Licensing Laws, P. P. 1898. xxxviii, p. iv. The list is reproduced in Appendix D below.

280. See. R. C. Liquor Licensing Laws, Vol. I P. P. 1897 xxxiv, evidence of Barradale (Birmingham) Q5549; Roberts (Newcastle) Q7642; Gore (Bristol) Q9366.

the late 70's. The law, along with prosecutions, and the often jaundiced views of policemen about clubs, provided the essential background for the workings of a hybrid and exotic opposition to the working man's club composed of teetotaler, licensed trader and policeman, an altogether unlikely 'triple alliance'.

Following the prosecution of clubs in the early 70's the drink interest demanded legislation to place the clubs under some restraint. Wilmer of the Cannon Brewery, Newport Pagnell wrote to the Inland Revenue asking for their advice. He wanted some defence for those "who already have to pay highly for their privileges." The reply failed to satisfy as the Board made it clear that they would not interfere with any properly constituted club. Wilmer called upon the various defence and protection associations to organise a scheme to obtain some form of protection. (281)

In 1880 the licensed victuallers sent a deputation to the Prime Minister to demand legislation. He promised to hand over the matter to the Chancellor of the Exchequer for consideration. He expressed his sympathy with the cause of the trade seeing clubs as a form of unfair competition and suggested that a tax might be imposed on them. (182) Calling for legislation to check the clubs, Mr. Mason, M. P. pledged his unwavering and enthusiastic support for any measure which might be brought forward. He doubted if any "stalwart, sturdy, intelligent race of politicians" would evolve from membership of political clubs. (283) Licensed Victuallers were warned not to raise their hopes of obtaining a speedy redress as little could be done to control the clubs "until the glamour of distinguished patronage fades." (284) This pessimism was confirmed when the Inland Revenue Board again informed a deputation, this

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281. Brewers Journal, 15 April 1875.

282. Licensed Victuallers Gazette, 17 July 1880.

283. Temperance Record, 1 December 1881.

284. Licensed Victuallers Guardian, 8 May 1880.

time of the Licenced Victuallers' Parliamentary Committee, that no action was being contemplated to bring forward new rules for the clubs. (285)

The licensed Victuallers found little support for their case at the Inland Revenue. The Board had had an exchange of correspondence with the Union in 1878-79 when they were troubled by some of the details about the clubs brought to light in the various prosecutions and by Solly's allegations. Young, Secretary of the Board wrote to Pratt informing him of the Board's fears that if admission to the club was made too easy and visitors admitted after hours simply to obtain drink then the club/pub distinction would be destroyed. He also told Pratt that the Board was open to much criticism from the drink interest and if abuses were not corrected they would rebound badly on an otherwise excellent and worthy movement. Pratt expressed his readiness to consider any measures to check possible abuses in the clubs. The Council did not want to see its principles jeopardised which is why they looked upon affiliation as so crucial as a result the Union guaranteed the bonafides of the club. All clubs were carefully investigated before affiliation was agreed. He was not willing to concede, however, to any suggestion that drink, for example on Sundays, should be subject to any new restriction. This would produce much dissatisfaction in the clubs, besides which he was personally opposed to such rules. Young pressed no further; the correspondence was closed with him assuring Pratt that the Board desired no further restrictions and that it confident that the Union would not countenance any abuse connected with the supply of excisables in its affiliates. (286)

To some extent the drink issue was overshadowed by the revolt against patronage in the early 80's. Pratt, like many other club men, discounted the opposition of the licensed trade as being "the selfish cries of a few prosperous monopolists." while ignoring altogether the growing militancy

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285. Licensed Victuallers Guardian, 17 March 1883.

286. Standard, 8 January 1879; Correspondence between the Union and the Union and the Commissioners of Inland Revenue, (1878).

of the temperance movement. (286) Gaston shared Pratt's hostility to Bung and his friends. He told fellow members that they had no need:

to be sorry at the downfall of publicans... they have never been friends of the people; they have ever linked themselves in politics with the Tory party, who have never shown much sympathy with the working classes, nor cared for their educational advancement. (287)

It was recognised, albeit grudgingly, that there was a problem of spurious clubs. However, the Union did not see why this entailed new legislation to control the growth of the respectable movement. To strengthen the good character of the movement the Union made registration under the 1875 Friendly Societies Act obligatory for all affiliates, except for those not able to register or who raised money by shares. (288) There were even hints that some of the leadership might be willing to co-operate with the licensed trade to obtain legislation which would compel all clubs to register, but they would go no further. (289) The Union also made discreet inquiries regarding the spread of bogus clubs in the northern counties, suggesting to its constituents that if they had information on these clubs they ought to pass it on to the Excise. (290) Few clubs favoured this suggestion as they believed it would bring upon them the odium of common informers.

The Manchester Association voted to issue a badge to all clubs in the Union so that "the public might rely on any club with this badge affixed to it

286. CIU, Annual Report, No. 23, (1885), p. 6.

287. CIJ, 12 June 1885, A lecturer popular in the clubs remarked that men who read the Licensed Victuallers' Gazette, and other organs of the "gin literature," and who supported the "unspeakable and abominable things" that these papers propagated, were the same men "who object to the School Board Rate," Aldgate Pump, Studies of the Bar; Or, Beer, Bungs and Bruisers, (1884).

288. CIU, Annual Report, No. 23 (1885), p. 8.

289. CIJ, 18 July 1884. Gaston Dissented vigorously from this idea, see Ibid, 15 August 1884.

290. CIJ, 3 August, 1883 & 10 October 1884.

being thoroughly respectable." (291) In London the Union put an end to the practice of 'mutual affiliation' between Union and non-Union clubs. This was on the advice of Minet who argued that this practice went beyond the 1875 ruling on associate members. Some delegates dissented from this. Hart (Carlyle Club) stated that the practice was common among clubs of the upper and middle classes and should be allowed at the working man's club. Judge, shrewd as ever, agreed with the spirit of Minet's motion. He doubted that the practice was illegal but concurred that the Union had the right to expel any members who retained the practice, which he believed was open to considerable abuse. The Union's position was supported. The vote was carried with only one vote cast against. (292)

Clearly, although not alarmed by the forces allying against it the Union was taking steps to tighten up its internal discipline. If there was to be a fight, and all the signs were that this was to be the case, then the Union could only defend the clubs' liberties if its troops were ordered and disciplined. Internal unity, was the first priority especially as old friends were beginning to leave the movement. Lord Lyttelton, for example, who had once shared his father's opinion that drink should be allowed in the clubs had reversed his position. In the light of the prosecutions of some clubs and the abuses which they had revealed he was now less sympathetic. (293)

Moreover, with the success of the revolt the hand of patronage was removed from the Union. This gave the Union great opportunities for extending its work. At the same time it meant that the Union was denuded of various spokesmen who might have been expected to speak out for the clubs if attacked. This lack of influential friends did not necessarily entail that the Union's position had grown weaker. There were a number

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291. CIJ, 21 November 1884.

292. Ibid, 12 December 1884.

293. Temperance Record, 25 September 1884.



of factors which ensured that the threat of legislation, though real, would take some time to translate into practice. Most importantly, both political parties were ambiguous in their attitude to club laws. An effective club law would be difficult to frame, a point often stressed by the Union. The government of the day, whatever its political complexion tended to deprecate the threat of the bogus club. They had no wish to antagonise unnecessarily the club movement. The teetotalers looked to the Liberals for a clear commitment to legislate against the clubs. Licensed traders sought a similar undertaking from the Conservatives. Neither, however, received more than sympathy from the leadership of the respective political parties. The hierarchy of both parties were thought to be lukewarm regarding the control of the clubs because they were dependent on these organisations to carry out the routine political work such as registration which accompanied the advent of mass democracy. The Union was dominated by clubs of radical and liberal persuasion, while clubs loyal to the Tory cause rapidly increased their numbers from the early 1880's.<sup>(294)</sup> Tory working men seemed no less ardent in the pursuit of clubbability than their Liberal counterparts.<sup>(295)</sup> By April 1895 the Association of Conservative Clubs numbered some 350 clubs with a total membership in excess of 90,000.<sup>(296)</sup> Between 1896-1904 while the Union increased its numbers by 396 the increase in Conservative clubs was 500.<sup>(297)</sup> Conservative clubs and their Liberal or Radical rivals, whatever their professed political differences were agreed that legislation had to be resisted. Their view had to be taken seriously and their fears assuaged for in some industrial constituencies observers thought that the club vote could be decisive in an election.<sup>(298)</sup>

294. P. Smith, op.cit., pp.116-18.

295. The Craftsman, 2(24), April 1883.

296. Association of Conservative Clubs, Monthly Circular, No.1 April 1895; P. Joyce, Thesis, op.cit., pp.268-72.

297. CIJ, May 1904.

298. E. Pratt, The Policy of the Licensing Justices, (1909), pp.50-51; Liberty Review, 15 June 1895.

If a bill was introduced to control the clubs it was likely to come from a Private Member partly because the parliamentary table was taken up with more pressing matters such as the government of Ireland or foreign affairs and partly because successive party leaders seemed unconvinced of the need for further temperance legislation and club legislation in particular. Salisbury, for example, saw little merit in further instalments of temperance by law which he considered paternalist in character and often class biased in practice. Harcourt was alone in the cabinet of 1892-95 in calling for the Liberal Party to do more for the temperance cause which he thought was being unjustly neglected by the leadership.<sup>(299)</sup> These forces would have to be overcome if any campaign for legislation was to attain a satisfactory conclusion. Inertia was to the advantage of the Union.

As evidence of the moderation with which club members used excisable club papers regularly cited examples of the low expenditure per head on refreshments common at the clubs. The 700 members of the Eccleshall Club, to give but one illustration of innumerable examples, spent £248. 1. 10½d per year on refreshments or just over 1½d per member per week.<sup>(300)</sup> In 1884 a figure of 1d per day on excisables was given for members of the London clubs, excluding expenditure by guests and visitors.<sup>(301)</sup> What did these figures mean? The opponents of the club movement adopted a Disraelian posture towards these statistics mainly because their case against the clubs did not stand or fall on money spent at the club. For the licensed victualler the clubs were a special of un-

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299. For Salisbury, see Parl. Debates, Series III, Vol. 82, 1900 Col. 1207; Liberty Review, 1 June 1895; P. Marsh, The Discipline of Popular Government, (Hassocks, 1978), p. 128; P. Smith, op. cit., pp. 145-48; For Harcourt see, D. Hamer, Liberal Politics in the Age of Gladstone and Rosebery, (Oxford, 1972), pp. 98, 205, and M. Barker, Gladstone and Radicalism, (Hassocks, 1975), pp. 209-10, 252.

300. Calculated from balance sheet in Workman's Magazine 6 June 1873.

301. Echo, 7 Feb. 1884; Figures for the 1,700 members of the Boro' of Hackney Club in May 1885 give an average expenditure at the bar of 1¾d per member per day, of which ½d per day was spent on mineral waters and tobacco, Republican, 11(2) May 1885.

fair competition, showing him that the clubs did not spend very much did not salve his ire. For the teetotaler, unless he or she held moderation to be advance over excess, any expenditure on alcohol was considered wasteful, the 2d or 3d per week spent on drink was money which could better have been used to provide for old-age or sickness through saving in a Penny Bank. (302) The statistics themselves were of dubious validity, and it would be dangerous to infer much from them. Firstly they were averages, the amount spent by the individual is impossible to estimate. They also failed to distinguish between expenditure on refreshments and the amount spent on excisables. An example of the difficulty in interpreting the statistics is given by the figures for clubs in the Rochdale district. There clubs spent  $3\frac{1}{2}$ d per head on refreshments, but if the figure was based on those who actually bought drink then the figure increased to  $10\frac{1}{2}$ d per week. (303) Wilson thought the expenditure of drinkers to be considerably higher than the averages quoted. He was of the opinion that in any club there were a number of club members "who exceed the bounds of customary moderation." (304) The figures were also complicated by the expenditure of guests and associate visitors which increased the total spent on refreshments, but whose numbers could not be taken into account when compiling the averages. Analysis of the refreshment receipts in 1891 shows wide variation in average expenditures, ranging from  $\frac{1}{2}$ d per week per member at the Bisham Club, to  $7\frac{1}{2}$ d at the Bermondsey Gladstone and the  $23\frac{1}{2}$ d at Walthamstow Social. (305) To ensure moderation in the clubs in its organisation the Manchester Association forbade the affiliation of any club whose expenditure on excisables exceeded  $1\frac{1}{2}$ d per week per member and any existing affiliate whose balance sheets showed this figure to be exceeded was investigated. (306)

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302. D. Brown, "The Pig or the Sty: Drink and Poverty in Late Victorian England," International Review of Social History, Vol. 18(3),<sup>1972</sup> pp. 387-89.

303. WMCJ, 20 January 1877.

304. G. Wilson, Alcohol and the Nation, (1940), p. 144.

305. CIU, Annual Report, No. 29, (1891), Appendix I, See Appendix D, below.

306. CIJ, November 1901.

Refreshments, which included biscuits as well as beer, gave clubs a good income. Over £240,000 was taken across club counters in 1894. (307) In the mid-twentieth century the proportion of the national drink bill spent in clubs did not exceed 7% and this figure was probably much smaller in the early years of the movement. (308) Moreover, too much attention on the supply of beer obscures the fact that soft drinks, as they became more palatable, proved very popular in the club bars. Idris lemonade being an especial favourite with London clubmen. (309) Per capita expenditure on drink was falling from the mid-70's and the club statistics, although not proving the Union's contention that clubmen were unusually abstemious, were in keeping with other figures of working class expenditure on intoxicants. (310)

Statistics were no talisman with which to fend off the growing demands for the law to control the clubs. The temperance movement was convinced by the growth of shebeens in Wales which followed the passing of Sunday Closing Act in 1881 that unless clubs were regulated its plans to bring the nation to greater sobriety would be undermined by the use of clubs. Reporting to the magistrates in September 1888 the Chief Constable of Cardiff told them that in the previous year 36 shebeens had been proceeded against of which 31 were convicted. (311) Despite speedy

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307. Returns given in Table 27, Annual Abstract of Labour Statistics, P.P. 1895 xcii. The full table is given in Appendix D, below.
308. G. Wilson, op.cit., p.238. Wilson's figures also include expenditure in athletics clubs, British Legion Halls, & Young Farmers Clubs.
309. Mr. Idris was a well-known and popular figure in London Club Land. In the late 80's the Union organised visits to his model factory as part of their Saturday afternoon activities for clubmen.
310. A Shadwell, "The Decline of Drunkenness," National Review, Vol. 26, December 1895, p. 567; L. Levi, Wages & Earnings of the Working Classes, (1885 ed), p. 32; Returns of Expenditure by Working Men, P.P. 1889 lxxxiv, Section 11; A. Dingle, "Drink & Working Class Living Standards," in D. Oddy & D. Miller (Eds), The Making of the Modern British Diet, (1976); There is also a useful discussion of expenditure in Peppin, op.cit., p. 46 and Hall's evidence to the R.C. Liquor Licensing Laws, Qs. 16259; 16264-267.
311. Sunday Closing Reporter, No. 43, 1 Feb., 1889. For the role of the Shebeen see J. Barrett, "Why Paddy Drank; The Social Importance of Whiskey in Pre-Famine Ireland," Journal of Popular Culture, Vol. 11(1), 1977, pp. 161-62.

action by the police many temperance writers were convinced the Act would continue to be flouted while clubs were allowed free rein (312) Mr. Oliphant, General Secretary of the Beer and Wine Trade National Defence League told a conference on temperance legislation that Sunday Closing Laws had led to the substitution of the wretched club for the respectable pub. (313) In 1883 the retail trade had suggested an alliance to put down the clubs:

Hateful as the system maybe we call upon all honourable teetotalers and all really temperate people to unite with the licensed victuallers in their efforts to exterminate these social pest-houses. (314)

In order not to compromise deeply held principles the alliance should be restricted to a legislative campaign. Following the experience of Sunday Closing, a number of teetotalers were willing to accede to this. (315)

The government was cautious over legislation, Gladstone perhaps remembering the pressure exercised by the elite clubs which had forced him to abandon his proposal to place a tax on excisables in clubs in 1863. (316) Its hesitancy did not convince those interests pledged to put the clubs down. In 1885 Stalybridge Town Council sent a memorial to the Home Secretary calling upon him to introduce compulsory registration for all clubs in respect of police entry and hours of closing to put the clubs on an equal footing with the licensed victuallers. On Councillor Bradley, a former

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312. K. Mitchell, The Drink Question (1890), p. 62; H. Stephen "Sunday Closing in Operation," Fortnightly Review, Vol. 60, Aug, 1896; Report of a Commission on the Operation of Sunday Closing (Wales) Act, 1881, P. P. 1890 xv; Rev. D. Mackintosh, Glasgow Municipal Commission on Housing of the Poor, (Glasgow, 1903-04), p. 441; Sunday Closing Reporter, No. 34, 12 June 1885; W. Lambert, "The Welsh Sunday Closing Act, 1881," Welsh History Review, Vol. 6(2), 1972, pp. 176-79; A Shadwell, "The Forces of Temperance," National Review, Vol. 27, April 1896, p. 272.

313. Conference on Temperance Legislation, (1886), p. 47. See also, Licensed Victuallers' Yearbook, (1898), pp. 65-66; Liberty Review, 26 January and 4 May 1895.

314. Licensed Victuallers' Guardian, 14 April 1883.

315. Sunday Closing Reporter, No. 36, 5 March 1886.

316. See Parliamentary Debates, SIII, 1863 Vol. 170. 8/5/63 Cols 1395/96.

publican, was the moving force behind the memorial. <sup>(317)</sup> The Union was hostile to these suggestions. It did not object to some form of registration but it would not consent to any other form of control, certainly not one which placed clubs in the jurisdiction of the licensing magistrates, a body "by no means unprejudiced" towards the clubs. On a positive note the Union did recognise that the campaign against the clubs might bind them closer together and make the Union "a living reality." <sup>(318)</sup> If the Union could successfully defend its clubs and in the process be taken to be the authoritative voice of club opinion, then the Union might well emerge from the struggle stronger and more popular than before. This was a machiavellian strategy which required cool diplomacy to carry through. But if it succeeded, much credit would accrue to the Union and some of those divisions and tensions in club land which had revealed themselves in the wake of the revolt might be healed.

The Union would need all its skills as some of the suggestions issuing from the licensed victuallers were positive in intent. At their conference in Manchester in October the provincial section of the trade had put forward the idea that clubs ought to be taxed at a rate of 5/- per member, that police be given the right of entry, and that clubs should be made to pay a licence twice or three times that of the nearest public-house. <sup>(319)</sup> A similar proposal was later taken up by the Bradford trade, with the exception of police entry because it was felt that this was "obnoxious." <sup>(320)</sup>

While the licensed victuallers were considering their tactics the first Bill to register working men's clubs alone had been introduced in the Commons by Holland, Bryce, Buxton and Stanley. It was dropped after its first reading on November 13th.

The London City Mission also added its voice to the rising chorus of protest against the clubs. London clubs were seen as centres of in-

317. CIJ, 12 June 1885.

318. Ibid, 19 June 1885.

319. CIJ, 30 October 1886.

320. J. Thornton, S.C. Clubs Registration Bill, p. p. 1893-94 x pp. 134-35.

fidelity, insobriety and immorality. It did not immediately align itself with the legislative alliance. Instead it trusted to "the more persistent and earnest preaching of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus" as the most effective means of ridding the metropolis of the club menace. (321) The Union continued to deprecate the importance of these attacks. It held them to be unreasonable, and it particularly singled out the pledge signers for special rebuke. Clubs were attacked, the Annual Report complained, because they had "not all at once transformed men from the love of lower gratification into a passion for temperance and learning. (322) But it could no longer trust that its defence of clubs would be given serious and impartial consideration.

The licensed trade was at the forefront of the attack. Meetings of the Liverpool, Bristol and Staffordshire societies as well as the Annual Meeting of the National Defence League passed unanimous resolutions demanding swift and retributive government action to put down the clubs, few of which were held to be bona-fide. (323) Lest any mean-minded person think that the trade was pursuing private vendetta against the clubs which it expected the state to underwrite, the Licensed Victuallers Guardian was at pains to stress that in this instance the interests of the trade happily coincided with "the interests of public morality... and of temperance itself." It drew attention to the mushrooming of clubs in the East End which were little more than "centres of a political propaganda which aims at sapping the very foundations of society." (324) Mr Lawler of the U. K. A. urged all teetotalers to leave their clubs if they sold intoxicants. (325)

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321. London City Mission Magazine, Vol. 50(583), June 1885.

322. CIU, Annual Report, No. 21, (1883), p. 21.

323. Licensed Victuallers Guardian, 15 January, 22 January, 5 March, 1887; Weekly Advertiser, 17 March 1888.

324. Licensed Victuallers Guardian 1 October 1881.

325. Alliance News, 7 January 1888; see also, Temperance Record, 28 April 1887; Church of England Temperance Chronicle, 11 August 1888.

Demands for legislation seemed to have come to fruition when in April, 1888 Caine, together with Reid, Kelly and Gentleman-Davis, introduced a Bill for the Registration and Regulation of Clubs. The Bill compelled all clubs to register with the Friendly Societies Registrar on payment of £5. When making application to register the rules of the club had to be produced to show that the club was a bona-fide corporate body of at least seven members.<sup>(326)</sup> The Bill, although it did not provide for police entry, was roundly condemned in the clubs. A conference of clubs and allied institutions was held at the Memorial Hall, Farringdon Street, to organise action against the Bill. Pratt, chairing the meeting spoke vigorously against the section of Caine and his associates. Clubs, he sternly warned the audience, "were not to be interfered with by outsiders." "The conjunction of persons who brought forward this Bill," he continued, "was rather remarkable for it was the first time in his experience they had publicans and teetotalers allied." Whatever esteem Pratt had lost in clubland by his critical remarks about Bloody Sunday was restored by his performance at this meeting which unanimously condemned the Bill.<sup>(327)</sup>

Agitation against the Bill was the first test of Legal and Parliamentary Committee which had been established in March.<sup>(328)</sup> Minet, valued friend of the movement and Chairman of the Committee, called a special delegate meeting at the Union Offices on 23rd June at which 45 delegates representing 33 London clubs were present. It was proposed that clubs be circularised with objections to the Bill and that a deputation be elected to make the clubs' anger known to the appropriate authorities. Minet rejected the suggestion of a petition as a waste of paper. He also told the meeting that the Committee had been in touch with the Liberty and Property Defence League who were sympathetic to the club cause.

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326. P. P. 1888 vi.

327. CIJ, 30 June 1888, Caine at a temperance conference called by the Union in 1886 had told delegates that he did not consider legislation against the clubs necessary.

328. Ibid, 24 March 1888.



The League support of the clubs was considered by the licensed trade to be more of a liberty than a defence of property as they were one of the largest groups affiliated to the League and now found the League defending the clubs.<sup>(329)</sup> The delegates were told that the financial requirements of the Bill would mean the end of many small clubs as well as causing financial difficulties to many others. They voted against the Bill as did the delegate meeting of the M. R. F. which thought the proposal "monstrous."<sup>(330)</sup> Before the campaign to defend the clubs could commence the Bill was dropped. A similar fate was encountered by Bills in 1889 and 1890.<sup>(331)</sup> Pressure of business prevented Randolph Churchill's Licensing Bill, which also contained provisions for the registration of clubs, from reaching a second reading. The Union was poised to oppose that as well.<sup>(332)</sup> First blood had gone to the clubs, although the parliamentary timetable must share the credit.

The legal battle was favouring the clubs, but that was only one part, albeit the most important part of the issue of drink. The regular procession of clubs before the court and the allegations of mal-practice being made against the movement were adversely affecting the standing of the Union and the good-name of the clubs in many working class communities. One group who had been paraded at meetings to show the high esteem in which the club movement was held were women, especially the wives and sweethearts of members. Like reformed drunkards at experience meetings, women were usually displayed at gatherings to establish a club to bear witness to how their menfolk had been made sober

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329. See Liberty and Property Defence League, Annual Reports: The relations between the League and the licensed trade are discussed in E. Bristow, "The Liberty and Property Defence League and Individualism," Historical Journal, Vol. 18(4), 1975 and N. Solden, "Laissez Faire as Dogma: The L. P. D. L., 1882-1914," in K. Brown (Ed), Essays in Anti-Labour History, (1974), pp. 213; 227-228.

330. CIJ, 30 June and 7 July 1888.

331. P. P. 1889 vii and 1890 viii.

332. CIU Annual Report, No. 28, (1890), pp. 12-13.

and their domestic life elevated by the men's membership of the club. Some were now brought forward to speak out against the clubs. One mother whose son was tried for assaulting the Secretary of the Bright Radical Club pleaded for the magistrates to show lenience towards the wayward youth for it was the club which had proved the ruin of her son:

It was kept open to all hours of the morning. Her son would not be in this position if it had not been for this horrid den which was known as the 'rat-trap'. They talk about public-houses but they are nothing compared to this club. It is one of the worst clubs ever opened and has been the utter ruin of my son. (333)

Women in the vicinity of the club were said to curse the day it had been opened. (334) According to the Rev. Spence, Vicar of All Saints, Haggerston, local women had christened the Boro' of Hackney Club, "The Boozers' Hole". (334) Another East End minister held a special meeting in the Church Hall for the wives of members of local clubs at which the women "bore the most painful testimony to the mischief of these places." (336) Clubs were alleged to take men away from their families, and wives were to be seen waiting on the steps of clubs at night waiting for their husbands to come home. (337) So hostile had the wives of Doncaster Club become that they laid seige to the Socialist Club one Friday night and:

after demolishing the windows, broke in and dragged their hibulous spouses, one by one, with the police looking on and laughing. (328)

These actions and comments fueled the recurrent debate on whether clubs promoted or undermined domestic life. the latter position being regularly alleged by clergymen. (329) Home may seem dull" lamented a 'members wife' to men "who are acquainted with the excitements and

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333. CIJ, 26 May 1888.

334. Star, 18 June 1888.

335. Evidence, S.C. Clubs Registration, p. 144.

336. Christian World, 16 February 1893.

337. Temperance Record, 18 Aug, 1892, Church of England Temp. Chronicle, 14 January 1888.

338. Temperance Chronicle, 12 July 1895.

pleasures of clubs, sad so a place where pleasures should be found is ignored to the general detriment of the family." Clubs, she suggested should be reserved solely for single men. (340) The most savage attack on the clubs from a woman was made in an editorial in the Woman's Signal. Club drinking, it maintained was far worse than that found in the public-house, for unlike the pub a man could drink until all hours in the club so the wife never knows when he would return. Moreover the wife could not enter a club to see what her spouse was up to:

she may only walk past the doors, and as they open to admit members she may catch a glimpse of the man who is supposed by law to be her breadwinner and companion and protector lean over the bar with his face close to the brindling barmaid, or check by jowl with the vile women who are admitted freely. (341)

By the end of the century women were said to be wholly opposed to clubs. (342) It is difficult to gauge how accurate this portrait of female opposition was. Hall defended the clubs, stating that the movement was dependent for its success and survival upon the goodwill of the wives and female companions of members. Had they opposed the movement it would have died away. (343) Many of these complaints were orchestrated by interested parties to emphasise the need for legislation. They were not the free expression of opinion. Towards the end of the century, there was a

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340. Club World, 31 August 1895, Knapp, in Ingrams op. cit., p. 24 argued that by turning its face against selling drink the club gained, "an indefinable difference of tone, and the popularity of the club with the 'missus. '"

341. Woman's Signal, 15 Oct, 1896. 19 Nov, 1896. The editor of the journal, Mrs. Fenwick Miller had also launched an attack on the clubs in the Illustrated London News in 1892. Clubs resented this as they put it down to spite on her part. Until then she had been a lecturer in the clubs on topics such as Hygiene and Women's Suffrage, but had cooled towards the club when her husband's candidature for Central Finsbury met with little support in the clubs. See CIJ, 30 April and 7 May 1892.

342. London Temperance Times, No. 81, July 1900.

343. Woman's Signal, 19 October 1896.

growth of interest in the schemes to bring women into the clubs. No doubt there were some women whose husbands repaired most evenings to the local shebeens. They had genuine cause to regret the coming of clubs. On the other hand, female opposition could be manipulated and exaggerated by the temperance movement in order to reinforce its claim that legislation was needed to curb such threats to the family.

More damning to the integrity of the movement were the charges levelled by spokesmen for radical and socialist organisations who believed that educational and political work was being neglected while activity around the bar flourished. Theirs' was the familiar charge that clubs had fallen under the control of the strolling potman. Whatever sectarian issues divided the progressive movement they tended to concur in their belief that beer had triumphed over all in the club. (344) A reporter who visited the Boro<sup>1</sup> of Hackney Club found the library and class room empty, while members crowded round the bar "drinking, swearing, and discussing the latest news relating to horse racing." (345) The increase in Liberal and Radical Clubs in Portsmouth was attributed not to an increased political awareness but to the desire to get a drink after hours. (346) Burns was not alone in deriding clubs as "mostly hypocritical pretexts for getting the same or worse liquor at a cheaper price when the pubs were shut." (347) Another journalist portrait of the clubs decried the:

'men who should be trying to find solutions to the problems of the day instead now find their chief duty in providing 'bitter' and 'Burton' in fixing the price of clay pipes, and framing regulations for the use of billiards and bagatelle players. (348)

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344. Radical, 14 May 1881; Labour Elector, 15 November 1888; Labour Leaders, 14 April 1894; Justice, 28 February 1885, 11 August 1888 and 2 July 1892; Democrat 17 July 1886; South London Chronicle, 5 November 1892; Workers Cry, 22 August & 5 September 1891.
345. Evening News and Post, 1 January 1893.
346. Christian Citizen, 4(1) May 1893.
347. J. Burns, Labour and Drink, (1904), p. 45.
348. South London Chronicle, 5 November 1892.

Greatest hostility to the drink selling club came from the Independent Labour Party (I. L. P.), the most militantly teetotal of all socialist sects. The Party was against the drink selling club in principle and campaigned to expel drink from those of its clubs in which it was available. In September 1898 the National Advisory Committee pressed for I. L. P. clubs to discontinue the sale of intoxicants. If this was not immediately possible then<sup>at</sup> the very least clubs should not sell liquors on a Sunday. Moreover, they should stay open only those hours found at the local pub.<sup>(349)</sup> Resolutions condemning the sale of intoxicants and the use of drink money to finance political work were carried by large majorities at the Annual Conferences of 1897 and 1898.<sup>(350)</sup> The campaign had a great measure of success for by the early twentieth century over 80% of I. L. P. clubs were teetotal.<sup>(351)</sup>

Pressure from the police, hostility and criticism from previously well-disposed individuals and groups could not be shrugged off as passing vexations which the movement had to bear. Some members shared the concern of outsiders that drink was gaining too much of a hold on the movement, that the aims for which clubs had been established were being lost sight of, and that the ordinary member of the club was being driven from the club by the droves of visitors who came to drink at the clubs when the public houses were closed.<sup>(352)</sup> Others, however, were not so defensive or willing to concede that such a change had taken place. Gaston, as usual, humorously rebutted the charge that

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349. I. L. P. News, October 1898, See also the sad experience of the Branch in North Lancashire which after the sudden death of its energetic secretary, Condon, in 1896 gradually dropped its political work, becoming a resort popular only with drinkers, N. Todd, "Labour in North Lancashire," Bulletin, North West Labour History Group, No. 2, 1976.
350. I. L. P. Fifth Annual Conference, (1897), p. 27; Sixth Annual Conference, (1898), p. 49.
351. I. L. P. News, July 1903; H. Oyston, Socialism and the Drink Evil (n.d. 1909?), pp. 25-6; K. Hardie, After Twenty-Five Years : All about the I. L. P. (1913), p. 5.
352. See, for example, CIJ, 4 April 1891; 4 February 1892.

clubs were losing their purpose. The time had passed; he wrote when a "few men were content to sit on wooden forms round a deal table and read a copy of the British Workman, with perhaps a bottle of giner beer."<sup>(353)</sup> Another clubman rightly observed that clubs that went in for:

water and politics generally came to a dismal end, and although the intentions of the founders may have been laudable to discuss the Home Rule Question or bimetallism over a bottle of giner beer is not sufficiently exhilarating to the average man, who prefers 'Her Golden Hair was Hanging Down Her Back' and a pint of 'Old Six'. (354)

The "normal man" was defined as one who after his fair day's work, for which he expected a fair day's pay, enjoyed a glass of beer with his mates and perhaps a game on the bagatelle table. He was certainly not of the British Workman type who was depicted "as sitting round a fire nursing one or two abnormally clean children, while the good wife is knitting, or counting the savings from the household expenses into a money box."<sup>(355)</sup> There was little sympathy for the publican, who had done nothing for the advancement of the working man but had taken his money and used that to give succour to his political enemies. Teetotalism was also despised, a movement composed of fanatics who would begin by taking away the working man's beer and then suppress his amusements altogether.<sup>(356)</sup> Clubs, were urged however, to make more provision for the comfort of their members. Men coming to the club would not stay if they found the rooms cold or the facilities poor. The public house, responding in part to the counter-attractionist challenge, was extending its comforts. To attract custom some publicans were offering 'cigar nights' on which they gave away free cigars, 'lucky 3d pots' in which they concealed 3d pieces to be found by the for-

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353. Echo, 23 February 1893.

354. Club World, 18 May 1895.

355. CIJ, 1 April 1893; See also Club World, 22 September 1894.

356. CIJ 18 March 1895; Club World, 13 July 1895.

tunate customer and in rural areas they were organising flower shows. (357)

Clubs had won all their battles up to 1890. It was questionable, however, whether they would continue to triumph. On the eve of the 1892 election, club men were warned that whoever won the election, one probable outcome would be legislation to control the clubs, a sensible judgement, especially as the temperance faction in the Liberal Party were daily becoming more vocal, demanding that their case be taken up by the leadership. (358) "These occasional [sic] demands for legislation," declared the CIU portentously "should make all respectable clubs join the Union. They would become more powerful by their acquaintance with a central body, and be better able to resist any attacks that might be made on the liberties of members." (359) With the decision in the Percy Supper Club case police now had a clear ruling against the proprietary club and they were swift to act. Vigilance committees were urged to bring spurious clubs to the attention of the Excise so that they might be speedily put down. (360) Teetotalers had no qualms about informing. Such pleasure as the respectable movement derived from the sorry procession of bogus club owners appearing in the courts, was soured by a new campaign in support of club registration. After defeat, the hybrid alliance of publican and pledge signer was once again reforming. During the L.C.C. elections in 1892 the East London Licensed Victuallers' and Beer Sellers' Protection Society issued a list of questions to candidates which included a demand that they would pledge themselves to support action "to place clubs under official surveillance." (361)

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357. Illustrated Temperance Monthly, No. 77, Mar 1897; Northern Temperance Yearbook, (1896), p. 62 For discussions of the changing nature and layout of the public-house in this period see, A. Shadwell, "The English Public-House," National Review, Vol. 25 May 1895, pp. 377-81; H. Blacker, "The Pub", Journal of Alcoholism, Vol. 11(2) 1976, and M. Girouard, Victorian Pubs, (1975) Chapters 2 and 7.

258. D. Hamer, Liberal Politics, pp. 186-91; D. Fahey, "The Politics of Drink : Pressure Groups and the British Liberal Party, 1883-1908," Social Science, Vol. 54(2), 1979, pp. 78-90.

359. CIJ, 2 July 1892.

360. Church of England Temperance Chronicle, 23 March 1893.

361. CIJ, 5 March 1892; Licensing World 1 May 1893. See also Morning Advertiser, 16 March 1891.

For the temperance movement, further progress towards national sobriety could only be contemplated after the clubs had been dealt with. Simply to reduce drinking facilities, by Direct Veto, for example, would have little effect if it was subverted by the growth of shebeens. Caine ominously warned that the only effective resolution was to treat the clubs as licensed premises. <sup>(362)</sup> A missionary of the London City Mission whose earnest preaching had not achieved lasting results demanded united efforts by both groups to put the clubs down. <sup>(363)</sup>

The measure to which they gave their support was the Clubs' Registration Bill introduced by Newdigate on 1st February 1893. <sup>(364)</sup> It was given a second reading on March 22nd.

Between the first and second reading the Evening News, impelled no doubt by a desire to set the "facts" before the public and to help the passage of the Bill, issued a series of inflammatory and altogether lurid accounts of club life in the East End. They were similar in tone and content to a series of articles on "Unlicensed London," which had appeared the previous year, in which working men's clubs were described as "haunts of unrestrained vice, where the novice took "his first step on the easy road that leads to destruction." <sup>(365)</sup> The Evening News Reports were intended to bring such information before a mass audience.

The reports chronicled the late hours kept, the comparative freedom with which club drinkers were allowed to indulge their tastes, the abuse of the sanctity of the Sabbath, and the respective opinions of clergymen and traders who lived or worked close to the clubs named. Club land worked itself into a lather over the reports, especially as the

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362. W. Caine, "The Attitude of Advanced Temperance Party", Contemporary Review, Vol. 63 January 1893, pp. 58-59; Temperance Record, 29 December 1892.

363. Christian World, 2 March 1893.

364. Parliamentary Debates 4th series, vol 8, 1893 Col. 163.

365. Pearson's Society News, 6 August and 13 August 1892.



clubs named had naively allowed reporters to enter the clubs to obtain copy for their stories. The paper was contemptuously termed "The Evening Liar" and letters from a number of Presidents of East London were sent to the editor demanding an apology. There was even some talk of action for libel, although Minet counselled restraint as he thought the actions had little chance of success. (366) A member of the United Radical Club called upon London M.P's to speak up for the clubs:

If Howell, Cremer, Pickersgill, Stuart and others who owe their seats to the the clubs so shamefully libelled do not write their experiences of club life they deserve to lose working men's votes as cowards who are afraid to defend the clubs that have made them what they are. (367)

In other circles the reports and the Bill met with warm support. If these actions could end clubs - "the curse of our modern civilisation" - then a great boon would have been conferred on the working man. (368) Inevitably questions were asked in the House on the veracity of the reports. Harcourt informed Mr. Hulse that in the previous 12 months the Excise had obtained 15 convictions. They were not relaxing their watch, but he still hinted that the problems had been exaggerated. (369)

All parties to the contest, except the Union, thought the Bill a good one, although the licensed trade would have liked the Bill more if it included police supervision. (370) On the other hand, the Union considered the Bill inadequate. In particular they disliked the amount of registration fee payable and maintained that no good would come of

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366. CIJ, 11 March, 18 March and 1 April 1893.

367. Ibid, 11 March 1893.

368. Temperance Record, 30 March and 12 October 1893; Echo, 25 February 1893; Christian World, 2 March 1893; Licensing World, 1 July 1893; Church of England Temperance Chronicle, 24 March, 23 June, 30 June 1893.

369. Parl. Debates, 4th Series, Vol. 9, 1893, Cols. 1440-41.

370. Licensing World, 8 September 1893.

placing clubs under the authority of local magistrates.<sup>(371)</sup> The friends of the movement were equivocal. Foote in a lecture at the Hall of Science defended the clubs as being far less harmful than public-houses. He had little sympathy for the Bill. Cremer, however, addressing a hostile audience at the Hackney Radical Club stated that he would support the Bill.<sup>(372)</sup> To prevent nosy journalists or others from entering the club a number of London clubs took the sensible precaution of barring all visitors from the club on a Sunday.<sup>(373)</sup>

Captain Grice-Hutchinson opened the Second Reading of the Bill on March 22nd, telling the members that the clubs had "grossly abused" their liberties in the use of drink and that public opinion was on the side of the House in seeking to check this evil. Caine seconded. He was optimistic that the Bill would get through.<sup>(374)</sup> He began his speech by quoting Churchill's definition of a club as "unlicensed taverns, where drinking and gambling is indulged in with impunity." Shaw-Le fevre, responding for the Chancellor of the Exchequer, gave government support for the Bill which was thought to be of "considerable value." Pickergill and Bowles were less happy. The former, who sat for Bethnal Green S.W. a stronghold of London clubland, was emphatic that such a Bill, if passed, must be applied to all clubs, not just operated against those of the working man. Bowles made his case on the ambiguities of the Bill. It did not define a club and would be difficult to operate.<sup>(375)</sup> On March 24th the Select Committee was nominated and began hearing evidence in May.<sup>(376)</sup> Notwithstanding the Union's vehement opposition

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371. CIJ, 18 March 1893; See also evidence of J. Allport, Secretary of the Ipswich Reform Club, S.C. Clubs Registration, P.P. 1893-94. x p. p. 62-63.

372. CIJ, 15 April 1893. The reasons for Cremer's opinion were not give

373. Evening News and Post, 23 March 1893.

374. See his comments in Evening News, 4 March 1893.

375. Parl. Debates, 4th Series, Vol. 10 Cols. 783-801.

376. Ibid. Col. 1107.

to the Bill some clubs were slow to respond to the call for collective action to defend the clubs. One commentator attributed this sloth to misplaced loyalty to the Liberal Party. "What would have happened," he inquired "if a Tory Government had introduced a Clubs Registration Bill:

clubs would have marched to Hyde Park, and the flags would have been taken out of lavender, brass bands, more or less discordant, would have headed the processions, and club orators would have denounced the 'blotted Tories.' (377)

The Bill was published in the club paper on 29th July. On the 5th August a meeting of over 350 delegates from over 250 clubs assembled at the Union offices. Although a number of M.P.'s had been invited, all sent their apologies for absence. Minet took the chair. The meeting was of the opinion that the current Bill was useless. It would hamper the bona-fide club but would not put an end to the bogus one. They remained calm as it seemed unlikely that the Bill would pass government support for the Bill, having been withdrawn as Grice-Hutchinson admitted. Delegates wished to use the meeting to put on record their general feelings on the subject of legislation so that should any individual feel compelled to introduce a measure in the future he would know whom to consult. Mr. Ware spoke for the majority at the meeting when he suggested that if legislation was required then the Union should begin it. Only by initiating legislation itself could the club movement be sure that its interests would be defended. Resolutions against the Bill were carried unahimously and communicated to M.P's. (378)

The Select Committee heard evidence for and against the Bill. On 9th June Dent, who had just relinquished his post as Secretary of the Union, gave his evidence. He confined himself mainly to information on Union clubs and the procedures used to assure the Union that the clubs it admitted to membership were bona-fide. Any complaints made about a club, if only a paragraph in a newspaper, were thoroughly investigated

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377. CIJ, 3 June 1893.

378. Ibid, 2 September 1893.

by the Union. He also told the committee that any club which sold excisables had to have a minimum subscription of 6d, if paid monthly. Clubs which allowed subscriptions to be paid weekly were not entitled to apply for affiliation.

For Dent the distinction between bogus club and bona fide one was simple. At the former the proprietor or company took the profits on excisables, at the latter, they were owned by the membership. There was no other distinction to be made. Several amendments were suggested by Dent to make the Bill more useful. One he insisted upon was the reduction of the registration fee of 40/-. He saw no reason for charging a fee at all, which for many clubs would be a serious tax on their finances. Clubs were not a luxury but a necessity for the working man. Everything should be done to encourage their formation. Making them pay large sums to guarantee their respectability would only hinder the movement. He also objected to the membership list being available to a policeman or any other person. This was open to abuse by employers for example, who might wish to check up on whether their employees belonged to political clubs. On the vexed issue of off-sales, Dent was of the opinion that it would do no harm if they were stopped. But the rule had to apply to all clubs and he warned the Committee that such a proposal would meet with loud opposition throughout the clubs movement as the Committee would be taking away a right confirmed by the courts. Apart from an altercation with Mr Buckmill over the role of brewers in the clubs Dent's evidence was a thorough and balanced review of the Union's case against legislation. (379)

The Bill, when it came back to the House, failed to get support. A number of its former backers, including Caine, had come to the realisation that the Bill would work in a way which interfered with the respectable club. Nonetheless it was hoped that public opinion would

be roused by the evidence taken of abuses in some clubs to demand the necessary legislation to end the bogus club. (380)

For Hall, the new Secretary, the bid to place the Bill on the statute book was the first operation:

of the newest Triple Alliance, Activated by widely different motives, without a single bond but the common hatred of the clubs, the sabbatarian, the Publican and the Fanatical Teetotaler, join hands to destroy the institution they abhor.

Yet club men would be unwise to resist totally Parliamentary interference. Legislation should be initiated by the Union, which should include, a minimum age for membership of 20, a fortnight to elapse between nomination and election, and registration under the Friendly Societies Act. (381)

At its Annual Meeting the Manchester Association also decided in favour of some form of registration as a procedure already familiar to a great number of clubs. (382)

In July 1895, the call went out from the clubs for a Royal Commission into the licensing trade to expose the falsehoods of the "cold tea brigade." (383) Just before resigning, the Liberal Ministry seemed to accede to that request when they appointed Lord Peel to chair a Royal Commission to inquire into the Liquor Licensing Laws. (384)

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380. Sunday Closing Reporter, 54, November 1893.

381. South Eastern Progressive, 22 July 1893.

382. Temperance Record, 30 November 1893.

383. Club World, 13 July 1895.

384. For a full discussion of the Royal Commission see, D. Fahey, "Temperance and the Liberal Party : Lord Peel's Report, 1899." Journal of British Studies, Vol. 10(2), 1971.

Upon the announcement of the Commission Hall applied for membership, but this was refused. (385) Balfour, however, was anxious to assuage Hall's fears that the inquiry would turn into a vendetta against the clubs. (386)

On 19th May 1896, the Commission began to hear evidence and soon turned its attention to the clubs, a move welcomed by temperance movement and licensed trade. (387) Club opinion was generally lukewarm to the Commission. "We shall resist" Hall declared "any attacks based upon financial or fanatical motives and we shall succeed." (388) Once again the clubs affirmed their outright rejection of all claims by the police for more powers. To at least check some of outbursts against the clubs the delegate from the Hatcham Liberal Club, of which Hall was a member, brought forward a motion to the April meeting of the delegate council requesting the Union to establish a scheme to obtain direct representation in Parliament. After a strong speech from Hall opposing such a move, the motion was defeated. (389)

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385. CIJ, September and November 1896.

386. See Balfour's comments in B. Hall, The Working Men's Club and Institute Union, p.29. Talyer in his new year address to the Union told the delegates that the "Beer Party" would have to be closely watched" for they were anxious to place restrictions on the clubs, "Club World, 11 January 1896.

387. Temperance Chronicle, 11 September 1896; Licensing World, 1 February 1897. The latter paper in the Issue of 19 December 1896 had suggested the creation of an alliance between teetotalers, policemen, and licensed traders to put down the sham clubs.

388. Temperance Record, 17 September 1896; CIJ, September and October 1896.

389. CIJ, May 1896.

Evidence was taken by the Commission from a number of witnesses sympathetic to the club movement, but it was Hall, his Fabian training to the fore, who most impressed the Peel Committee. Indeed, in their Report they suggested that any legislation should be based on the proposals made by Hall.

Before his appearance at the Commission Hall circulated the Executive with a resumé of his proposed case on behalf of the clubs. Beginning by indicating his still strong reservations on the qualifications of the Commissioners to sit in judgement on the clubs, Hall went over the points made familiar by club spokesmen over the years and repeated by Dent at the Select Committee. He discussed the Union, its work, the life of the clubs and its opposition to punitive legislation but not to the administrative procedure of registration. He was adamant that the clubs, no matter what was proposed, would not accept without a fight, police supervision. The police already had powers to deal with the clubs; to grant police right of entry to a club, at law a private house, was "foreign to English notions... There is something Continental about it. It suggests that gendarme, and maybe the agent provocateur, and it is accompanied by the sure and certain faith that it would be applied unequally."<sup>(390)</sup> Clubs were opposed to being licensed because that was payable for the carrying on of a trade, and no business was transacted in a club. He was sympathetic to clubs having to specify in their rules their hours of opening and closing but hours should not be fixed absolutely. Amongst the suggestions made, Hall included publication of rules and balance sheets, and the supply of false particulars to be made an offence. He also entered a protest at the Commissioners' use of evidence taken before the Clubs Registration Bill Committee, for the printed evidence contained several errors, club witnesses were refused permission to appear, and the committee had only sat for a week, hardly enough time to gather balanced evidence on a growing movement.

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390. B. Hall, The Case for the Clubs, (1896), p. 11.

On 9th February, 1897, the 31st Day of the inquiry, Hall was called to give his evidence. The central themes of his examination was that "where... bona-fide, well-organised working men's clubs exist" drunkenness decreases.<sup>(391)</sup> Then, for the benefit of the Commission he put forward the Union's proposals which included the registration of all clubs at a central registry. Details to be recorded in the registration included the method of election of members, method of electing committees, the circumstances under which membership was allowed to lapse, the rules of the club and the hours of closing and opening.

Hall was extremely critical of the police. He attributed their adverse comments on the clubs to the failure of clubs to "subscribe to police athletic sports, or orphanages; nor do we give gold watches when they retire. That we feel, seriously and without any joke, is an element which prejudices the police reports against our case."<sup>(392)</sup> He stated openly that he believed such customs to be practiced by all licensed victuallers.

On seeing a draft report of the Commission the Union felt that its case had been justified. Another assault on the clubs had failed, for which the clubs had to thank the "Union and the Union alone."<sup>(393)</sup> In almost all respects the Commission accepted the Union's position on registration, and other evidence taken seemed to vindicate the Union's critical assertions on the behaviour of the police.<sup>(394)</sup> Hall in particular could feel pleased. His evidence was singled out by the Commissioners for special praise. They wrote:

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391. R.C. Liquor Licensing, Q 16251.

392. R.C. Liquor Licensing, Q 16296.

393. CIJ, March 1899.

394. B. Hall (Comp), Report of the R.C. Re:Clubs, (1896).



Mr. B. T. Hall, who gave his evidence with remarkable lucidity and ability, spoke very strongly of the many social and educational advantages which arose from properly conducted Working Men's Clubs. We fully agree with all that has been said by Mr. Hall as to the benefits to be derived from properly constituted and well-conducted clubs. (395)

The Commission eventually issued two reports. A Majority Report, perjoratively termed the "Brewers' Report" because the majority of the trade members of the Commission had signed it, and a Minority Report, whose signatories included Peel and the Archbishop of Canterbury. (396) Whatever the difference between the two reports they were both agreed that some form of registration would prove beneficial to the club movement. Some control on the clubs was held to be necessary because if another of the recommendations were carried through that to reduce the number of drinking facilities-clubs might be established to by-pass the new law. (397) Only Whittaker in his dissenting memorandum still maintained that clubs were established mainly for drinking. (398)

There was a growing groundswell for some form of registration. The Union declared that it now had no objection to such a measure, provided that it did not diminish the "current liberties" of the clubs. (399) In practice this meant that the Union would consider any registration legislation only if it excluded any form of police surveillance. The Union and its affiliates would "resent, yea, fight to the bitter end, against any attempt at police inspection, just as they would not tolerate it in their own homes." (400) The need to pass legislation quickly in the wake of the Peel Report also had the approval of the publican and pledge-

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395. Quoted in B. Hall, The Working Men's Club and Institute Union... p. 30.

396. Wings. 17(11) November 1889.

397. A. West, "The Two Reports of the Licensing Commission," Nineteenth Century, Vol. 47, February 1900, pp. 272-73.

398. R. C. Liquor Licensing Laws, P. P. 1899 xxxv, pp. 325-27; See also, his comments on clubs in "Alcoholism and Legislation," in T. Kelynack (Ed), op. cit., p. 233.

399. Club Life, 22 April 1899.

400. Ibid, 2 February 1902.

signer. (401)

For the clubs it was a propitious juncture to consider forwarding legislation. Hall's evidence had won much good-will for the movement so that even old foes were at least making the pretence that any new laws should not interfere with the rights of the bona-fide movement.

In January 1901, Earl Grey led a deputation, which included Cannon Barnett and Bramwell Booth, to consult with Ritchie, the Home Secretary. They impressed upon him the need for action against the clubs, suggesting that some kind of certificate system would end the bogus club. They came away feeling that Ritchie was lukewarm on the issue and th s little could be expected. (402)

At the annual meeting of the Church of England Temperance Society in Manchester, February 1901, resolutions calling for legislation were passed unanimously. (403) Caine was writing to Chamberlain in the October suggesting that the government might bring forward a Bill which would include provisions for the registration of clubs. He envisaged placing clubs, despite all the evidence that such an idea would be stoutly resisted, under "magisterial license and control" if they sold intoxicants. He assured Chamberlain that such a measure would win for the government "the hearty and united respect of every section of temperance reformers." Chamberlain replied that while he sympathised with such a Bill he did not think that the government had time to put forward such a measure. Other legislation had high priority. However, a Private Members' Bill might win support. (404)

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401. Brewers' Weekly, 3 May 1900; Temperance Record, 5 October 1899; 20 December 1899; Temperance Chronicle, 28 December 1900.

402. Temperance Chronicle, 25 January 1901.

403. Temperance Chronicle, 15 February 1901.

404. J. Newton, W.S. Caine, (1907), pp. 296-99. On Chamberlain's temperance activities see, J. Brown, "The Temperance Career of Joseph Chamberlain: A Study in Political Frustration," Albion, Vol. 4(1), 1972. Gully attributed the Registration clauses in the 1902 Bill to Chamberlain, but credit more properly belongs to the Union, and Hall in particular; see E. Gulley, Joseph Chamberlain and English Social Politics, (New York, 1926), p. 286.

Temperance legislation was mentioned in the King's Speech on January 30th, 1908. On the same day Ritchie rose to introduce a Bill to Amend the Licensing Law and To Provide for the Registration of clubs. The Bill, he stressed, was a limited one in order to carry the majority of opinion with the government. While some clubs were a great source of evil, the difficulty was to frame proposals which did not draw distinctions between clubs intended for different classes. The intention of the present measure was to make all clubs which sold intoxicants register, the suggested agency being the Clerk to the Justices. A simple form was to be completed and submitted to the Clerk who was then to register the club. No provision was to be made for police entry without a warrant and the Bill would not apply to Scotland. Caine, welcomed the measure, but urged the government to tread carefully where the clubs were concerned. (405)

The Bill, for once, met with general favour from the Union. If passed it would give "the club movement an impetus and a vogue it never had before." (406) Hall, guest of honour at the Anniversary Dinner of the Victoria Club, Sheerness, told the diners that several bills had been brought forward but the Union "had ruthlessly slain them all." After the cheering subsided he continued, the measure was one which the clubs could support, especially as it did not intend to put clubs "at the mercy of policemen." (407) Not all club men were so jubilant, S. Taylor for one opposed. He was against legislation of any sort in principle. Clubs did not want to invite the government to put "its foot in their midst." (408) Mr. Bellinger, North Brixton Club, moved opposition to Ritchie's Bill at the February delegate meeting because it had been introduced by the Tories. Hall poured scorn on this motion calling Mr. Bellinger's members "illogical and unjust" in their statements. The Secretary was

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405. Parl. Debates, 4th Series, Vol. 19105 1902. Col. 1439-48.

406. CIJ, January 1902.

407. CIJ, February 1902; see also Club Life, February 1902.

408. CIJ, January 1902.

now firmly of the opinion that the interests of the clubs "were much safer in the hands of the present government than they would be in the hands of certain fanatics amongst the Liberal Party."<sup>(409)</sup>

The Bill was given a second reading on 7 April. Speakers were careful to balance their criticisms of the bogus club with praise for the respectable ones. Caine, who now had considerable experience in these matters, proposed amendments in order to define the bona-fide nature of clubs in the register, the suitability of premises for use as a club, and the illegality of the proprietary club. These amendments, he maintained, would not interfere with the respectable club and he cited for support the proposals Hall had put to the Royal Commission. He dissented however, from the off-sales rights of clubs. Ritchie, architect of the Bill, received hearty congratulations for having introduced the measure. "It is a great pleasure for all parties in the House." Lord Edmund Fitzmaurice, member for Cricklade, Wiltshire, remarked, "to join together in the work of blessing a great measure." Ritchie, summing up, recognised that the Bill could be improved in certain areas. He had assured the House that appeal proceedings would come under the Summary Jurisdiction Acts thus clubs had nothing to fear from vexatious appeals from individuals who took umbrage at clubs opening near to their houses. The Bill was passed to the Standing Committee on Trade.<sup>(410)</sup> On July 4th the Committee completed its work. Most of the amendments put had related to Parts I and II of the Bill, not Part III which dealt with clubs. While the Committee deliberated Hall watched from the gallery, pleased no doubt with the smooth passage of the measure. Even the critical comments of Burns during the Second Reading did not disturb the equanimity of clubmen. The day of the narrow fanatic was passing and as the clubs had helped to elect him they could tolerate his eccentric ways for a little longer.<sup>(411)</sup>

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409. Club Life, 8 February 1902.

410. Parl. Debates, 4 Series, Vol 105, 1902, Cols. 1138-1242.

411. Club Life, 7 June 1902.

After swift debate in the Lords the Bill was returned to the Commons, being debated for the last time on 5th August. It passed and three days later was given the Royal Assent. Cremer, at the conclusion of the debate, expressed the Union's thanks to the Home Secretary, while Ritchie later wrote to Hall "It is a very great gratification to me to know that in dealing with a difficult question I have been able to give satisfaction to so important an organisation as the Club and Institute Union."<sup>(412)</sup> The Act came into force on January 1st 1903. To prepare secretaries and members for their duties under the Act club journals carried regular articles and features on the registration procedure and implications.<sup>(413)</sup> Most temperance organisations and licensed victuallers' associations gave a guarded welcome to the Act believing it to be a modest step forward.<sup>(414)</sup>

It provided for the registration of all clubs if they sold excisables. To sell excisables there had to be a minimum membership of 25. Clubs which did not sell excisables or which had less than 25 members did not have to register. On January 1st every year a fee of 5/- was payable to the Clerk to the Justices whose job was simply to administer the Register. There were no restrictions as to hours but at least 48 hours had to elapse between proposal and election. Every club which came forward with its 5/- had to be registered, there was no discretion allowed. Even if the details of a club showed it to be illegal the Clerk was to take no action. He was simply to register the club. The police of excise would take the necessary action against those clubs which did not meet formal requirements. Only

412. Parl. Debates, 4th series, Vol. 112, 1902, Col. 911; CIU, Annual Report, No. 40, (1903), p. 6.

413. See Hall's articles, CIU, March-August 1903. Not all parties seemed to understand the Act. The police, for example, laboured under the misapprehension that the Act gave them right of entry. To familiarise the police with the movement the Union sent every Chief Constable a copy of the history of the Union, CIU, Annual Report, No. 41, (1903), p. 11. For the action of London's police against the 'dens' see PRO. Mepol 2/514, 'Clubs: Irregularities, 1900-1904,' and Mepol 2/1555, 'Clubs Supervision Bill, 1913.'

414. See Wings, 21(6), June 1903; National Temperance League Annual, (1903), pp. 59-67; Guardian, 9 April and 4 June 1902.

members' clubs could have liquor<sup>463</sup> on the premises without a license. Any unregistered club possessing intoxicants or any proprietary club engaged in illegal selling was liable to a fine of not more than £50 or one month's imprisonment with hard labour. (415)

For the clubs the 1902 was hailed as a final measure. It guaranteed a new status to the respectable movement while maintaining its privileges intact. No further legislation the Union believed was necessary. (416)

Their opponents saw the Act as a first instalment in placing the clubs under more rigorous control. The Lord Mayor of Manchester, for example, at the close of Brewster Sessions, demanded stricter legislation against the clubs for this would "curb a major source of drunkenness in the industrial towns." (417) The Union had won a battle, but the war was to continue.

Wearily the clubs recognised that:

in respect of the two political parties they were between the devil and the deep blue sea. Both publicans and fanatical teetotalers hate them with an equal hatred. The former largely sway the Conservative Party, and the latter are active, or at least noisy, tyrants in the Liberal Party. It is true that teetotal bigotry has kept the Liberal Party from office for many years, and that if an election is won by that Party it will be in spite of these furious persons. But once in power the clubs must expect a bitter attack, one striking at their very existence. (418)

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415. An Act to Amend the Law relating to the Sale of Intoxicating Liquors to Drunks, and to provide for the Registration of Clubs, 2 Ed.VII c.28 s.24. Its provisions are fully discussed in J.Wertheimer, The Law of Clubs, (3rd ed., 1905), Chapter II, passim; C.Rothera, A Practical Guide to the Licensing Act 1902, (1903). The Act continued the tradition of giving no formal definition of a club, as Paterson commented "when any concrete case arises the court will have to decide whether the association in question is or is not a club," Paterson's Licensing Acts, (15th ed, W.Mackenzie, editor, 1903), p.261.

416. Conservative Clubs Gazette, 4(92), November 1902; Club Life, 13 December 1902, 14 November 1903.

417. Temperance Chronicle, 17 March 1905. See also, Guardian, 9 April 4 June 1902.

418. CIJ, July 1904.

Police continued to make themselves a nuisance, especially by harrasing clubs in rural areas. <sup>(419)</sup> In the three years following the Act the number of registered clubs increased by over 2,800, while licenses were reduced by over 3,500. As the table below shows there was a modest annual increase in the number of clubs prosecuted during the first decade of operation. But this must be set against the large increase in clubs on the register, from 6371 in 1904 to 8209 in 1912. For many temperance thinkers further legislation was therefore needed to

TABLE 17  
PROSECUTIONS OF REGISTERED CLUBS

|                   | Year |    |    |    |    |    |    |     |     |      |
|-------------------|------|----|----|----|----|----|----|-----|-----|------|
|                   | 1903 | 04 | 05 | 06 | 07 | 08 | 09 | 10  | 11  | 1912 |
| Proceeded against | 74   | 82 | 77 | 51 | 94 | 67 | 81 | 114 | 132 | 198  |
| Struck Off        | 67   | 73 | 62 | 41 | 78 | 52 | 64 | 92  | 115 | 179  |

Source : True Temperance Annual, 1914.

stop clubs being used as devices to effect the reduction in licenses. <sup>(420)</sup>  
Between 1906-1909, the Union was drawn into further campaigns to prevent further legislation controlling clubs from reaching the statute books. The Union headed a club movement "popular front" which scuppered the Bill introduced by Wilson in 1906 to transform clubs into licensed premises. In 1908 the same alliance led the campaign against clauses in Asquith's Licensing Bill which would have given the power of inspection to Chief Constables or any other person authorised by him. <sup>(421)</sup>

419. CIU, Annual Report, No. 43, (1906), p. 17.

420. "National Sobriety," Quarterly Review, Vol. 196, October 1902, p. 375; Temperance Witness, 17(2), June 1906.

421. Conservative Clubs Gazette, July and Dec. 1907; CIU Annual Report, No. 45, (1908), pp. 12-13; Ibid, No. 46, (1909), pp. 13-14; Temperance Witness, 19(2), March 1907; Tremlett, op. cit., Chapters XV & XVI  
The Bill was amended out of recognition by the House of Lords.

The only defeat suffered by the club forces was inflicted by Lloyd George when he included a tax of 3d in the £1 upon sales of excisables in clubs as part of the "People's Budget." Clubmen did not want to organise against the budget so reluctantly accepted the tax.

Temperance, although a declining force in political and social life, kept up its campaign against the clubs well into the twentieth century. The basis for their objections remained the ease with which clubs could be established and the unsupervised nature of drinking within the club. (422) Licensed victuallers also continued their opposition; the pub and the club carried on the contest for the patronage of the working man. (423) Publicans were still wont to lament their loss of trade to the club, in Derby for example, it was claimed that the club had all but extinguished the trade. (424) While clubs in the North East at last realised a long held ambition of the club movement to possess a successful brewery when the Northern Clubs Federation Brewery was set up in 1919. (425)

Legislation did finally eradicate the bogus club, although it no longer seemed the threat it had once done in the late nineteenth century (426)

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422. True Temperance Annual 1911, p. 18; G. Winterton, The Case For the Drink Selling Club Examined. (n. d. 1913); I. Foot, Clubs and Drink, (1925); H. Carter, Clubs and the Drink Question: Why New Legislation is Necessary, (1935); The Clubs Bill : Betrayed by the Government, (1939)
423. National Consultative Council of the Retail Liquor Trade, Memorandum on Clubs, (n. d. 1932?).
424. T. Carter & J. Downham, The Communication of Ideas, (1954), pp. 64-68.
425. T. Elkins, So They Brewed Their Own Beer, (Newcastle, 1970). The idea of a co-operative brewery controlled by the clubs had first been mooted in the 1880's. For example, Moulton Village Club was established by a group of working men who were unhappy with meeting at the local public house because of its Tory connections. They were attacked by the Northants Licensed Trades Association which called upon all brewers who were members of the Association to cut off supplies of beer to the clubs. To meet this challenge the club started its own brewery, CIJ, Nov. 1895. For a general review of previous ventures see B. Hall, "Club Co-operative Breweries," CIU, Ann. Rep. No. 44(1906), Appendix XI.
426. Chairman of a Licensing Bench, "The Menace of the Bogus Club" Spectator, 7 September 1934.



Campaigns against the clubs achieved little by way of concrete results - D. O. R. A. regulations limited the hours of opening and these remained in force after 1918, although clubs pressed for their removal. (427) Police entry was still pressed for by the temperance movement, but it was conceded that such measures had little chance of success, Shadwell, uncharitably attributing this to the pressure from the working men's clubs "many of whose members have no love of the police." (428) Until 1961, with the passing of new Licensing Act the 1902 legislation was not fundamentally superceded, despite much pressure from critics. (429) With the passing of the 1961 Act the traditional all-male drinking club came to an end. (430)

Clubs continued to peg away at the idea that membership was an aid to sobriety. G. Roberts, Labour Party Whip, speaking at the Jubilee Dinner, told the guests that he had originally been suspicious of the clubs because of the hostility of fellow teetotalers but decided

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427. R.C. Licensing Laws, P.P. 1931-32 xi, p.12; T. Carver, Government Control of the Liquor Trade Business in Great Britain and the United States. (New York, 1919), pp.64-75; H. Carter, The Control of the Drink Trade, (1918), p.30. M. Rose, "The Success of Social Reform? The Central Board (Liquor Traffic), 1915-21," in M. Foot (Ed), War and Society, (1975).
428. A. Shadwell, "The Drink Question and the Royal Commission," Nineteenth Century and After, Vol III, February, 1932, pp.150-51.
429. See, for example, the remarks in R.C. Licensing, 1931-32, pp. 106-07. There is a discussion of other campaigns against the clubs in G. Wilson, Alcohol and the Nation (1940), pp.145-47; Rev. C. Weeks, "The situation in England and Wales," Proceedings, Twentieth International Congress on Alcoholism, (1934), pp.195-97.
430. H. Thompson, Durham Villages, (1976), pp.57-58; on the Act see J. Lee, "The Political Significance of Licensing Legislation" Parliamentary Affairs, Vol.21 (2), 1961, p.214.

to give the clubs a try. From his knowledge of the membership he was able to affirm that working men's clubs "were the most powerful influence in building up habits of temperance and self-respect of any operative on the working class."<sup>(431)</sup> More recently Patrick Joyce after a careful study of clubs in Lancashire has concluded that for many working men "the clubs were not an excuse for drinking but an escape from it."<sup>(432)</sup>

If the clubs won the legal battle their triumph at the ideological level was more equivocal. While the volume of evidence taken by the Royal Commission and other inquiries had challenged the simple-minded notion that clubs were got up for the beer, it was an image of the club which was continually alluded to in studies which touched upon leisure in working class communities.<sup>(433)</sup> Mass observation noted that clubs in Worktown were "synonymous locally with drink; and especially with obtaining drink after hours." An example of that rare literary form, the novel set in the clubs, opens with the comedian anti-hero remarking that:

Two things had marred the customarily flawless perfection of my performance at the Gawkesworth Reform Club that Saturday evening. One was the technically imperfect microphone system...the other was the quite apparent fact that the audience was well and truly pissed. (435)

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431. CIU, Annual Report, No. 51, (1913), p. 218.

432. P. Joyce, op. cit., p. 322.

433. See B. Rowntree and G. Lavers, English Life and Leisure, (1951), pp. 166-67; R. Evans and A. Boyd, The Use of Leisure in Hull, (Hull, 1933), p. 10; COPEC, Leisure, (Commission Report No. 5. 1924), p. 94; N. Dennis et al., Coal is Our Life, (1956), pp. 144-45; F. Zweig, Men in the Pits, (1948), pp. 99-100; See also the comments of D. Davies in R. Goldman (Ed.) Breakthrough, (1968), p. 28; G. Wilson, "The Liquor Problem in England and Wales," British Journal of Inebriety, Vol. 38(4), 1941, pp. 150-52.

434. Mass Observation, The Pub and the People, (1943), p. 17.

435. L. Dawson, A Card for the Clubs, (1974), p. 7. The fictional club is situated in South Yorkshire. There is a similar atmosphere of beer and masculinity in the descriptions of the working men's club in Joe Ashton's Novel, Grass Roots, (1976).

A study of the provision for the leisure of young men in Nottingham praised the good work being done in the mining villages by the Cadet Units, for apart from the Cadets there was little other provision for a young man's spare time except for the Miners' Welfare:

where the lads play billiards, make up their betting lists, watch their elder brothers getting 'tiddly' and their fathers getting 'tight.' (436)

The representation of the club a centre of profligacy, some latter-day revival of St. Bartholomew's Fair is one which regularly provides good copy for the salacious Sunday newspapers. The accuracy of such a portrait remains to be investigated.

The cunning of history, however, seems to have worked against the founding fathers of the movement. Ironically, the popular image of the club depicts not the sobriety of the membership, but the general ambience of "booziness" to be found there. Notwithstanding much evidence to the contrary the working man's club has become associated with excess. (437)

436. Quoted in L. Barnes, Youth Service in an English County, (1945), p. 71.

437. For exceptions to the sensational descriptions see, G. Slater, op.cit., p. 435; E. Selley, the English Public-House as it is, (1927) pp. 149-70; B. Jackson, Working Class Community, (Harmondsworth, 1972), Chapter, 4 especially, pp. 50-51; R. Batley, "The Role of Working Men's Clubs," New Society, 5 July, 1973, p. 13.

CHAPTER 5: FROM IMPROVEMENT TO CITIZENSHIP: A  
SURVEY OF THE EDUCATIONAL WORK OF  
THE CLUB MOVEMENT.

Education is highest and best when it is used by the individual to improve the conditions of the mass. (1)

Any educational work that is done in working men's clubs should rather be regarded with approbation than censured for its shortcomings. (2)

All philanthropic bodies established to elevate the working man shared one concern in common; they all placed great emphasis upon the transforming and civilizing power of education. Accordingly provision for educational work of some sort was made in their respective organisations. Working men's clubs, therefore, were intended by many of their promoters to supply their members with various means of intellectual improvement as well as amusement. While it would be the duty of individual committees to determine the specific content of that educational programme in order to respond effectively to the particular requirements of the membership, committees were urged not to let this important work be relegated to second place. For a club to flourish it was essential that there should be a balance between the claims of amusement and the need for improvement. Pleasure was not to subvert pedagogy.

Numerous clubs took up the challenge, although only a few were fortunate enough to develop an elaborate programme of classes and lectures. Nevertheless, educational work was an important part of club activity in these years and great stress was placed on its value by a succession of club ideologues.

Little recognition has been given to the educational work of the clubs. When it has been noted it has usually been accompanied

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1. A. Temple, The Educational Policy of the Union, (1922), p.10.
  2. T. Peppin, Club-Land of the Toiler, (1895), p.58.

by a sharp note of criticism concerning the indifference of much of the movement's membership to more elevating pursuits. A number of writers have argued that the altogether modest educational ambitions of the clubs were quickly displaced by the more enduring, if less cultured, attractions of beer and billiards.<sup>(3)</sup> Others have expressed strong antagonism to club education because of its emphasis upon co-operation and concern for the duties of citizenship. Such an orientation promoted class collaboration and reconciliation, while the support of philanthropists for the clubs prevented them from establishing a truly militant and politically relevant working class education, the keystone of which was independence from all middle class benevolence.<sup>(4)</sup> These critics and detractors at least recognised that clubs undertook educational work, although they might regard it as weak, misguided, or of little consequence. This was in sharp contrast to some surveys of provision for adult education in Britain published in the early twentieth century which ignored the work of the clubs though they listed the range of activities undertaken by adult schools and co-operative societies, as well as the work of the Workers' Educational Association.<sup>(5)</sup>

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3. R. Altick, The English Common Reader, (Chicago, 1957); G. Cole, A Short History of the British Working Class Movement, (1948), p.166, observed that the Union was "purely social with a very slight admixture of educational activity."
  4. E. and C. Paul, Independent Working Class Education: Thoughts and Suggestions, (1918), p.16; J. Horrabin, "Independent Working Class Education," Journal of Adult Education, 1(1), 1926; J. and H. Horrabin, Working Class Education, (1924), Chapter 2; especially, pp.27-28; W. Craik, Central Labour College, (1964), p.26. See also, V. Abell, "Independent Working Class Education," (M.Ed Thesis, Univ. Sheffield, 1974) Chap. 1, passim.
  5. See, for example, "Education and the Working Class," Round Table, No.14, March 1914; "Workers' Education in Great Britain," International Labour Review, Vol.4(2), 1921.

Cursory and uncritical reading of some statements by Union spokesmen and observers of the movement has given credence to this gloomy estimate of the success of educational work. Yet the evidence presented has never been the subject of more careful investigation. This Chapter, therefore, will review the clubs' work in education and offer a more positive evaluation of their achievements. It is not intended to reverse all negative judgements. Rather it is hoped to place educational undertakings in the general context of club development and to offer a more sympathetic view of the nature of such labours.

The experiences and difficulties of the various forerunners of the club movement should have convinced all but the most optimistic that initiating and sustaining educational work in the clubs would be no simple task. Often the experiment of mixing amusement with instruction, which had been forced upon a number of mechanics' institutes, had entailed the diminution if not extinction of those pedagogic ideals for which they had been originally established. An "Old Member" urged his fellows to consider such sad experiences in their eagerness to introduce lighter elements into the activities of the Working Men's College, for he sadly noted that when

amusements were introduced into a place meant for work, they invariably become the dominant feature, and in a little while the serious purposes of the institution were overridden and neglected. (6)

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6. Working Men's College Magazine, February 1861. He may have had a point. College members who also enlisted in the Volunteers pressed for beer to be admitted to the College, and drill was said to be overshadowing the lectures in popularity; see H. Cunningham, The Volunteer Force, (1975), pp.120-21.

According to this view education and amusement were mutually exclusive options and there could be no successful scheme which allowed both to exist. By opting for the latter, therefore, clubs could expect little but disappointment if they also tried to pursue the former.

For many associated with the early club movement, however, the "Old Member's" fears were of little consequence. To those for whom the club represented primarily a place of recreation and refreshment for the working man after his daily labours, the real obstacle to progress came from the misguided though well-meaning statements of many benevolent men and women who in canvassing support for the cause laid too much stress on the improving, useful side of club life. To present a sternly utilitarian vision of club life before the average working man would hardly be an incentive to membership. During his address to the Social Science Association Brougham cautioned against an excessive concern with trying to find an educational role for the club:

Nothing can be more erroneous than the notion prevailing in some quarters that the object of these clubs is for education and other matters of use to the working class. These may arise out of them, but the main object is to give the labourers that amusement and recreation which they require after their work. (7)

What troubled Brougham was that unless checked the club movement would repeat the errors and difficulties which had caused much anguish to the mechanics' institutes. He was supported by an anonymous ally in the Leisure Hour who noted that many artisans were "too wearied at the end of the day's toil to engage with

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7. Friendly Society Journal, November, 1865..



any ardour in dry reading or severe calculations."<sup>(8)</sup> Institutes and lyceums had failed because they had not been made "sufficiently recreative in their character."<sup>(9)</sup> To redress this shortcoming was the raison d'etre of the club movement. It was easy for well-meaning philanthropists to lose sight of this. If they were not checked and warned then they would condemn, by their actions, the infant movement to an early and swift demise. Potential benefactors of clubs had, thus, to be aware that in drawing up schemes for a club they had to allow for any work of "intellectual culture" to be accompanied "by a pretty free admixture of recreation, as men who toil hard all day cannot be expected to forgo their customary methods of spending their evenings."<sup>(10)</sup>

Educational work had to be approached slowly and pragmatically. Too much insistence upon intellectual accomplishments would fail to attract membership, and would involve much disappointment for those eager to be of service, as well as embarrassing the potential member who would not feel at ease in such institutions. Large numbers of the members of such clubs, it was remarked:

will not or cannot at first accept instruction, except in a gradual and popular form. This defect should be very gently dealt with; and any systematic attempt to put in classes will only repel them. (11)

The author of a popular manual on mutual improvement and firm sympathiser with the club movement, Neil, similarly urged a

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8. Leisure Hour, No.998, 11 February, 1871.
  9. Public Good, 5 May 1850.
  10. Social Science Review, 1(22), 8 November 1862.
  11. "Working Men's Clubs," Temple Bar, Vol.8, July, 1863, p.387.  
"The Working Men's Club and Institute Union," London Review, 23 May 1863.

circumspect approach to educational matters. "To start working men's clubs with high intellectual aims is a fallacy, to begin them with the expectation of performing some sort of mysterious pantomimic transformation scene from everydayism to paradisaic morality is nonsense." Clubs, he countered, should be, indeed had to be, established on the more prosaic basis of making provision for "friendly companionship and association."<sup>(12)</sup>

Several speakers at a meeting to promote the establishment of a club in Smethwick confirmed the correctness of Neil's remarks. In a number of clubs they observed attempts had been made to begin formal classes. They had all ended in failure. Yet, this did not mean that improving influences were completely absent from the club. On the contrary, a certain type of knowledge was transmitted in the clubs by means of informal discussions amongst members, the reading of newspapers and periodicals, elevating entertainments, and the use of wallcharts as a means of decoration. What had to be avoided were over-ambitious schemes of educational work. For the success of the movement it was far better that members were induced to join to obtain recreation, rather than for "the study of French, or mathematics, or any other distinct branch of education."<sup>(13)</sup> Clubs for working men had to be genuine clubs not schoolrooms in disguise, said Lord Stanley.<sup>(14)</sup> If clubs failed to satisfy the working man's

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12. S. Neil, Public Meetings and How to Conduct Them, (1868), p.91. He was the author of Culture and Self Culture: A Guide to the Improvement of Mind and Life, (1863).

13. Solly Collection, Vol.XV, Item 7. ca.1868.

14. Nonconformist, 9 August 1865.

legitimate need for relaxation and companionship, and provided only reading rooms and classes then he would quit and seek to "gratify these desires in forbidden and unlawful paths."<sup>(15)</sup> Addressing a public meeting called by the Union to examine the relative lack of success of the early clubs, the Earl of Lichfield put the blame upon the promoters making such clubs too austere and educational.<sup>(16)</sup>

A number of the friends of the early club movement, as these comments demonstrate, felt impelled to question the insistence found in promotional literature and meetings upon the role that clubs could play in elevating and civilizing the working man by placing him in a classroom or lecture hall. H. Clarke in a letter to the Times scorned those who would limit the facilities available at the working men's club because it was for the working man. It was stupid, he believed, to treat the working man "as if he was always yearning to be crammed with scraps of useful knowledge and the Lazarus crumbs of political economy."<sup>(17)</sup> The functionalists did not seem to be easily dissuaded from their calling. This prompted Lord Rosebery, addressing the thirteenth annual meeting, to upbraid those who continued to see in the working man's club the shell of a plebian Athenaeum. Tersely he rejected newspaper reports of

persons discoursing to the members of these clubs, and drawing pictures of enlightened miners returning from their underground toil to the consumption of aesthetic teas or the discussion of the subtleties of Hamlet or the mysticism of Greek Literature.....

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15. Lecturer's Gazette, February 1863.

16. Inquirer, 12 May 1866.

17. The Times, 2 February 1872; See also, "The Artisan and His Friends," Saturday Review, 12 August 1865.

An important result of taking a course such as that I describe is to create a system of priggishness and to call into existence a race of prigs. (18)

Educational work was, nevertheless, integral to the vision of the club movement held by several of its leading figures. To deprecate the important role which intellectual work could discharge in placing before the club movement nobler ideals would impoverish it. (19) The union was intended to be an association of clubs and institutes and was thus certain to draw into membership those desirous of pursuing intellectual advancement as well as those seeking recreation. Moreover, by trying to limit the scope of educational work or by seeking the rigid separation of education and recreation the innovative role of the club would be diminished. Far from being rivals or alternatives for the loyalties of working men, many hoped that the club and the mechanics' institutes would complement each other, and that each would gain from a close alliance. Dr. Pankhurst was not alone in believing that "the social element of the club room will, in many instances, prove a door of entrance to the class room." (20)

Solly was most explicit on the centrality of educational work. His experiences in Cheltenham and Lancaster had made him aware that "innocent and rational recreation was perhaps the best means

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18. WMCJ, 24 July 1875. It is worth noting that one of the charges made against certain students at Ruskin by the breakaway group at the time of the 1909 dispute was that they were "prigs," see, Ruskin College and Working Class Education, (Oxford, 1910?), p.9. See also "Does Ruskin College Breed Prigs?" CIU, Annual Report, No.50, (1912), Appendix VII.
19. See editorial, House and Home, 8 January, 1881.
20. "The Yorkshire Union of Mechanics' Institutes," Transactions, N.A.P.S.S., (1864), p.477.

of rousing the drowsy intelligence of the working man to desire improvement."<sup>(21)</sup> That conviction had brought him into the club movement. Clubs could not rest content with the provision of humble attractions such as billiards or free-and-easies. For Solly, educational work would keep before the movement the ideals of co-operation and fellowship. Educational provision, however difficult it might prove to initiate, was not some option which clubs might or might not take up according to the fancy of their members. It was an area of work central to the elaboration of the club ideal, and by which its success would be measured.<sup>(22)</sup> Education, like teetotalism, would give clubs "tone." To neglect education would eventually sabotage the advance of this great social reform for if those who joined the clubs solely to pass their time with amusements gained the ascendancy then much mischief would result.<sup>(23)</sup>

Whatever their differences on other matters (and they were substantial) it is clear that Solly's insistence on the role of education was fully shared by Pratt. This accounts for the emphasis of particular speeches and address on educational matters, as well as their generally harmonious co-operation in the promotion of political and technical education in the clubs. Both also shared an interest in education as part of a wider strategy for recruiting working men to the clubs. Like so many observers of the nineteenth century working class, Pratt and Solly saw the working class as being composed of two distinct strata, artisans

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21. "On Working Men's Societies for Mental and Moral Improvement," Transactions, N.A.P.S.S., (1862), p.692.

22. H. Solly, Facts and Fallacies Connected with Working Men's Club and Institutes, (1868), pp.5-6.

23. H. Solly, These Eighty Years, (1893), Vol.II, p.312.

and labourers. To succeed, the club movement had to attract both into membership. But those features which would most readily induce the labouring man to sign up would not necessarily recruit the artisan. If the club movement was to advance as a mass movement, the sheer numbers it could count as members would be no guarantee of its intrinsic merits. What was required was the transformation of quantity into quality. Artisans were to be catalyst. They would provide the leaven of the movement. They possessed, most importantly, the skills of organisation and management necessary for the running of the club. They were knowledgeable men, often concerned to debate and familiarise themselves with a wide range of economic, social, and political questions. Thus the club movement looked to the "intelligent, thoughtful, earnest and well-informed artisans to lift up those below them in intelligence and knowledge."<sup>(24)</sup> To win the loyalty of this stratum, thereby assuring the future of the Union, facilities for self-improvement had to be offered at the club.<sup>(25)</sup>

The insistence of Pratt and Solly on the "vanguardist" role of the artisanate was shaped by their mutual acquaintance with the "Moral force" tendency in Chartism in the west country. Solly had been very impressed by the seriousness with which the Chartists, with whom he had become involved during his ministry in Cheltenham,

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24. WMCJ, 5 January 1878.

25. "The men who would form the backbone and brain of the club, know that its other agencies are wholly insufficient permanently to benefit and raise their class, without something in the shape of education forming part of its regular operations," H. Solly, Facts and Fallacies, p.7.

had created and pursued programmes of mutual instruction.<sup>(26)</sup>  
 Pratt, too, was adamant that clubs, to reap their full harvest, had to provide more than beer and billiards. Properly conducted, clubs could become "first rate machinery for extending knowledge... and for raising the tastes and aspirations of the people."<sup>(27)</sup>  
 Failure to take cognisance of the legitimate needs of the artisans "whose presence is essential to check gross self-indulgence" would drive them from the Union. If they seceded then clubs would fall into the hands of "noisy boys."<sup>(28)</sup> In numerous addresses Pratt returned to this theme urging representatives to enlarge intellectual work as they would, thereby, draw into permanent membership "a steady and thoughtful class of men."<sup>(29)</sup>

Given the positions which Solly and Pratt held in the movement and the genuine affection in which they were held, their opinions were given serious consideration. But their remarks were exhortatory not programmatic. They refrained from putting forward a specific programme which the clubs ought to adopt or a fixed timetable for the clubs to follow in order to attain educational progress. They represented, however, only one view of education. As has already been seen, others dissented vigorously from such a position, even if they did not name their adversaries.<sup>(30)</sup> A small group

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26. The impact of Chartism upon Solly is seen most clearly in his novel, James Woodford, Carpenter and Chartist, 2 vols., (1883); On Chartism and education, see, D. Jones, Chartism and the Chartists, (1975), pp.35-44; M. Cullen, "The Chartists and Education," New Zealand Journal of History, 10(2), 1976.

27. WMCJ, 30 September 1876.

28. WMCJ, 20 November 1875.

29. Ibid., 9 September 1876.

30. There was a very small minority of clubs for which education had a special role to play, such as Catholic clubs where it was suggested that educational work could be of assistance in keeping men in the Church and restoring lapsed members to the faith. See, Mr. Cullinan, "Relationship of Catholic Clubs to Education," League of the Cross Magazine, 3(10), October 1887.

pressed for the middle way, suggesting that at least during their early years clubs should try to keep their educational objectives modest and to maintain a flexible relationship between improvement and amusement. From such limited beginnings greater rewards might eventually be obtained. However trivial the reasons for joining a club the individual member, through regular attendance and association with his fellows and concern for the corporate well-being of the little commonwealth that his club represented, might gradually be aroused to consider extending his knowledge. Others might be stimulated by hearing a lecture or by talking to companions about some item seen in the reading room. Once interested they might recruit others to join them in forming a small reading party or discussion class and then set about obtaining lectures from outside speakers. The desire for improvement would develop organically. Working men who belonged to clubs, it was said, would derive great benefit "from having access to libraries, newspapers, periodicals and occasional lectures."<sup>(31)</sup>

This variety and clamour of opinions shows clearly that there was no unity over the appropriate educational tasks to set before the clubs. Some of the divisions were manifested at a debate on problems of club life called for June, 1869. Held at the Society of Arts, it was attended by delegates from 17 clubs, nine of which were situated in the metropolis. For Alsager Hill, the educational work of the union ought to have been discharged in the formation of night schools. He told the meeting of the important and pressing work that such schools could undertake,

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31. Inquirer, 26 September, 1863.



and spoke of his own experiences with such a venture on the Isle of Wight.

Dissenting sharply from this suggestion, Pratt wanted to draw a clear distinction between the working man's club and the youth's institute. Only at the latter should education enjoy a central role as it was conducive to good order "to lay hold of youth just at the age at which they were most in danger of acquiring bad habits." Education found at the night school was unsuitable for men. Other delegates recounted the educational experiences of their respective clubs. At Leytonstone, for example, the rather ambitious classes in arithmetic and latin had been discontinued for lack of support. More cheering examples of endeavours brought to fruition were given by speakers from the Mutual Improvement Society at Exeter and the Wisbech Club, Cambridge. At the latter club, all the classes were flourishing; the average attendance at the science, French and drawing classes, for instance, being respectively 40, 34 and 30. Notwithstanding such stories of progress under adversity, most delegates were of the opinion that educational work should not be overstressed, an opinion in which the Chair concurred. Great work, however, could be carried out if clubs developed schemes of "indirect education" through, for example, industrial exhibitions, wall diagrams and decorations illustrative of scientific or moral progress, the formation of reading rooms and local museums, the establishment of some form of library, and through the organisation of excursions which had some didactic purpose.<sup>(32)</sup>

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32. CIU, Annual Report, No.7, (1869), pp.8-13.

By using the distinction given here, club educational work could be divided into two kinds of provision; formal or direct and informal or indirect. Formal or direct education referred to the work of classes or lecture courses set up to attain some definite objective such as elementary instruction. Some of these schemes were conducted by or related to external bodies, such as the examinations of the Royal Society of Arts, the Department of Science, or the various prize essay schemes set up by interested bodies or individuals. Indirect, or informal education, was concerned with a wide range of activities which could be seen to possess some didactic purpose, even if this was disguised heavily from the participants. Undertakings covered by the rubric of indirect education included "Penny Readings," discussion and elocution groups, museum work, as well as the improvement in standards of behaviour and a new sense of moral worth which was said to accompany the very act of membership in a club. Some clubmen saw indirect education as a self-sufficient activity, while others hoped that involvement in such pastimes would kindle the desire for deeper and more thorough study thereby preparing the student to be able to make effective use of formal education. The two forms of education, therefore, were not mutually exclusive, but in terms of continuity and success of provision, indirect education was by far the most popular mode of club education. In addition to these distinctions, clubs like many other working class organisations faced general difficulties in making provision for educational work. In the early years of the movement there was the problem of space, that is the adequacy and availability of rooms usable for class meetings or lectures. For small clubs,

meeting in one or two rooms, giving over a room to a class of a few students would involve a considerable sacrifice. Moreover, clubs had to resolve difficulties of timetabling of activities so that, for example, the class work was not upset or interfered with by the noise coming from the "free-and-easy," or a discussion class disturbed by members wanting to use the smoking room. Besides, problems of space and allocation of rooms, there were other difficulties to be overcome, for instance obtaining a suitable supply of books for the library or periodicals for the reading room. Teachers had to be found. In some cases club members could be called upon to fill that role, for many working men, especially in elementary classes, preferred to be taught by men of their own class. For some classes, it would be necessary for the club to look outside its walls for qualified staff. This raised a host of problems. Assuming that teachers could be found who were willing to come to the club, then there was the question of the reward for their labours. To pay a teacher might be a large drain on the small income of a newly established club. Further, teacher and students had to be able to work together. Lichfield, using his considerable experience gained from the Working Men's College, was strongly of the opinion that progress in class work was only possible when work was placed on a less formal footing, for initially working men were inclined to treat teachers as "a severely official personage whose dignity is not to be lightly interfered with."<sup>(33)</sup>

Notwithstanding the cautionary remarks of well-wishers that

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33. Working Men's College Magazine, September, 1959.

over-zealous promotion of education would inevitably produce much disappointment and the material difficulties to be overcome, many clubs in the early years sought to lay down some programme of educational work for their members. Classes for reading, writing, arithmetic, mechanical drawing and singing were established by the club in Rectory Place, Loughborough. All proved popular.<sup>(34)</sup> By 1861, educational activities at the Bermondsey Working Men's Institute, founded in 1856, had so surpassed "the expectations of its most sanguine supporters" that extra lecturers were being engaged for the coming session.<sup>(35)</sup> By 1875, 21 lectures had been arranged for the winter session. In the previous season average attendance had been 500+, and no lecturer, it was said, "could wish to have a more crowded, attentive, and interested audience."<sup>(36)</sup> The directors of Leeds Working Men's Institute had been similarly well rewarded for their energy. Successful classes had been established for the teaching of elementary subjects, and an advanced reading class had been set up, the members of which "try to improve themselves and each other in the art of reading aloud." In addition, the Institute held a singing class and on alternate Thursdays a chemistry class had begun to meet, conducted by lecturers who gave their services free.<sup>(37)</sup> Elocution, shorthand, and elementary classes comprised the curriculum offered

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34. Solly Collection, Vol.XV, Item 9(b).

35. Lecturers Gazette, October, 1861.

36. WMCJ, 26 June, 1875.

37. Leeds Working Men's Institute, Annual Report, (Leeds, 1869), p.4.

by Shrewsbury Working Men's Club.<sup>(38)</sup> At Faversham prizes of an educational character were offered to successful exam students, while clubs in South Staffordshire were given much advice and assistance in developing programmes of instruction by the South Staffordshire Association for the Promotion of Adult Education.<sup>(39)</sup> Reports from clubs in all parts of the country suggested that few were heeding the warnings of the cassetras. Classes, especially elementary classes were being undertaken by the majority of institutions.<sup>(40)</sup> The experience of clubs such as Stourbridge or Scarborough where in the 1860's classes were but indifferently attended seemed to be the exception.<sup>(41)</sup>

To sustain such enthusiasm and to encourage others to initiate such work the Council of the Union, in September 1875, decided to make grants of money and books available to those clubs which made the most extensive provision for their members' education in the winter months.<sup>(42)</sup> To qualify for such a grant the club had to show that it organised a class which met at least ten times with an average attendance of five and that arrangements were made for either an oral or written examination. In particular, the Union

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38. Lecturers' Gazette, March, 1866.

39. CIU, Annual Report, No.3, (1865), p.14; Beehive, 28 January 1865.

40. See, for example, Kinver Improvement Society, Social Science Review, 2(34), 31 January 1863; Hackney Working Men's Institute, Ibid, 2(61), 8 August 1863.

41. H. Palfrey, The Story of Stourbridge Club and Institute, (Stourbridge, 1948), p.22; Lecturers' Gazette, May 1863.

42. CIU, Annual Report, No.12, (1874), pp.12-13.

wished to use the scheme to promote the careful study of history, politics, economics and morality. Prizes were also offered by the Union as incentives to study. The customary pattern was for the Union to select a topic to be studied or question to be answered, with suggestions as to the appropriate literature to be used. After a prescribed period of study students in individual classes were invited to submit essays on the chosen theme to the Union for adjudication. A prize was awarded to the best. Thus in September, 1876, the Union offered money prizes for the three best essays on "The History of the Great Rebellion," the suggested reading being Cordery and Philpot's King and Commonwealth. To the majority of the members of Council, this was an acceptable and successful educational incentive. Maurice, however, thought the practice reprehensible. He sternly rebuked the Union:

Of all the corruptions of our university and public school system none is more lamentable than the growth of an elaborate system of prizes. It implies that the love of learning for its own sake is declining, and that the people can be stirred to interest in reading only by one of the lowest motives which can act on men, the getting of a certain amount of money or reputation for themselves. (43)

Maurice's criticism went unheeded. The Union continued the practice of prize competitions, especially those which concerned historical topics as these were seen as an important constituent in the political education of the club member. In 1881, for instance, students could choose either to discuss the major themes

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43. WMCJ, 5 February 1876. Maurice's was clearly the minority opinion. At a soiree held at Toynbee Hall, for instance, in December 1887, Mrs. Barnett offered a prize of £2 to be awarded in the following year for the best essay on the "National Gallery." She was prompted to choose this subject because "Whitechapel was such an ugly place it was therefore necessary... that we should cultivate a knowledge of the beautiful." CIJ, 10 December 1887.

in English History or write on British Rule in India. The latter theme had been chosen because the Council was convinced that every clubman "ought to have some means of studying the character of our rule in the East, so that he may be sure that the 200 millions of fellow-subjects there are ruled by the principles of justice and mercy."<sup>(44)</sup> Individuals sympathetic to the Union's aims also offered prizes for educational work. Lord Francis Hervey offered a series of prizes in the early 1880's for essays written by members on the subjects of history, social and industrial topics and poetry. Although many of the essays submitted in such competitions, proved to be of indifferent quality, this did not dissuade the Union from arguing that essay work was of considerable value, especially for the younger member, in training accurate thought.<sup>(45)</sup>

After the flurry of activity in the late 1860's it was becoming clear by the mid 1870's that, Union prizes and grants notwithstanding, class work in the clubs was experiencing grave difficulties in recruiting and sustaining membership. To be sure, there were still examples of success to be noted. "Self Culture" was the motto taken by the Livingstone Club, Islington which it tried to put into effect by classes in elocution, elementary arithmetic, and animal physiology. Similar success was reported from the Gifford Hall where well-attended classes in elocution and drawing were held in 1875. A number of students had won prizes of chess sets and boxes of mathematical instruments for

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44. House and Home, 15 January 1881.

45. CIU, Annual Report, No.20, (1882), p.9.

their work in the classes. (46) Many other clubs appeared to be experiencing the gravest difficulties in maintaining or beginning class work, even though the membership of the movement was expanding. A projected class in political economy under the direction of F. Maitland, organised by the Union, had to be cancelled due to lack of interest from the affiliated clubs, although whether this was the result of indifference or ideological aversion to the topic chosen is not possible to determine. (47)

Returns submitted by 174 clubs to the Union, also in 1873, showed that less than one third had classes in elementary instruction or science. (48) These obvious difficulties did not deter the Union from submitting a memorial to the Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge University stressing the potential for educational work in the clubs. Believing that there would be "a great increase in the number of the more intelligent artisans" who would join the clubs if higher education were provided, the memorialists stated that there was a demand from superior workmen for systematic and regular instruction in political philosophy and political economy. There remained the problem of financing such instruction, for workmen seemed reluctant to lay out much money for education unless it was of a technical kind which gave them some direct reward in terms of enhanced earnings. But the Union was not deterred for it believed that ample funds would be forthcoming from the upper and middle classes who were coming to recognise that "sound instruction for the mass of the people in History and Political

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46. WMCJ, 1 November 1875. See also the prospectus for St. Martin's Club, Ibid, 20 November 1875.

47. CIU, Annual Report, No.12 (1874), p.11.

48. Ibid, p.18.



and Economic Science is an important security for the future good government and civil peace in this country."<sup>(49)</sup>

The Union remained optimistic regarding the potential for educational work carried out in classes. The grounds for such optimism were slim. With the establishment of the University Extension movement, the Union discussed with Stuart the possibilities of using the clubs as bases for the work. Yet there was no strong evidence that club members would be willing to take up any schemes that could be established. Various kinds of formal instruction could be found in those rural clubs which had grown from local mutual improvement societies. Similarly, clubs which had the support of a local patron continued to offer programmes of educational work. At Saltair, for example, besides successful elementary and needlework classes, the club also had a school of art, a gym and a laboratory.<sup>(50)</sup> At another model institute, Wisbech, all classes were closed in the early 1860's.<sup>(51)</sup> These difficulties forced the Union to reconsider the contribution that clubs could make to the formal education of their members. In consequence of such disappointments, the Union redefined the educational potential of the clubs as the "preparation of a considerable number of persons for more regular and thorough instruction." Such a task was capable of swift realisation if:

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49. CIU, Annual Report, No.11 (1873), pp.ii-iv.

50. Capital and Labour, 3 February 1875; A. Holroyd, Titus Salt, (Saltaire, 1871), p.21; R. Balgarnie, Titus Salt, (1877), p.229.

51. W. Bray, op.cit., p.10.

those who have had the immense advantages of higher education would avail themselves of the wide field of usefulness afforded by these institutions in serving their less fortunate fellows. (52)

With this statement the Union came to recognise that it was unlikely that it could stimulate class work in the clubs. It could, however, offer facilities to its members which would allow them to take up the various forms of education offered by outside bodies such as University Extension classes.

In the early 70's there had been a concerted attempt to give some London clubs a more specific role in the cause of technical education. Concern for the provision and quality of technical instruction had first been expressed in the 1850's. Lyon Playfair, one of the first Joint Secretaries of the Department of Science and Art established in 1853, was commissioned to inquire into the condition of the London Mechanics' Institution in 1856. He was troubled greatly by what he discovered there. There was only one major class, and that was for vocal instruction, while the chemistry class could only muster fourteen students. Lectures were poor, and the institute, like so many others, seemed unable to resist the demand "for novelty and amusement." Playfair concluded that if the academy was to discharge its proper function then either the wealthy must give substantial financial assistance to allow the educational programme to expand and proper staff to be attracted, or the government should take responsibility, preferably through a payment by results system. (53) It was the

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52. CIU, Annual Report, No.24 (1883), pp.8-9.

53. Report of Dr. Lyon Playfair on the London Mechanics' Institution. P.P. 1857-58, xlvi.

Paris Universal Exhibition of 1867 which demonstrated the parlous state of technical education in Britain.<sup>(54)</sup> The superiority of artifacts and machinery displayed was attributed to the thoroughness of the scientific and technical training of the continental artisan, which allowed him to produce items of better quality and workmanship compared to his British brothers. In explaining this advantage Huxley and Playfair stressed the wide range of facilities, such as art museums and galleries, open to the continental craftsmen as well as formal training for the development of skill as explanations for the privileged position of skilled workmen in France and Germany.<sup>(55)</sup> Artisans on trips to the Exhibition organised by the Society of Arts and the Club and Institute Union similarly emphasised the superior education of the French worker and the greater availability of rational amusements open to him and his family. Moreover the fact that French galleries and museums were open Sundays when the artisan had time

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54. Report Relating to Technical Education, P.P. 1867 xxvi. For the condition of technical education in the 1860's and 70's see, M. Gowing, "Science, Technology and Education: England in 1870," Notes and Records of the Royal Society of London, 32(1), 1977; A. Levine, "Structure of Scientific and Technical Education," Economische-en-Sociaal Historisch Jaarboek, Vol.38, 1975; M. Stephens and G. Roderick, "British Artisan Science and Technical Education in the Nineteenth Century," Annals of Science, Vol.29(1), 1972.
55. T. Huxley, "Technical Education," Industrial Art, Vol.2(1), January 1878; P. Musgrave, "Constant Factors in the Demand for Technical Education," in P. Musgrave (Ed), Sociology, History and Education, (1970), p.143; see also Circular of Lord Stanley to H.M. Representatives Abroad relating to Technical and Industrial Education, P.P. 1867-68, liv.

to visit them provided access to masterpieces of art and design. (56)

If Britain was to meet the challenge to its industrial and commercial supremacy coming from the newly industrialised nations of France, Germany and the United States, then the artisan had to be given training and education analogous to that received abroad. (57)

Technical education, declaimed Rosebery with patriotic fervour, was "necessary to maintain our race." (58) London Guilds as well as trade union leaders and artisans' organisations took up the issue. (59) Birmingham's Society of Artisans, in the early 1870's expressed their concern at the limitations placed upon their mobility and improvement by the restrictive division of labour found in the factory. Only by technical education could they

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56. Society of Arts, Reports of Artisans on the Visit to the Paris Universal Exhibition, (1867); D. Hudson and K. Luckhurst, The Royal Society of Arts, (1954), pp.209-11; Modern Industries, (1868); this contained a series of reports by skilled workmen who visited the Exhibition under the auspices of the CIU, for which Pratt wrote the Introduction. See also, R. Bestal, The Brass Workers of Berlin and Birmingham, (5th edition, 1910).
57. E. Bellhouse, "Technical Industrial Education," Transactions, Manchester Statistical Society, 1880-81; J. Plummer, "Technical Education at Home and on the Continent," British Almanack and Companion, 1869; Cassell's manual Technical Education, An Encyclopaedia of Technical Education, 4 volumes, was first published 1870-72. For a general account, see, L. Ward, "Technical Education and the Politicians," British J. Educational Studies, 21(1), 1973.
58. Lord Rosebery, Address to Keighley Institute, (1887), p.15.
59. For the technical education work undertaken by the Joiners' Company, House Furnisher and Decorator, New Series, Vol.2(2), 1 February 1872 and 3(26) February 1874; B. Singh, "The Development of Technical and Vocational Education in Britain and America, 1870-1940," (Ph.D Thesis, Univ. of London, 1974), pp.316-32; W. McCann, "Trade Unionist, Co-Operative and Socialist Organisations in relation to Popular Education," (Ph.D Thesis, Univ. Manchester, 1960), pp.103-104.

advance themselves. (60) Delegates to the Trades Union Congress at Sheffield in January 1876 unanimously passed a resolution strongly in support of technical education:

That this Congress believes the time has come, when it would be well for the working men's organisations to take up the question of technical education, with a view to further developing skill; and that with this object schools for technical instruction ought to be established in every centre of industry, supported by grants from the Education Department. (61)

Solly quickly took up the banner of technical education. His essays on the subject were intended to prove that:

good workmanship, and therefore efficient technical training, with habits of Temperance and Thrift, lie at the basis of everything that is desirable in a workman's life. (62)

Addressing the Peckham Radical Club, he drew the familiar and stereotyped distinction between the English artisan who was usually ignorant of the technical principles of his job and the scientific training and understanding of his German counterpart. (63) Solly's concern for the issues raised by technical education derived from his much larger interest in any matters which pertained to the

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60. A. Hooper, "Mid-Victorian Radicalism: Community and Class in Birmingham, 1850-1880," (Ph.D Thesis, Univ. London, 1978), p.26; The Society had been formed by twenty-five Birmingham artisans who visited the Paris Exhibition and was devoted to the advocacy of technical and scientific instruction. See McCann, Thesis, p.104.
61. Trades Union Congress, Annual Report, No.6, (1874), p.32; See also, A Trade Union Secret, Technical Education from a Working Man's Point of View, (n.d., 1889?).
62. H. Solly, "Technical Education," Nineteenth Century, 16 August, 1884, p.20; Idem, "Technical Education," Transactions, British Association for the Advancement of Science, 1886, p.751; R.C. on Technical Instruction, Vol.III, Second Report, P.P.1884, Part II, pp.204-10.
63. CIU, 27 March 1885. See also, H. Solly, "The Technical Trade Schools of North Germany," Fraser's Magazine, New Series, Vol.15, February 1877.

well-being of the artisanate. Besides propaganda Solly, aided by Pratt, also gave practical witness to wish to improve the position of the artisan. In 1872 Pratt began a series of classes in geometry for metal workers at the St. James and Soho Club.<sup>(64)</sup> He had been brought into contact with provision for technical training in Europe during his frequent trips abroad for rest and recuperation and like Solly was firmly of the opinion that Britain's commercial advantage would be lost if its artisans were denied facilities for technical training.<sup>(65)</sup> Four years prior to Pratt's class the London Artizans' Club had been opened, with premises in Newman Street, off Oxford Street. Formerly the House Painters and Decorators Club and Institute, the new club, which included among its benefactors, Morley, Shipton, Howell, Cremer, and Applegarth, was intended to become a centre for technical training.<sup>(66)</sup> Shortly after the inauguration of the club Solly together with leading trades unionists and philanthropists established an organisation to further the education and training of the artisans. This was the Trades Guild of Learning officially brought to the notice of the public at a meeting at the Society of Arts on 14 June 1873. Besides Solly, the meeting comprised leading churchmen, educationalists and officials from the majority of the London trades unions.<sup>(67)</sup> Much

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64. C. Millis, Technical Education: Its Development and Aims, (1925), p.4.
65. See his Introduction to Modern Industries, (1868); and his address to the Artizan's Institute, The Beehive, 16 September, 1876.
66. Millis, op.cit., p.5; S. Cotgrove, Technical Education and Social Change, (1958), p.14; Inquirer, 30 January 1869.
67. Daily Telegraph, 18 June 1873.

goodwill greeted this initiative, even if the direction of the educational work to be undertaken had seemed a little vague. A series of meetings were held in early 1873 to explain the workings of the League. Trades unionists gave their support despite some initial suspicion regarding co-operation with the middle-class.<sup>(68)</sup> Harmony was short-lived for Solly was soon at odds with the committee. The cause of the dissension was the familiar one, that Solly's style of management was high handed, while Solly muttered to his patrons of intrigues against him and the manipulation of the Guild by radical interests. Before the end of 1873, Solly had left the Guild. The Guild struggled on until 1882, although it was no longer mainly concerned with technical education.<sup>(69)</sup> During its early years it did provide a number of lectures on literary as well as scientific subjects, and William Morris was retained by the League to give a series of lectures on the "Principles of House Decoration." A wish to extend the class work undertaken caused the League to diminish the lecturing programme after 1881.<sup>(70)</sup> Lack of interest in the League by the union movement hastened its demise. It was an interesting venture, and one which showed again the impossibility of maintaining harmonious relationships between Solly and many of his associates.

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68. Workman's Magazine, No. 4, April, 1873; Standard, 10 April 1873.

69. For a full account of the Guild, see W. McCann, "The Trades Guild of Learning," Vocational Aspect, Vol.19(42), 1967; Woodroffe, op.cit., pp.26-27 also sees Solly's personality as the main cause of the breakup of the League. For Solly's account, see These Eighty Years, Vol.II, Chaps. X and XI.

70. Capital and Labour, 10 August 1881.

In late 1877 the Union organised a conference at the Society of Arts on the theme of technical education, at which Huxley was the guest speaker. He warmly greeted the establishment of universal elementary education urging the representatives to organise industrial exhibitions which did much to "inculcate and improve love of science."<sup>(71)</sup> Technical education was also promoted by the Artisans' Institute which had been established in Castle Street in 1874 by the familiar coterie who had pressed for the Trades Guild and who had helped the Artisan's Club. At the Institute in winter a sustained programme of technical instruction was offered. Thus in 1875 the subjects taught included joinery, building construction and algebra, while in 1880 there was a class for bricklayers conducted by Mr. Channon and Millis took two classes, one in tin-plate working, the other for workers in Zinc.<sup>(72)</sup> Apprentices who brought a recommendation from their foreman or employer could join the classes for a nominal fee of 1/- compared to the usual charges of 3/- for an elementary class and 4/- for the advanced.<sup>(73)</sup> The Institute also offered courses suitable for a liberal education such as elocution and latin besides holding debates and giving public lectures. Relations between capital and labour was the chosen theme for a series of lectures given in the Spring of 1875. The speakers included Mundella, Brassey, and Rosebery besides a number of working men.<sup>(74)</sup>

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71. Industrial Review, 8 December 1877.

72. WMCJ, 28 August 1875; C. Millis, Education for Trades and Industries, (1932), pp.17, 25 and 46; Common Good, 1(4), 31 October and 1(6), 13 November, 1880.

73. House and Home, 1 January, 1881.

74. Capital and Labour, 14 April 1875.



One further organisational initiative came with the foundation in 1882 of the Artisans Technical Association with Thomas Burt as President, Pratt and Solly as Vice-Presidents, and Millis as Honorary Secretary.<sup>(75)</sup> The object of the Association was to campaign to bring to public notice the importance of technical education. In March, 1885, for example, at Anderton's Hotel the Association brought together over 150 working men and employers to consider the provision of technical education for youth. On the motion of Ben Ellis and Stephen Taylor, the meeting set up a committee to examine plans whereby young men could be given thorough instruction in technical matters.<sup>(76)</sup> The Association was disbanded in 1885 which marked the end of a series of attempts to use London clubs as part of an organised programme of technical instruction. The reason for the failure of such schemes are complex. Besides that of personal antipathy, it is also necessary to note that most of these organisations lacked any clear understanding and presentation of objectives. There was no attempt to consider the overall relationship between the capitalist labour process and the nature of skills. Even on the basic definition there was ambivalence regarding what constituted technical education.<sup>(77)</sup> More importantly, although situated in a city which was dominated by workshop production and which therefore favoured discussion of the impact of technical change on traditional work practices, these organisations faced hostility from those

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75. Millis, Education for Trades....., p.7.

76. CIJ, 20 March 1885.

77. See the useful discussion in P. Musgrave, "The Definition of Technical Education, 1860-1910," in P. Musgrave, op.cit.

groups which were supposed to be the objects of such solicitous concern. Although trades union leaders were anxious to see the diffusion of technical education, they were suspicious as to the methods of working and ultimate intentions of those with whom they came into contact. Workers and trade officials, in a number of instances, thought they saw in the cry for technical training a ploy to devalue apprenticeships, undermine craft mysteries, and to weaken the workshop "frontier of control."<sup>(78)</sup> From this perspective technical education assumed the character of an employers' offensive, especially at a time when basic issues of trade union rights remained unresolved. To some extent the enthusiasts for technical education were given a boost by the onset of the trade depression in the early 1870's which seemed to confirm their dire prophecies of commercial vulnerability. However, the antipathies and sheer expense of this training for many working men worked against such propitious ideological circumstances.

The demise of formal organisations did not mark the end of club involvement with the technical education campaign. Individual clubs, throughout the 70's and 80's, tried to make some provision for the training of their members. Keighley Working Men's Club ran a trade school for its members.<sup>(79)</sup> Classes for mathematics and science, fully illustrated with experiments, were given by Mr. Hatfield at the Redditch Club. They began in 1887 and cost 1½d for 90 minutes instruction.<sup>(80)</sup> A very ambitious programme

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78. On the working man's prejudice see, R. Baxter, "How best to encourage technical education among the workmen," Society of Arts, International Congress on Technical Education, (1897).

79. WMCJ, 19 June 1875.

80. CIJ, 19 February 1887.

was undertaken by the Worcester Union of Working Men's Clubs which by 1895 had a grant of £450 available for instruction in horticulture. The Union employed two full-time staff to give evening lectures as well as visiting gardens and allotments to offer practical advice. Over 103 lectures were delivered in 1893-94 in addition to over 1400 visits. The Union also held several classes in relevant subjects such as practical pruning.<sup>(81)</sup> Over 100 students of the London and South Western Railway Club passed their City and Guilds examinations in 1887 in applied mechanics, geometry, machine drawing and carpentry.<sup>(82)</sup> Clubs in London were also circulated with promotional literature by the National Association for the Promotion of Technical and Scientific Education when it was set up in mid 1887.<sup>(83)</sup> This was followed by a conference of representatives of the London Clubs at Toynbee Hall in July 1888 where they were urged to take up the work of technical education by Professor Stuart.<sup>(84)</sup> A similar conference was held in February 1889. Introduced by Llewelyn Smith the conference debated the ways in which London clubs could contribute to technical education.<sup>(85)</sup>

The need for clubs to take up technical education was a

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81. The Record of Technical and Secondary Education, 4(21), October 1895.
82. CLJ, 29 October 1887.
83. Ibid, 30 June 1888.
84. National Association for the Promotion of Technical and Scientific Education, Annual Report, No. 1, (1888), pp.1 & 9. For the establishment and work of the Association, see W. Armytage, Mundella, pp.270-72.
85. National Association.....Technical Education, Annual Report, No.3, (1890), p.47.

regular theme of journal editorials and formed the theme of Brassey's Presidential speech in 1883.<sup>(86)</sup> Solly also warmly welcomed the report of the Royal Commission on Technical Instruction which was published in 1884. His only criticism of the report was its failure to recognise the important contribution that skilled workmen could make as technical teachers, rather than simply stressing the need for state activity.<sup>(87)</sup>

With the passing of the Technical Instruction Act, 1889, the necessity of the clubs to provide technical instruction for its members diminished.<sup>(88)</sup> For the student wishing to obtain a technical training there were now facilities available at the local night school, besides provision offered by the City and Guilds Science and Art Classes and later, polytechnics. Technical education in the clubs thus generally fell away in the 1890's. It had never achieved widespread support among clubmen. Some members had found the pressing questions of the 1870's and 80's - radicalism, socialism, secularism and Ireland - far more to their taste than dry class room learning. More practically, for many clubs struggling with finances or pressed for space, the resources

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86. Charity Organisation Reporter, 19 July 1883; See, CIJ, 26 December 1884.

87. H. Solly, Nineteenth Century, p.302. He had given evidence before the Commission where he had recommended the establishment of apprenticeship schools. He also noted that evening classes only attracted a few "strong, hearty lads, ambitious and aspiring, who do not mind fatigue." R.C. on Technical Instruction, Second Report P.P.1884 XXXI, Part II, pp.206-10

88. The Act enabled local authorities to levy a rate of 1d in the £1 for the support of technical education, the money raised thereby to be used in support of education in polytechnics and other local educational institutions. Under the Libraries Amendment Act, 1884, libraries which desired to conduct technical courses were empowered to apply for grants to defray the payment of teachers and cost of equipment. See D. Davies, Public Libraries as Cultural and Social Centers: The Origins of the Concept, (New Jersey, 1974), pp.77-78.

required to establish feasible technical training were beyond their means. To urge every club to establish a workshop, a suggestion made at the 1887 Annual Meeting, showed little understanding of the realities of club life.<sup>(89)</sup> Even if clubs had the necessary space there were other obstacles to be overcome such as the expense of purchasing suitable equipment, the recruitment of experienced teachers and setting a fee which was financially acceptable to both club and students. Few clubs could meet all three criteria.

Besides campaigning for technical education, the Union also tried to interest the leading London clubs in building closer ties with the Working Men's College. Between 1885-87 the Union organised a series of meetings at London clubs to publicise the work of the College and to encourage clubs to set up classes to be conducted under the auspices of the College.

At the Council Meeting of June 1885 it was decided to hold the first conference at the Bryanston Club to which the 29 clubs in the west and north west districts of London were invited to send members. On 1st July the conference opened, Mr. Nash, Honorary Secretary of the Council taking the Chair. It was a poorly attended meeting, only 16 delegates from 9 clubs bothered to turn up. Mr. Tansley from the College explained the idea behind the venture and told the delegates that the College was willing to send teachers to any class organised by a club which attracted at least 10 members. Fees were to be the same as those current at the College. Delegates warmly welcomed the proposal. Penny of the Britannia Club drew attention to the

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89. CLJ, 9 July 1887.

need to provide elementary classes as "the intellectuality of the majority of members was very small." Cuereel (John Bright Radical) on the other hand wished to see classes in French and political economy organised so that the "large number of men of superior attainments" who were club members would have their needs attended to.<sup>(90)</sup>

This enthusiasm for the scheme persuaded the Council that Mr. Tansley ought to send a circular to the clubs explaining the proposal and its attendant benefits. This task he completed by mid-July, the main theme of his document being the need for strong ties of mutual aid between the two bodies because both desired that "working men should have opportunities for self-culture, and both believe that the association of men of various occupations and in different ranks of life is a great means to this end."<sup>(91)</sup>

Delegates at the reconvened meeting stated that the circular had been well received and they had answered many inquiries. On Dent's suggestion it was resolved to form small committees to canvass support for various classes and then report back to another meeting in mid-August. It was also agreed to hold a meeting of delegates from clubs in south west and south east London in August.<sup>(92)</sup>

A meeting similar to that held at the Bryanston met at the Eleusis Club on August 20th. Delegates were once again more than sure that opinion in their respective clubs would be favourable to the scheme.<sup>(93)</sup>

Hatcham Liberal Club was the venue for a meeting

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90. CIJ, 10 July 1885.

91.. Ibid, 17 July 1885. For Tansley's outstanding contribution to the history of the Working Men's College, see, J. F. C. Harrison, A History of the Working Men's College, (1959), Chap.V, passim.

92. CIJ, 7 August 1885.

93. Ibid, 28 August 1885.

of nearly 50 delegates from the south eastern clubs. Dent took the chair. He urged them to take full advantage of the offer for it was important that members obtain a good education in order "to fit them for intelligently using the great power which recently had been placed in their hands."<sup>(94)</sup>

The first class under the auspices of the scheme opened at the Bryanston Club in October. Its subject was "Electricity and Magnetism," open to any club member for a fee of 4/- for the course. But the club remained alone, for no other club had set up a class by the beginning of 1886.<sup>(95)</sup>

The members of the Bryanston Club were rewarded for their industry when in the College examinations all eight members of the class passed,<sup>(96)</sup> No doubt inspired by this example a number of clubs sought the aid of the College in the autumn of 1886 to discuss the establishment of classes, the provision to include both elementary and advanced subjects. Several clubs made this application for assistance including the Jewish, Netherlands, and Peckham Reform, while in West London a joint committee had been formed to promote educational work comprising representatives from the Hammersmith, Chiswick Liberal, Starch Green Radical and West Kensington Radical clubs. After some hesitation the scheme seemed to be winning favour. Classes for "Magnetism and Electricity," practical geometry and building construction were announced by the Hammersmith club, the programme to commence with a special address by Sidney Webb on the "Importance of Scientific and Technical Training."

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94. Ibid, 11 September 1885.

95. CIU, Annual Report, No.24 (1886), p.12.

96. CIJ, 31 July 1886.

Further propaganda work was to be carried out by a conference at the Eleusis Club which in addition to representatives from the clubs and the College, would also welcome speakers from Toynbee Hall and London University Extension Society.<sup>(97)</sup>

On 29th September the conference took place, with Pratt in the chair. Despite extensive advertising the response from the clubs was poor. Roberts of the Extension Society, gave the major speech, taking as his theme the need to dispel apathy towards educational work. "A great missionary work lay before them," he told the audience, "in rousing the people to a sense that there is an education which they need." Resolutions were passed supporting the joint venture.<sup>(98)</sup> At the College in August 1887, the almost routine conference to discuss education in the clubs was held. Over 30 delegates listened to speeches from Pratt and Webb, and were again presented with information on the facilities for study offered by the College which they were asked to bring to the attention of their members.<sup>(99)</sup> Following the Conference some clubs did seem to regain their enthusiasm for the project. A meeting, at the South Hackney Club, of the Hackney Radical Federation on September 12th loudly applauded Mr. Wain when he drew attention to the importance and value of learning to the working man. "Education was a boon thrown upon them that they ought not to miss. Educational advance means political advance," he solemnly declared. As usual the proceedings ended with unanimous resolutions being passed commending the opportunities for elementary

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97. Ibid, 25 September 1886.

98. CLJ, 2 October and 9 October 1886.

99. Ibid, 3 September 1887



and technical education offered by the College.<sup>(100)</sup> Some clubs were giving substance to these resolutions by commencing extension classes. Sidney Webb took a class in "Political Economy" at the Wandsworth Liberal and Radical Club, while at the St. Peter's Club, Kennington Lane, Rev. England conducted a class in "English Literature."<sup>(101)</sup> Classes in political economy were also taught in the Fulham, Walham Green and West Marylebone Clubs. Technical instruction was provided by classes in machine construction and applied mechanics at the Hammersmith Club, and building construction at Surbiton. Dr. Aveling took the class in physiology at the Patriotic Club.<sup>(102)</sup>

This attempt to unite clubs with the Working Men's College has been told at some length because it illustrates the problems associated with starting educational work in the clubs. To many Union and College officials the idea seemed a good one bringing beneficent results to both participating organisations. There would be no shortage of assistance or encouragement for those clubs which joined the scheme. Representatives of the London clubs attending the various conferences to discuss the initiative were enthusiastic, pledging the support of their members for the scheme. The subsequent history of the classes showed that most had allowed their optimism to overrule their judgement. Classes were taken up in only a few clubs and it seemed to require endless prodding to induce the small numbers to keep up their membership once

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100. Ibid., 17 September 1887.

101. CIJ, 29 October 1887.

102. Ibid., 1 October 1887. Aveling was "reputed to be the best living teacher on biology."

class work began. There were other obstacles apart from indifference on the part of the membership. For example, although the clubs were being offered some of the classes at a reduced rate, for some potential students the cost was still beyond their limited means. The experiment showed that while there was a real regard for the importance of education and a desire that the club movement should play a full part in developing such work, it required long, and often unrewarded, labours to translate ideological commitment into practical achievement. (103)

But not all educational undertakings met with such desultory results. During the winter of 1881-82 an active class in "Political Economy" met weekly at the Warwick St. Club, Blackfriars. (104) The demise of the Honley Mechanics' Institute in 1879 was attributed to the establishment of a club. The club took over its elementary class, which continued to meet until the mid 80's as well as the Institute's library. Over 180 members of the club attended the elementary class in 1880. (105) An educational innovation was carried out by the Manchester Association of Working Men's Clubs which joined with the Manchester and Salford Trades Council in providing facilities for amusement and instruction for school-leavers in the Salford area. In 1886 the local school board

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103. But clubs were not alone in experiencing difficulty in promoting class work. London Extension classes were indifferently attended and their classes in scientific subjects run in conjunction with the Working Men's College attracted only eight or nine members. See, E. Welch, "The London Society for the Extension of University Teaching, 1875-1902," Guildhall Studies in London History, 3(1), 1977, especially, pp.59-61.

104. CIU, Annual Report, No.20, (1882), p.9.

105. J. Hemming, Thesis, pp.78-80.

granted the two bodies the evening use of three local schools, two for boys and one for girls. Classes were begun for singing, musical drill, illustrated science lectures, and cookery lessons for girls. So popular did the experiment prove that another girl's school had to be opened soon after.<sup>(106)</sup> These classes, part of the Recreative Evening Schools movement, lasted until 1902.<sup>(107)</sup> Finally, the growing interest in and support for drama in the clubs in the mid 80's gave rise to a number of classes, such as that run by Kegan Paul, for the study and discussion of Shakespeare's plays.<sup>(108)</sup>

The poor response to the CIU/Working Men's College venture did not dilute the Union's enthusiasm for educational work. London clubs were contacted by the Union in July 1887 urging the formation of educational committees and making them aware that the union was able to supply teachers and lecturers.<sup>(109)</sup> This was followed by a circular in October to all affiliated clubs setting out a number of proposals which the Union suggested if adopted would enhance club education. For London clubs there was the news that the Union was to offer a prize for the best club student in any class connected with the Working Men's College. All clubs could benefit from the other points listed by the Union, including the provision of French

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106. CIJ, 23 October and 6 November 1886.

107. K. Dockray, op.cit., p.26. On the Recreative Evening Schools Movement see, F. Wills, "Recreative Evening Schools," Nineteenth Century, Vol.20, July 1886. In London, the London Trades Council had been active in the work, see Mrs. Thorpe, "Recreative Evening Schools," Good Words, Vol.29, November 1888; J. Marchant, J. B. Paton Educational and Social Pioneer, (1909), pp.238-39.

108. CIJ, 8 May and 5 June 1886.

109. Ibid, 6 August 1887.

and German dictionaries for students taking language classes, and the supply of appropriate text books to classes.<sup>(110)</sup> At the Club building in 1893, the Union organised popular lectures, which were held every Thursday in winter, a shorthand class, a reading class conducted under the auspices of the Home Reading Union, and there was an economics discussion class at the modest charge of 6d for the session.<sup>(111)</sup> The following year, in response to requests that it was becoming very difficult for many thoughtful men to obtain intellectual stimulation from their clubs, the Union initiated an Economics Class which met to examine Marshall's Elements of Economics of Industry.<sup>(112)</sup>

Nonetheless, it had become clear to many by the 1890's that classes for formal education would probably never meet with much success or prove attractive to the mass of the membership. Study courses, above the elementary level, appeared to rely for support on a very small section of the membership. Moreover certain kinds of education were of diminishing value to clubmen. This was especially true of elementary education. By 1888 the first generation of male working class children educated in Board Schools had reached the age where they were eligible for club membership.<sup>(113)</sup> Thus clubs would be recruiting into membership men who no longer

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110. CIJ, 15 October 1887.

111. CIJ, 28 October 1893.

112. Ibid, 6 January 1894.

113. Although at the Garforth Working Men's Club with the passing of the 1870 Education Act, working men were prohibited from the night class, admission being restricted to working lads; Popple, op.cit., Vol.II, pp.65-66.

required or would admit to requiring tuition in elementary subjects. Elementary provision did not cease immediately, but such classes were of marginal importance by the end of the century. The Union, however, was often critical of the attitudes of those educated by the new schools. Too many men seemed content with the limited education provided by the Board school having no desire to extend their knowledge. What, an editorial in the club journal pondered, would have happened to the education of the working class if men such as Burns had spent their time listening to "song and dance artistes" instead of improving themselves?<sup>(114)</sup> The need for specific class provision in the clubs for such subjects as technical or commercial education was also curtailed by the modest expansion of facilities for such instruction given by Science and Art classes, polytechnics, and courses run under the direction of the City and Guilds Institute.<sup>(115)</sup> If members required tuition in metalwork or book-keeping then these institutions often offered far superior facilities to those found in the overwhelming majority of clubs. Extension work, initiated by Cambridge in 1873 and taken up by London University in 1876, and, from 1903, the workers' Educational Association also presented alternatives to club education. Toyabee Hall opened as a centre for London extension work in 1877, and in 1878 Frederick Rogers, himself a club Vice-

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114. CIJ, 5 September 1891.

115. H. Edwards, The Evening Institute, (1961); K. Parry, "The Prehistory of the Evening Institute," Studies in Adult Education, Vol.2(2), 1970, pp.149-53.

President became Organising Secretary.<sup>(116)</sup> These new organisations were not seen as rivals. On the contrary, the Union came more and more to stress the value to club men of taking advantage of the facilities offered by these bodies, and took an active role in promoting the work of both Extension societies and the W.F.A. For those clubs who could muster the necessary attendance there was still a wide range of class work offered as late as 1890, as Table 18 shows. All the classes were to be taught by University teachers employed through the assistance of the Working Men's College and the Co-operative Society.

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116. W. Leaf, "The Extension of University Teaching in London," Journal of the Royal Society of Arts, Vol.23, June 1876; E. Abel, "Middle Class Culture for the Urban Poor; The Educational Thought of Samuel Barnett," Social Service Review, Vol.52(4), 1978, pp.607-08; J. Pimlott, Toynbee Hall: Fifty Years of Social Progress, (1935), pp.17-18; 59-60; Welch, op.cit. On extension work, see J. Collins, "The Universities in Contact with the People," Nineteenth Century, Vol.26, October 1889; J. Harrison, Learning and Living, (1961), Chapter 4, passim; J. Burrows, University Adult Education in London, (1976).

TABLE 18 Classes in connection with the CIU.

| Subject                 | Min. No. of Students | No. of Lessons | Fee for Course |
|-------------------------|----------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Arithmetic              | 12                   | 11             | 6d per student |
| Book-keeping            | ↑                    | ↑              | ↑              |
| Co-operation            | ↑                    | ↑              | ↑              |
| Elementary              | ↑                    | ↑              | ↑              |
| Politics                | ↑                    | ↑              | ↑              |
| English Grammar         | ↑                    | ↑              | 6d per student |
| French                  | ↑                    | ↑              | 60/- for class |
| Freehand Drawing        | ↑                    | ↑              | 60/- for class |
| Modern History          | ↑                    | ↑              | 6d per student |
| Political Economy       | ↓                    | ↓              | 6d per student |
| Shorthand               | 12                   | 11             | 60/- per class |
| *Applied Mechanics      | 20                   | 30             | ↑              |
| *Building Construction  | ↑                    | ↑              | ↑              |
| *Electricity            | ↑                    | ↑              | ↑              |
| *Geometry               | ↑                    | ↑              | ↑              |
| *Chemistry              | ↑                    | ↑              | ↑              |
| *Machine Drawing        | ↑                    | ↑              | ↑              |
| *Physiology             | ↑                    | ↑              | ↑              |
| *Biology                | ↑                    | ↑              | ↑              |
| *Theoretical Mechanics  | ↑                    | ↑              | ↑              |
| *Sound, Light & Heating | ↓                    | ↓              | 60/- per class |
|                         | 20                   | 30             |                |

\* Class in connection with South Kensington Science and Art Department.

Source: Guide to Evening Classes in London, (Second edition 1890)

Classes, then, did not die out in the 1890's. They became, despite strenuous effort by various interested agencies, a smaller,

less noticed, area of club work. The only exception to this was the popularity of the training in first aid and related matters given by "Ambulance Classes." In 1899, for example, the Mildmay Ambulance Class attracted over 100 members and their wives. (117) The fact that the training was of practical value and that classes were open to members' wives probably accounted for the popularity of ambulance work.

In contrast to the rather bleak picture of class work, one area of education actively taken up by the clubs was the lecture. Whatever their station in life Victorian men and women seemed to enjoy greatly the public speech, lecture or address, being shrewd and severe judges of the talents of the would-be orator. In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century there had been an extensive network of itinerant lecturers, particularly in science subjects, supplying the various literary and philosophical societies and later the mechanics' institutes. (118) But this was as nothing compared to the demand for the services of lecturers produced by Victorian England. So great was the clamour for lecturers that it was commonplace to assert that a new profession had been created. (119) Writing at the end of the century, Lecky observed

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117. Club Life, 17 January 1899. See also, T. Peppin, Club-Land of the Toiler, (1895), pp.56-57; Toynbee Record, 17(4) January, 1905.

118. On science lecturers see, for example, I. Inkster, "Culture, Institutions and Urbanity: The Itinerant Science Lecturer in Sheffield, 1790-1850," in S. Pollard and C. Holmes (Eds), Essays in the Economic and Social History of South Yorkshire, (Sheffield, 1976); F. Gibbs, "Itinerant Lecturers in Natural Philosophy," Ambix, Vol.8(2), 1960.

119. S.C. on Public Libraries, P.P.1849 xvii, p.viii.



that

Nothing ... in English life during the last twenty-five years is more extraordinary than the growth of the taste for lecturing and being lectured to. Lecturing has become a regular profession, a great unestablished church without creed, without articles, but exercising no small influence over the minds of men. (120)

The lecture was not only educational. A well-delivered lecture was considered a rational entertainment, a valuable counter-attraction to amusements which catered for more dubious tastes.<sup>(121)</sup> To promote standards of lecturing and to enhance social intercourse between lecturers, one professional lecturer, Joseph Simpson, editor of the Lecturers' Gazette founded a short-lived Lecturers' Association in the 1870's, while the philanthropist, Alsager Hill ran a lecturers' bureau in Long Acre to bring together lecturers and potential employers.<sup>(122)</sup> For those men, and the few women, who earned their living by public lecturing it could sometimes be a wearying, disappointing profession, involving much travelling and the delivery of lectures to indifferent audiences.<sup>(123)</sup> But of the popularity of the lecture there could be no doubt. Thomas Cooper had enjoyed the career of lecturer from 1846-1855 when he

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120. W. Lecky, "Presidential Address," Social and Political Educational League, Annual Report, No.18, (1896), p.5.

121. British Lyceum, 1(1) October, 1875.

122. WMGJ, 17 July 1875.

123. For some of the difficulties of Extension lecturing, for example, see, S. Marriott, "Extensionalia," Studies in Adult Education, Vol.10(1), 1978, pp.62-66. For the travails of those engaged in political lecturing and propaganda see the remarks in H. Snell, Men, Movements and Myself, (1936), pp.114-15.

took over from W. J. Fox as Sunday evening lecturer at the National Hall. (124) Newman Hall drew audiences of over 2,500 for his lectures recounting his summer rambles in Wales. (125) Audiences of similar size were attracted by Henry Roscoe's Penny Lectures on science given in the 1870's. (126)

Clubs provided a natural resort for lecturers to ply their trade (or art). Most clubs, once established with a few chairs and a suitable room, set about organising a lecture programme for the winter months. Even lectures on light-hearted subjects were recognised as important means for transmitting information. It was hoped that the amusement given by a lecture or the interest roused by an address on a particular subject would kindle the wish to know more about that subject, thereby leading on to the class room. Lectures were seen as being particularly attractive to the working man for in the lecture:

knowledge is presented to him in its most winning guise, freed from the toil and effort of its acquirement, and his taste is evoked and formed to assist him in his future hours. (127)

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124. R. Conklin, Thomas Cooper the Chartist, (Manila 1935), pp. 302-04; See also, "Evening Institutes for the People," Eliza Cook's Journal, No.160, 22 May 1852.
125. "London Working Men's Institutes," Old and New, Vol.2, November, 1870, pp.37-38.
126. R. Waller, "Henry Roscoe and Adult Education," Rewley House Papers, Vol.3(10), 1961-62, pp.31-32.
127. "Lectures and Lecturing," Meliora, Vol.2, 1860, pp.205-06. The association of lecturing with entertainment was something which Frederick Harrison found distasteful. Embarking on a series of lectures, he wrote to a friend, "The whole atmosphere of the professional lecturer is so repulsive; and the accessories, the music, the choirs, the chairman etc., etc., are so inevitable that I had half given it up. However, I shall try to make the thing answer as well as I can," F. Harrison, op.cit., Vol.I, p.267.

They were also to be recommended to the lecturer as a means of breaking down class barriers, a way of getting to know the working man on more intimate terms.<sup>(128)</sup> No evaluation of club education would be adequate which ignored the role of lecturing in the club.

The very variety of lectures given in the clubs and their modes of delivery defy categorisation. For the amusement and improvement of its members during Christmas 1863 the Herne Hill Working Men's Institute organised an extensive lecture programme including:-

Electro-biology (with experiments): Mr. Andeade.  
 A Walk through London Street: W. Denniss.  
 Flies and Spiders: W. Selway.  
 Heroes and Heroism: G. Murphy.  
 The Life and Times of Queen Elizabeth: Mr. Redman, Hon. Sec.  
 A Lump of Coal (with experiments): Mr. Hawkins.

Members were admitted free to the lectures, although the public paid 3d.<sup>(129)</sup> As indicated by this list, science lectures were popular, especially if the lecturer could be prevailed upon to illustrate it with appropriate, and preferably spectacular, experiments, such as those proffered by Mr. Waller during his lecture on "Combustion and the Structure of the Flame" given at Holloway Working Men's Club.<sup>(130)</sup> Literature proved another enduring attraction. A capable lecturer talking on an author or literary work was normally assured an attentive audience. Thus a good audience turned out at the Croydon Club to hear a lecture

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128. On this aspect of the lecturer's vocation see, "The Relation of the Universities to the Working Classes, The Museum and English Journal of Education, New Series, Vol.3, Nos.25 & 26, April and May 1866; S. Rowbotham, "The Call to University Extension Teaching, 1873-1900," University of Birmingham Historical Journal, Vol.12(1), 1969, pp.67-68.

129. Lecturers' Gazette, November 1863.

130. Friendly Society Journal, 5(8), May 1865.

on "Charles Mackay, the Poet for the People," during which they were urged to spend more time studying poetry for by such methods they would raise their ideals.<sup>(131)</sup> Henry Solly, of course, was not to be left out of this vogue for the spoken word. In the first half of 1868 he gave a series of Sunday evening lectures on social and religious topics at the Prince's Concert Rooms. He had a fair audience, averaging over one hundred of "unmistakably ... the better class of artisans," although whether they came to hear Solly or the choir of the Working Men's College who appeared with him is far from clear.<sup>(132)</sup> On occasions the need to illustrate lectures or do something unusual to retain interest could be taken to extremes as in the example of the lecture on "Arab Life" given by Seyyid Ben Yussuf to the Wisbech Club and Institute, in which he was accompanied by fourteen men and women dressed in various eastern costumes depicting various characters together with a whole range of artifacts, pots and implements, showing life in the middle east in biblical and modern times.<sup>(133)</sup>

For the members of the clubs lectures were usually free or they were admitted at reduced rates. But Benjamin Scott in his manual of advice for aspirant lecturers to the working class argued that there was a major benefit to be derived from charging for admission as a general principle, for a charge tended to keep out "a very worthless class who take no interest in self-improvement and who often attend a free lecture merely to create a disturbance."<sup>(134)</sup> Members were also often allowed, indeed

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131. Lecturers' Gazette, April, 1864.

132. Inquirer, 18 January, 7 March and 25 April, 1868.

133. British Lyceum, 1(4), January 1876.

134. B. Scott, Practical Hints to Unpractised Lecturers to the Working Classes, (1858), p.14.

encouraged, to bring wives and sweethearts to club lectures, thereby diffusing the power of improvement as well as showing the daughters of the proletariat that clubs were not all "boozers' kens."

To cater for the growing appetite for lectures in the clubs the Union, in late 1875, circularised a list of lecturers willing to appear free in the clubs.<sup>(135)</sup> This was a valuable service, for although many clubs, especially in urban areas, might be able to meet the travelling expenses of a lecturer, few in these early years had the necessary finances to pay for a professional lecturer. For its part the Union was concerned to encourage friends of the movement to take up this work for if the demand for speakers was not met "by men of education and high character, the demand will be met by the supply of lectures of a kind which may be injurious, instead of enobling and improving."<sup>(136)</sup> Besides this concern for the quality of the speakers some members of the Union were also a little troubled by the working man's understanding of how a lecture should be approached. He had to be instructed how to take notes, to be trained to reflect after a lecture on the substance of what had been said, and to realise that attendance at the occasional lecture was no substitute for the close study that could only take place in the class room.<sup>(137)</sup>

Oxford House was one of those organisations which advertised itself willing to supply the working man's club with free speakers.

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135. WMCJ, 25 September 1875.

136. CIU, Annual Report, No.16, (1878), p.14.

137. WMCJ, 17 July 1875.

In late 1884, it announced that clubs could apply to it for speakers on a wide range of social, religious and historical topics, lectures being delivered on any weekday or Saturday. Among the topics offered in 1886 were "Pond Life" (F. Dixey), "Socialism and Individualism" (D. Medley), and "Cromwell" (H. Wakeman).<sup>(138)</sup> The newly democratised Union was not so eager for benevolence as its predecessor had been, or so anxious to promote class mixing and thus cautioned those newly graduated from university, eager to appear on the lecture platform of an east end club:

Those who have studied from books alone, and who are what is termed "highly educated" are sometimes apt to think that no one else is capable of thinking; this intellectual priggishness ... leads to patronage and patronage of all kinds is hateful. Oxford and Cambridge will find that, while no doubt they can teach us much, they have still more to learn from us. Our education has not been of books, but the harder one of the world and its struggles. (139)

For the lecturer the response of the audience was all important, especially if he or she wanted further engagements on the club circuit. To hold and to engage an audience was the prime imperative of the speaker. Working men and women sat attentive during Joseph Simpson's lecture on "Cardinal Wolsey" at Drury Lane Working Men's Hall. They were, it was reported, impressed with the "lessons suggested by the stirring scenes of Wolsey's life and times."<sup>(140)</sup> Mrs. Fenwick Miller, in a lecture to the Eleusis Club on "The Woman Question," was heard with the

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138. CIJ, 20 October 1886.

139. CIJ, 10 October 1884.

140. Drury Lane Workmen's Hall Messenger, May 1875.

greatest interest "the appreciative silence being only broken by occasional applause."<sup>(141)</sup> Similarly Mr. Lyons, of the Liberty and Property Defence League, claimed (perhaps with some measure of exaggeration) that his lecture on "Progress or Plunder" had been heard by a highly enthusiastic audience who frequently interrupted the speaker with applause.<sup>(142)</sup> The reporter present at the Woolwich Radical when Sidney Webb spoke on "The Economic History of Society" lamented that few of his fellow club men had bothered to attend that Sunday morning. Had they done so they would have enjoyed "one of the best lectures ever delivered at the club."<sup>(143)</sup>

Other lecturers, however, for one reason or another failed to win the support of the audience. Members of the North East Bethnal Green Club, walked out during the lecture by Mr. Purslow on "Milton and His Time."<sup>(144)</sup> When Samuel Smith M.P. lectured members of the Boro' of Hackney Club his "whining voice and preachy manner drove all the members into the bar, leaving only women ... to endure his eloquence."<sup>(145)</sup> Much to his discomfiture, Mr. Burdon who had addressed an east end club on "Emigration," found that after his lecture members of the audience sprang to their

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141. Cosmopolitan, 4 March 1875; There was a similar response to Mrs. Miller at the Hatcham Liberal Club, where the lecture was followed by the passing of a unanimous resolution in favour of women's suffrage, see, CIJ, 26 February 1887.

142. M. Lyons, Progress or Plunder, (1885), p..3.

143. CIJ, 19 March 1887.

144. CIJ, 10 September 1887.

145. CIJ, 27 February 1892.

feet to attack him stating in contradiction to his thesis that only 'nationalisation of the land and a radical alteration in the Government would eradicate the misery of the population.'"(146)

Those blessed with eloquence, however, were normally assured of a fair hearing, even when their talk clashed with a more light-hearted attraction. This was the pleasant experience of Dr. Aveling who gave a series of lectures, "The Battle of the Microbe," to the United Radical Club. He arrived to deliver the first lecture and discovered that it was "standing room only" and this despite the appearance in the club of the popular Miss Langley and her company in a new three act burlesque.(147) Even when the lecture was on the wane speakers continued to praise the courtesy and intelligence of the club audience. One clerical gentleman who spoke to the clubs on "Christianity and Democracy" noted the evident intelligence of the audience and thought the "great body of well-dressed, earnest and attentive men looked just as we think working men ought to look."(148)

Political questions provided an inexhaustible fund for the lecturer to draw upon. A member of the Shoreditch club addressed his fellows on the "House of Commons," a talk which was very well received being constantly interrupted by applause. He concluded that the "working class were very inadequately represented, and that a large extension of the franchise was much to be desired."(149)

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146. CIJ, 29 May 1886.

147. CIJ, 27 January 1894.

148. CIJ, January 1901.

149. Lecturers' Gazette, April 1865.



Advanced radicalism also informed the tone of Mr. Hopes' lecture to the West Marylebone United Club in May 1887 on "The Jubilee; Or, Fifty Years of Flunkeydom," in which he admirably dilated upon the "tomfoolery of flunkeyism". In particular his audience seemed to enjoy his exposition on "the herd of greedy Germans, hangers-on of Royalty, who have secured the best posts in the army and navy."<sup>(150)</sup> The club was clearly a venue for those inspired by radical feelings for in the following month after Mr. Trower had delivered a lecture on "Politics from a Worker's Point of View" he was roundly taken to task by a member of the audience - "one of the would-be exterminators of everything - a Social Democrat" who vigorously opposed the speaker's references to the compensation of landlords preferring instead wild and excited talk about "cutting off heads."<sup>(151)</sup>

Radicals were not alone in realising the propaganda potential of lecturing at the clubs. In the mid 80's the Liberty and Property Defence League reported that a number of its members, particularly Lyons, Shedwell and Gunsberg, were well-known and welcome lecturers in the clubs. "By this agency, not a week passes without the principles upon which the League is based being explained to working class audiences at one or more of the chief clubs in the metropolitan district."<sup>(152)</sup> London conservatives were also concerned at the seeming monopoly of radical lecturers at the clubs. A conservative working man, one E. Taylor, read a

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150. CIJ, 26 March 1887.

151. CIJ, 2 April 1887.

152. Liberty and Property Defence League, Annual Report, (1886); CIJ, 3 July 1886.

paper to his club, the Camberwell and Peckham Working Man's Conservative Club, suggesting that it would be of value to the Conservative Party and the conservative cause generally, if clubs organised a supply of speakers for public meetings and club lectures. He suggested drawing up a corps of volunteers "who would devote a certain night a week to drill under a chosen leader so as to become thoroughly adept in the professional methods of dealing with disorderly persons."<sup>(153)</sup> Metropolitan working men's clubs in the 1890's could also apply for free speakers to the Association of Conservative Clubs.<sup>(154)</sup>

But it was the radicals and socialists who dominated the club lecture halls. Webb, as already mentioned, was a popular and well-known club speaker, as were Aveling, Besant, and Eleanor Marx. Bradlaugh had been a regular visitor to club platforms in the 1880's having assisted the formation of a number of clubs by giving lectures on their behalf. He addressed the Tower Hamlets Radical Club in late June 1882 on the subject of "Grants to the Royal Family," while in September 1884 he was using his oratorical skills to assist the newly established Poplar and Limehouse Club, where he spoke on "Rich and Poor London."<sup>(155)</sup> Bernard Shaw could also often be found in the lecture lists published in the Club and Institute Journal. For his topic at the Woolwich Radical in October 1887, he chose "Socialism and Malthusianism" concluding that the latter offered "no remedy for the evils under which the

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153. Craftsman, 4 December 1884.

154. Monthly Circular: Association of Conservative Club, No.5, May 1895.

155. National Reformer, 2 July 1882; CIJ, 3 October 1884.

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153. Craftsman, 4 December 1884.

154. Monthly Circular; Association of Conservative Club, No.5, May 1895.

155. National Reformer, 2 July 1882; CIJ, 3 October 1884.

industrial class Suffered." He looked rather to "the middle classes and the best among the proletariat for a reform than to either the nobility or the residuum."<sup>(156)</sup> Morris, too, was an effective club speaker. His talk on "Socialism" given to a packed audience at the Boro' of Hackney Club was very well received. Gaston seconding the vote of thanks (a custom at most clubs) recited "The Day is Coming" which "brought down a thunder of applause."<sup>(157)</sup> Between 1884 and 1890 Morris delivered a number of lectures to clubs both in London and the provinces. In February 1884 he gave "Useful Work Versus Useless Toil" to the Invicta Club, Woolwich. "Socialism" was delivered at the Peckham and Dulwich Radical, December 1885, and the London Patriotic, February 1886. During 1888 he delivered lectures to the Manchester Socialist Club, Rochdale Social Democrtatic Club, and the Nottingham Socialist Club.<sup>(158)</sup> Other socialist organisations made sure that they did not neglect the clubs. Macdonald and Fitzgerald addressed several London clubs, including the Deptford Liberal, United Radical, and the Battersea Rise, on behalf of the Socialist Union in early 1886.<sup>(159)</sup> Fabians, as might be expected, were well-known lecturers in London and surburban clubland. The following

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156. CIJ, 22 October 1887.

157. Ibid, 2 April 1887

158. For Morris's lectures see, E. Lemire (Ed), The Unpublished Lectures of William Morris, (Detroit, 1969), pp.241-282.

159. The Socialist, July 1886.

examples are taken from engagements in 1891. (160)

- S. Webb - "The Eight Hours Bill." (Battersea Radical)
- B. Shaw - "Socialism" (Pimlico Radical)
- S. Dark - "Landlords" (Paddington Radical)
- A. Barron - "Old Village Life" (South Bermondsey)
- G. Bottle - "Land Nationalization" (Sydenham Liberal)
- G. Wallar - "A History of Working Class Politics"  
(Central Finsbury)

Quantity was one thing, the quality of the lectures was another. Some observers were far from impressed by club lectures and their attendant discussions. Gissing went to the Bermondsey Gladstone in June 1888 to listen to Stewart Headlam on "Christian Socialism." He found the parson fluent and knowledgeable, but reminded himself that it was:

well to go to these clubs occasionally, to remind myself that I am not giving way to prejudice merely in despising the intellectual qualities of their frequenters. The speakers after Headlam were contemptible in a degree not to be expressed by words. (161)

Writing to Pease Beatrice Webb recalled that her first experience of the Fabian Society had been at lectures delivered by Besant at the Eleusis Club. She had not been much impressed by the lectures. (162)

The demonstrable popularity of lectures, especially those concerned with current political and social topics, and the mushrooming of clubs professing liberal and radical sympathies in the late 70's provided the inspiration for another of Henry Solly's

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160. Fabian News, 1(2), April, 1(3) May, 1(4) June 1891. In 1888-89 it was reported that the Fabians delivered over 800 lectures, North London Press, 10 August 1889.

161. P. Coustillas (Ed), London and the Life of Literature in Late Victorian England: The Diary of George Gissing, Novelist, (Hassocks, 1978), pp.32-33.

162. S. and B. Webb, Letters, (Cambridge, 1978), Vol.III, p.65.

schemes. Worried that the tone of the lectures given in many clubs was incompatible with sound and calm political thinking he helped to found an association which was intended to provide clubs and other working men's organisations with factual and objective talks on matters of contemporary concern.

The vehicle for the diffusion of sound political knowledge in the clubs was the Workmen's Social Educational League, established early in 1877.<sup>(163)</sup> The idea of a specific political education was not novel in the 1870's. One of the major issues which divided the mechanics' institutes and weakened their appeal to the articulate artisan was the ban placed upon discussions of a political or religious nature. Some institutes tried to repair this initial damage by admitting political debates and lectures though to little avail. Detrosier was one of a vast number of radicals who called upon his brothers to seek out instruction in moral and political questions, for such knowledge was as important as understanding the scientific and mechanical arts.<sup>(164)</sup> A ginger group within the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge similarly campaigned for the Society to take up some form of political education. Led by Roebuck, Place and W. J. Fox, the group tried to establish a Society for the Diffusion of Political and Moral Knowledge in 1832. They were forced to suspend its activities in 1833 because of difficulties over stamp duties. There was a half-hearted attempt to revive the scheme

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163. National Reformer, 14 January 1877; see also, Co-Operative News, 25 October 1879.

164. R. Detrosier, Address delivered at the New Mechanics' Institute, (Manchester, 1830), p.10. See also, R. Webb, The British Working Class Reader, 1795-1848, (1955), Chapter IV, passim.

in 1834 with the "Society for the Diffusion of Political Knowledge," but this too failed.<sup>(165)</sup> In the 1850's political education was pressed for both as a means of social and political advance, as Smiles argued, for example, and as part of the necessary training in citizenship by which the working man would come to an appreciation of his duties in political life.<sup>(166)</sup> It was this latter emphasis rather than the radical equation of knowledge and power which inspired Solly. This was exemplified by his introduction to his novel of Chartism, James Woodford, where he held up the example of William Lovett as a man who understood fully that "citizens have duties as well as rights, and that unless we perform faithfully and wisely the one, we shall soon lose the other."<sup>(167)</sup>

A number of advanced radicals thought Solly's scheme a good one and pledged their support. At a discussion on political education at the Manhood Suffrage League, Kitz stressed the importance of extending the range of information available to working men upon which he could base his political opinions and judgements. Besides formal education much good could be achieved if libraries were permitted to open on Sunday.<sup>(168)</sup> The League was publicly baptised at a meeting at the Society of Arts in

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165. D. Robbins, op.cit.; M. Grobel, "The Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, 1826-46," (M.A. Thesis, Univ. London, 1933), p.807.

166. S. Smiles, The Diffusion of Political Knowledge among the Working Classes, (Leeds, 1842); W. Fox, "Rights and Duties," Apprentice, 18 May 1844; "The Importance of Political Knowledge to Working Men" Operative, No.24, 14 June 1851. The citizenship argument was best expressed by Solly's mentor, Maurice in Learning and Working, pp.132-33.

167. J. Solly, James Woodford: Carpenter and Chartist, (1883), Vol.I, p.x. See also, Sir Edward Starchy, "Education and Advance in Life," Good Words, Vol.13, No.43, 1872, pp.608-09.

168. National Reformer, 28 January 1877.

March 1877, at which Shaftesbury took the chair. Solly read a letter from J. R. Seeley, his fellow Honorary Secretary, describing the objectives of the League and the reasons why such an organisation was wanted. The League, he said, was set up to meet the pressing need to supply the working man with an education suitable "to fit him for the exercise of political power." Seeley was inspired by the work then being carried out under the auspices of the University Extension societies and wished to use their experience in the service of the League.<sup>(169)</sup> Educational work was to be carried out in a manner calculated to promote the harmonious mixing of classes, to encourage the participation of members of political parties, and its programme would be based on the firm belief that a thorough knowledge of history and statistics was essential to the formation of sound political opinion.<sup>(170)</sup> Its mode of operation was to supply lecturers free to clubs and to build up a list of lecturers who were willing to give their services free to the League. Besides Seeley and Solly, the first General Committee comprised:<sup>(171)</sup>

|            |                      |
|------------|----------------------|
| W. Baines: | Progressive Club.    |
| G. Berry:  | Bricklayers' Club.   |
| J. Cubbon: | Warwick Street Club. |
| F. Campins | Barrister.           |
| T. Emms:   | Boro' of Hackney.    |

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169. For Seeley's admiration of Extension work, see J. Seeley, "The New Missionaries," Toynbee Journal, Vol.I(2), November 1885; He was an Associate of Toynbee Hall and had taught at the Working Men's College where he had been offered the Principalship; see Harrison, Working Men's College, pp.141-46.

170. Times, 29 March 1877; Seeley's letter is reprinted in "Political Education of the Working Classes," MacMillan's Magazine, Vol.36, June 1877.

171. Solly Collection, Vol.III, Section 2(b), Item 1.



W. Gard: London University.  
 J. Graham: Secretary, Amalgamated Society of  
 Railway Servants.  
 F. Harvey: Artizan's Institute.  
 C. Shrives: Carmen's Society.  
 J. Jackson: Boro' of Finsbury.  
 J. Lowe: Boro' of Hackney.  
 C. Murray:  
 C. Reed:  
 G. Thompson:

Solly and Seeley might seem at first sight an unlikely combination to be involved in such a venture. Seeley, since 1869 Professor of Modern History at Cambridge, was related to Solly by marriage to one of the latter's cousins. They had come into contact during Seeley's Professorship of Latin at University College (1863-69). Seeley had given his warm support to Solly's lectures to working men in early 1868. At the meeting to publicise these lectures Solly announced that he would also give a series of Wednesday evening lectures on the History of Republican Rome as a very strong feeling:

was expressed by the promoters as to the value of historical studies to working men, the experience of other ages and nations, have become more than ever important to them since they have been so extensively invested with the rights and called upon to discharge the duties of citizenship. (172)

Both men were convinced that in order to exercise their rights and duties, the latter often receiving little mention in political tracts, newly enfranchised working men required a specific education to make them aware of the issues and to allow them to evaluate and

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172. Inquirer, 30 November 1867.

reflect upon different political opinions. (173)

What they feared was that working men would not consider political questions objectively. Instead they would judge issues by party loyalty. Moreover, in their efforts to secure election, parties would promote irrational factionalism, obscure issues for short-term party advantage and play upon the political ignorance of the new voter by stirring up heady emotions rather than enhancing rational inquiry. Democracy was thus potentially at the mercy of the unenlightened. To strengthen its bulwarks was the cause of the League.

Their worries regarding the political education carried out by the political parties were widely shared. For the Bishop of Manchester political clubs and party factionalism were tending to destroy "that independence of mind and character which he considered to be the best safeguard of our liberties." (174) The danger of the party to democracy were also observed by Emmett:

The care of all good citizens must be to raise democracy ... to make our "masses" ... into a sound solid structure of political intelligence. To leave this great constituency to the dishonest talk of party agents and political adventurers would be unworthy of our honest citizens. (175)

Though Seeley was less active in the cause of political education than Solly, there is no doubt that his conviction of the importance of the issue was the equal if not greater than that

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173. Seeley was to support Solly's attempts, in the 1870's, to get the Governors of London University to consider establishing a Chair in Political Science. Solly gave notice annually of the motion, but it was never voted upon because the meeting, to Solly's disgust, was never quorate; Eighty Years, Vol.II, pp.480-81.

174. The Craftsman, 2(20), December 1882.

175. J. Emmett, "The Elevation of the Working Class," Quarterly Review, Vol.17, (January), 1891.

of his compatriot, and was probably the origin of Solly's own writing on the subject. (176)

Seeley was a leading, if dissident, member of the Liberal intelligentsia of mid and late Victorian England. While Professor at University College, he had produced Ecce Homo, which presented the life and work of Christ in ethical terms, avoiding all mention of miracles and eschewing consideration of theological desiderata. He originally produced the book anonymously though his authorship was soon an open secret. And, although the book produced much controversy, unlike the other demythologising accounts of the origins of Christianity such as Strauss' Leben Jesu, Seeley's text was seen, by its very simplicity and stress on the humanity of Christ, as an aid rather than dismissal of faith. (177) In 1869 he was appointed to the Chair of History at Cambridge where his interest in the objective study of politics was aroused. He came to see politics as an adjunct to that education in morality which it was the duty of the established church to discharge. (178) In his lectures and essays he continually returned to the theme that the study of history must be placed on a firm empirical foundation. The aim of the historian was to present a clear and rational exposition of the conditions of past life. Such writing was not intended to stir the passions or to retell stirring stories. Rather by its calm and systematic presentation history could become

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176. H. Solly, Party Politics and Political Education, (1886).

177. R. Shannon, "J. R. Seeley and the National Church," in R. Robson (Ed), Ideas and Institutions of the Victorians, (1967); D. Pals, "The Reception of Ecce Homo," Historical Magazine of the Protestant Episcopal Church, Vol.46(1), 1977.

178. J. Seeley, "The Church as a Teacher of Morality," in W. Clay (Ed), Essays in Church Policy, (1868).

the foundation for a science of politics.<sup>(179)</sup> His early interest in an acquaintance with positivism impressed upon him the need for disciplined historical investigation and the necessity for serious, rational consideration of matters of political moment.<sup>(180)</sup> He believed that too much of what passed for political knowledge was the product of little study, an ill-assorted melange of myth and current party expediency.<sup>(181)</sup> His best known work grew from a series of lectures delivered at Cambridge in 1881 on the British empire. Published as the Expansion of England (1883) it became a remarkable seller, remaining popular well into the twentieth century.<sup>(182)</sup> This work, together with its less powerful sequel, The Growth of British Policy: An Historical Essay (1895), was a panegyric to the British empire which Seeley saw as the manifestation of Britain's supremacy. The Empire was Britain's unique possession, and its unity was charged to custody of the mother country. Thus Seeley, a Liberal in every other respect, strongly opposed Home Rule as breaking up that system, a dereliction of that stewardship which guaranteed England's greatness.<sup>(183)</sup>

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179. See J. Seeley, Lectures and Essays, (1895), Chapter X, "The Teaching of Politics,"; For a discussion of Seeley's philosophy of history, see A. Birrell, "The Muse of History," Contemporary Review, Vol.47, June 1885; G. Kitson-Clark, "A Hundred Years of the Teaching of History at Cambridge," Historical Journal, Vol.16(3), 1973, pp.536-37, 539-40; J. McLachlan, "The Origin and Early Development of the Cambridge Historical Tripos," Cambridge Historical Journal, Vol.9(1), 1947, pp.225-26.
180. For a thorough discussion of Seeley's mentors and the importance of his work, see D. Wormell, "J. R. Seeley; Educational Reformer, Historian and Political Scientist," (Ph.D. Thesis, Univ. London, 1977).
181. J. Seeley, "The English Revolution of the Nineteenth Century," Macmillan's Magazine, Vol.22 October 1877, pp.444-45. M. Todhunter "Sir John Seeley," Westminster Review, Vol.145, May 1896.
182. See Solly's review of Expansion of England, in Modern Review, Vol.5, April 1884.
183. For Seeley's opposition to Home Rule, see C. Harvie, The Lights of Liberalism, (1976).

One of Seeley's admirers argued that his views of colonial policy touched "a new chord of patriotism, and raised in ordinary men a new feeling towards their splendid inheritance." (184)

His views on the correct approach to political education were succinctly expressed in his Presidential addresses to the League. Speaking to the 1882 Annual Meeting Seeley was insistent that the true duty of the organisation was to combat working men's errors. The greatest and most enduring achievement of the League would be to persuade:

Durham miners and the Rochdale pioneers to say that there was something in politics more than they had hitherto suspected, that politics are not merely electioneering, but one of the greatest and most elevating studies ... requiring, abstraction, accurate knowledge, and freedom from passion and prejudice. (185)

He returned to this theme in his 1888 address, urging that politics:

should be put upon a new basis of systematic and reasoned truth—not the Whig or Tory principles handed down from the party conflicts of ancient times, but principles of political science as taught by the great thinkers and writers, who were named with reverence, but scarcely ever read. (186)

His insistence that the League's work should be conducted upon the most severe precepts of truth and reason prompted him to rebuke Solly for his suggestion that to assure the League had a regular and adequate supply of speakers, undergraduates from Cambridge

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184. J. Tanner, "J. R. Seeley," English Historical Review, Vol.10, July 1895, p.507. To promote his idea of Empire Seeley worked closely with the Imperial Federation; see J. R. Seeley, Introduction to Colonial Yearbook, (1890) and the memoir of Seeley by G. Prothero in Seeley's Growth of British Policy, (Cambridge, 1895), Vol.I, pp. x-xx. For Seeley's status as a theorist of Empire see J. Tyler, Imperial Unity, (1938) and A. Thornton, The Imperial Idea and Its Enemies, (1959), pp.51-52.

185. Solly Collection, Vol.III, Section 2(c) Item 1.

186. CIJ, 9 June 1888.

ought to be brought into the League. "My notion of the League," Seeley replied, "is that it exists not to excite or rouse people's minds but rather to sober them by showing them the extreme difficulty of political questions and the impossibility of forming rational opinions about them without specific study." Lecturers, thus, ought not to be "brilliant young declaimers," but rather "cool clear-headed Cambridge [sic] specialists." (187)

Seeley provided the intellectual rationale for the League, Solly its organisational drive. To assist him in the day-to-day administration George Savage, Solly's old friend from the Trades Guild, was retained as Organising Secretary. In its first year the League held 12 discussions and delivered 52 lectures for the modest outlay of £12. By 1881 the number of lectures given reached 201, although attendance fluctuated from full halls to audiences of less than a dozen. In its early years the main thrust of its activities was directed towards the clubs. Also in 1881 to avoid any misunderstanding regarding its purpose the title "Social and Political Educational League" was adopted. The evolution of the League's work is shown by the following table:

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187. Solly Collection, Vol.III, Section 2(c), Item 1. Solly did not see things in the same way. He described the League as "encouraging the contact of the practical workman with the better-educated, but too often impractical university graduate or junior barrister," H. Solly, "Working Men's Clubs and Institutes," Transactions, N.A.P.S.S., (1880), pp.504-05. Frederick Harrison shared Seeley's displeasure with those who would make the League court "popularity." In his Presidential speech he warned League lecturers that if they wished their talks to amuse then "they had better get a piano, or sing a comic song," F. Harrison, Politics and Education, (1889), p.14.

TABLE: 19 THE PROGRESS OF THE SOCIAL AND POLITICAL EDUCATIONAL LEAGUE, 1880-1907.

| DATE | TOTAL NO. OF LECTURES | NO. GIVEN AT CLUBS |
|------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| 1880 | 39                    | -                  |
| 1881 | 201                   | 117                |
| 1882 | 321                   | 173                |
| 1883 | 474                   | 183                |
| 1884 | 582                   | 287                |
| 1887 | 230                   | -                  |
| 1888 | 173                   | 134                |
| 1889 | 118                   | 90                 |
| 1890 | 126                   | 101                |
| 1891 | 95                    | 74                 |
| 1892 | 51                    | 37                 |
| 1893 | 80                    | 61                 |
| 1894 | 61                    | 30                 |
| 1896 | 70                    | 30                 |
| 1897 | 157                   | 57                 |
| 1898 | 154                   | 42                 |
| 1899 | 177                   | 36                 |
| 1900 | 210                   | 13                 |
| 1901 | 163                   | 11                 |
| 1902 | 203                   | 14                 |
| 1903 | 164                   | 18                 |
| 1904 | 183                   | 14                 |
| 1905 | 276                   | 13                 |
| 1906 | 293                   | 29                 |
| 1907 | 234                   | 33                 |

SOURCE: S.P.E.L, Annual Reports.

In 1907, the year of Webb's tenure as President, clubs were a resort of declining importance. As there was a general falling off of interest in formal lectures so the use of the League similarly diminished. From the late '90's the League began to widen its base taking in Pleasant Sunday afternoon associations, Y.M.C.A.s, and Church of England Men's Societies. London had formed the major geographical region of the SPEL's work in the first five years. By 1883 it had begun to receive invitations to deliver lectures in provincial towns and rural areas. Lecturing centres in Leeds,

Sheffield, Cambridge and Cardiff were set up as a result of the success of this work. One limit to the League's expansion was the shortage of suitable speakers. One reason for the contraction of activity in the early 90's had been a loss of regular lecturers and a failure to find replacements. Every Annual Report contained an appeal for men to come forward to help. After 1900 when a recommendation that the League use female lecturers as well was accepted, appropriately qualified women were urged to volunteer and devote some free time to the League's endeavours.

The League was forced to dispense with the Organising Secretary's services in 1887 because of the necessity to make economies. There was the need, in particular, to pay off a long-standing debt. After the retirement of Savage in 1880 this job had been carried out by Charles Murray for the modest payment of 10/- per week.<sup>(188)</sup> Following his severance the organising work was carried out gratuitously by a number of gentlemen members. The mention of Murray's name, however, brings to light one curious fact about the S.P.E.L., that an organisation pledged to promote the cause of "sober" and "objective" political training based upon quiet and disciplined study was partly staffed and for a short while directed by some of the leading advanced radicals - former Chartists and "Old 48ers" - then living in London.<sup>(189)</sup> Moreover one of the leading radical resorts, the Manhood Suffrage League, was a leading venue for League meetings during its early years.

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188. Workmen's Social and Educational League, Annual Report, No.3, (1880).

189. It should also be noted that while appearing on the League's platform Solly and Conybeare were also lecturing for the London and Home Counties Liberal Union. For Murray and his associates see Hyndman's comments in a letter to Helen Taylor, 2 October, 1881 in Mill-Taylor correspondence.



Herbert Burrows, for example, gave the Sunday lecture there in September 1880 on "Joseph Mazzini: The Apostle of Modern Democracy" in which he concluded by appealing to the audience "to carry out in their own lives the great principles by which Mazzini was animated."<sup>(190)</sup> Another well-known meeting place for advanced radicals was the Marylebone Central Democratic Association, where, in February 1882, E. Pearce gave a lecture for the League on "India," Among those taking part in the lively discussion which followed the talk was Frank Kitz, prominent in London anarchist circles.<sup>(191)</sup> There is no doubt that for some radicals lecturing under the imprimatur of the League was a convenient way of presenting their judgement and opinions upon current affairs and they had no qualms about appearing in Annual Reports alongside clergymen and more reform minded Liberals. Thus, one Dunn lectured for the S.P.E.L. to the Clarmont Eclectic Debating Society

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190. Common Good, 1(1) 9 October 1880. The radicalism of the audience could be disconcerting to the unwary speaker. In October 1880 Rev. Reynolds of St. Mary's, Soho, spoke on the "Church and the People," taking as his general thesis that "there was no other association comprising so many people of education and culture devoting themselves to the welfare of their fellow-creatures." Upon finishing he was disconcerted to hear all his ideas contradicted in the animated discussion which followed. Daniel Chatterton, the "herring-gutted-wretch," and one Morgan, another advanced radical, led the attack. Common Good, 1(5) 6 November 1880. On Chatterton, part of that nexus of strange figures who haunted the centres of anarcho-radicalism such as the Rose Street Club, one of Kitz's resorts as well; see, Biography of Dan. Chatterton, Atheist and Communist, (1891) and W. Pett Ridge, I Like to Remember, (1926?), pp.66-70.
191. Labour Standard, 18 February, 1882. For Kitz see, F. Kitz, "Recollections and Reflections," Freedom, January-July 1912; J. Quail, Slow Burning Fuse, (1978), pp.5-17. The Manhood Suffrage League is discussed by W. Lincoln, "Popular Radicalism and the Beginnings of the New Socialist Movement in Great Britain 1870-1885," (Ph.D Thesis, Univ. London, 1977), pp.188-99 and 225-28; and Shipley, op.cit., pp.50-69.

on "Poverty: Its Causes and Cures" which he finished by calling for "the nationalization of the railways and of the land," a position warmly supported by two of the participants in the following discussion - Proctor and Daniel Chatterton. (192) The tolerance of diversity was a consequence of allowing each speaker complete freedom to choose the topics upon which he (or she) would lecture. Among the themes offered in the 1882-83 session were: (193)

|                      |              |
|----------------------|--------------|
| Rome and Her Fall:   | W. Townsend. |
| German Socialism:    | T. Raleigh.  |
| English Land Laws:   | A. Leach.    |
| Fraternity:          | M. Hart.     |
| Poetry of Democracy: | W. Darwood.  |

Many of the men who served as Presidents or officials of the League were prominent members of Victorian society, Presidents included Lecky, Harrison, Frederick Maitland, Webb, and Leonard Courtney. Honorary Secretaries included the Cornish radical Liberal, champion of the sweated chainmakers of Cradley Heath, C. Conybeare and C. Hecht a dietary reformer. Of many of the lecturers less is known. Some were advanced radicals, others Liberals. None were conservatives. William Rossiter, for example, was founder and Secretary of the South London Working Men's College, Mr. Benny was a publisher and author of a number of tracts on political questions besides text-books on mechanical

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192. Labour Standard, 11 February 1882. A year later Conybeare reported that the League used 14 speakers who could be termed working class and that they delivered 177 lectures. They were also the most active committee-men, Labour Standard, 15 September 1883.

193. Taken from list in S.P.E.L. Annual Report, No.5, (1883). Other examples of lecture lists are given in Labour Standard, 20 January 1883 and 27 January 1887, and Common Good, 1(7), 20 November 1880.

drawing and Paul Descours, was an associate of Webb in the Zetetical Society.<sup>(194)</sup> Not all lecturers could accept such catholicism. Herbert Burrows who had been lecturing for the League since 1877 resigned in mid 1881 because he found he could no longer adequately carry out the task. He wrote to Solly to explain the reasoning behind his decision but consoled his correspondent that his parting was for the best:

It is well in one way that my official connection with the League has ceased for I have got more extreme (and I dare say from your point of view more wild and revolutionary) than ever. I have quite broken with the so-called Liberal Party. (195)

No surveillance of the lecturers' performance was carried out by the League. Instead the League trusted to the "high character" of those speaking under its auspices "for the preservation of that freedom from party spirit and of that independent tone of thought ... essential to ... the dignity of scientific and historical research."<sup>(196)</sup>

The League continued its work well into the twentieth century, although it never had the success of attracting a single Conservative to appear on its platform. From the early 90's its base shifted from the clubs. How far it achieved Seeley's aims is difficult

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194. For Rossiter, see CIU, Annual Report, No.9 (1871), p.4. W. Rossiter, "Artisan Atheism," Nineteenth Century, Vol.22, July 1887; Harrison, Working Men's College, pp.51-55; 88-89. For Benny see, Mechanical Drawing and Practice, (1868) and The Industrial M.P. of the Future: A Forecast and Exposition, (1885); For Descours, see S. Webb to J. Falls, 28 February, 1881, in S. and B. Webb, Letters, (Cambridge 1978), Vol.I, p.76.
195. Solly Collection, Vol.III, Section 2(c), Item 1. He then joined the Democratic Federation. See the potted biography given in Labour Annual, (1895).
196. Workmen's Social Educational League, Annual Report, No.2, (1878), in Solly Collection, Vol.II, Section 2(b), Item 1.

to judge, though the charge that working men were too easily seduced into naive party factionalism was still to be heard. "They do not take pains to read blue-books, study economics, or learn history," bemoaned the Toynbee Record, "they go on as if they had a royal road to the understanding of politics, and act as if a few rough principles were sufficient to enable them to take part in making laws for our empire."<sup>(197)</sup> Notwithstanding the thirst for political oratory which he argued was widely diffused among the English people, Ostragorski, similarly thought little of the political understanding of the ordinary man:

by far the greater part of the English masses are still unable to take an intelligent interest in political questions. They lack the rudiments of culture and the mental discipline necessary to concentrate their attention for half an hour on a subject outside the preoccupations of their daily life. (198)

In the history of ventures in political education, however, the work of the S.P.E.L. ought to be better known. It was one of the few attempts to develop a specific political education for working men rather than a campaign for some training in politics to be included as part of the general school curriculum as was the case in the 1920's and 30's and in the more recent demands for "education for democracy."<sup>(199)</sup> In common with other schemes the

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197. Toynbee Record, Vol.15(7), April 1903. See also D. Cranage, "The Purpose and Meaning of Adult Education," in R. St. John Parry, (Ed), Cambridge Essays on Adult Education, (Cambridge, 1920), pp.25-26. Such accusations always leave out of consideration, for example, how many inhabitants of "villadom" or the superior suburbs were conversant with the niceties of "bimetallism" or the finer points of tenant right in Ireland and thus fitted for the discharge of their duties as citizens.

198. Ostragorski, op.cit., Vol.I, p.400.

199. See, G. Whitmarsh, "The Politics of Political Education," Journal of Curriculum Studies, Vol.6(2), 1974 on the Association for Education in Citizenship established in 1934.

S.P.E.L. was brought into action because of concern that the political system was undergoing or was open to crisis because of the ignorance of potential voters, and like them it did not only intend to transmit knowledge, but also by its instruction and precept to mould the character of those who attended its lectures. They would become good citizens with an understanding of the all important duties as well as rights that possession of the franchise bestowed upon them, and would demonstrate that appreciation by adopting the behaviour appropriate to a citizen, that is by voting, by attending political meetings of all parties in order to hear the issues, would make up their mind calmly and rationally and not on the basis of prior party commitments, and they would use their leisure both to further their knowledge and concern themselves with local issues. A citizen, above all, was active, but active within the well-defined limits set by the political system. An active citizen did not countenance extremism, nor did he tolerate apathy that most deadly of all the political sins of pluralist democracy, (200) The League had well-defined objectives and a well tried means for promoting them. They could not be accused of vagueness or obscurity. (201) The existence of the League also testified to certain real, if unspoken, fears about the consequences of the "leap in the dark" by those not opposed to the extension of

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200. On apathy see the stimulating discussion by S. Yeo, "On the Uses of Apathy," European Journal of Sociology, Vol.15(2), 1974.

201. For a discussion of the notion of political education, see T. Tapper and B. Salter, Political Education and Stability, (1978), Chapter 4, passim; G. Parry, "Citizenship and Knowledge," in P. Birnbaum et al (Eds), Democracy, Consensus and Social Contract, (1978), pp.38-40.

the franchise. Furthermore, the ideology, if not the practice of the League, showed that the threat to democratic stability, came from the very organisations essential to the functioning of the parliamentary system - the political parties. In their eagerness to make every working man either a little Tory or a little Liberal, in their pursuit of a corrupt exercise in political education whereby every issue was presented as a party issue irrespective of national interest, and their use of new organisations such as clubs, and a new breed of professional political agitator and manager, the great political parties were denigrating the very idea of politics. For men such as Seeley the advent of democracy brought new responsibilities as well as new opportunities to the political parties. But the parties were showing by their attitude that all they cared about was immediate, and often short term, party advantage. This was not only unworthy of the British political tradition, or a travesty of the understanding of the nature of government which members of the ruling class had imbibed during classics lessons at public schools, it also represented a danger to political stability.<sup>(202)</sup> The parties were conjuring up a golem, in the shape of a volatile working class electorate, over-excited by the partisanship of electoral contests, and seeing in politics only their own best material advantage.<sup>(203)</sup> The accuracy of Seeley's picture can be doubted, nevertheless, the

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202. See W. Haas, "Political Education," Hibbert Journal, Vol.25(4), 1927, pp.600-01.

203. Wormell, op.cit., p.309. The Rev. R. Horton, argued that a mind "debauched and gulled by the dull tirades of a one-sided party newspaper ... becomes permanently degenerate"; "The Responsibility of Reading," Good Words, 32(1), 1891.

fear of uncontrolled factionalism has been a very real one in British politics. However, there was a double edge in Seeley's scheme for political education. He attributed so much of the danger to party politics, while having to use partisans as lecturers. Moreover the League's strategy in its early years involved using the one organisation which, as the first chapter has shown, had since the eighteenth century, been notorious for its promotion of the spirit of faction and division, that is the club.

Whether addressed by representatives from the League, defenders of liberty and property, speakers from the Fabian Society, or the promoters of every sort of "faddism" from vegetarianism, through the Malthusian League, theosophists, associations opposed to alien immigration, to the Workmen's Peace Association, most urban clubs had a lecture at least once a week.<sup>(204)</sup> By the mid 70's a lecturing season had been established which ran from September to April. Sunday morning was the customary lecture period at most clubs. Members were also encouraged to bring their wives and guests to these improving events. Few lecturers could expect much in the way of payment, both because the clubs had little cash to allow for the regular payment of the fee and because the professional lecturer faced so much competition from the army of amateurs who hawked their services around the club and institute circuit. Occasionally effort would be given some tangible and lasting reward apart from the heart round of applause as Frederick

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204. See, for example, Mr. Statham, "International Arbitration," given at West Ham Club, International Arbitration Monthly Journal, 30 January 1886; R. Ledbetter, A History of the Malthusian League, 1877-1927, (Columbus, 1976), p.83.

Rogers discovered. After concluding his talk on "England in the Time of the Commonwealth" at the Commonwealth Club he was presented with an edition of the works of Tennyson by Mr. Westhall, the President and Mr. Pape, Chairman of the Political Council. The presentation humbled and delighted the orator who was happy to accept the gift, the value of which was enhanced "by the fact of its being an offer of his own order, for surely his own people must be the best judges of his merits."<sup>(205)</sup> A slight indication of the range of subjects available to clubmen by 1892 can be seen in the following sample of titles and speakers:

|                       |                                      |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|
| "Alien Immigration:   | W. Wilkins (Pimlico Radical)         |
| "Canon Kingsley" :    | Rev. Shuttleworth (Boro' Shoreditch) |
| "Mazzini" :           | B. King (Hatcham Liberal)            |
| "Trades Unionism" :   | F. Rogers (Gladstone Radical)        |
| "Sweating" :          | S. Webb (Hatcham Liberal)            |
| "Old Age Pensions" :  | J. Haysman (Central Finsbury)        |
| "Clerkenwell" :       | R. Griffith (Central Finsbury)       |
| "Freedom in England": | Mr. Vanderhout (Newington Reform)    |

Manchester clubmen were as well catered for as their metropolitan brothers. In 1889 the Association organised 116 lectures at 36 venues, a fifth of lectures being illustrated by appropriate experiments.<sup>(206)</sup> By 1896 the Association laid on over 172 lectures for its affiliates.<sup>(207)</sup> Club halls, of course, had to

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205. CIJ, 15 February 1884.

206. Manchester Guardian, 10 May 1889.

207. Manchester Working Men's Club Association, Annual Report, (1896); Lecturers were also widely used by the Federation of Working Men's Social Club. The lecturers were supplied by Oxford House and usually spoke on literary and historical topics. See, Federation, Annual Report, No.1, (1887), pp.20-21.



be large enough to accomodate the audiences that a good lecturer might attract. Over 300 people could be seated in the halls at the Garforth Club, while the Boro of Hackney could seat over 600 besides plenty of room for standing.<sup>(208)</sup>

To hold an audience a good voice was sometimes insufficient. Illustration was required and this need was met by the magic lantern. This machine, which seems somehow to be quintessentially Victorian, was in fact an invention of the sixteenth century. By the mid and late nineteenth century, as a result of a series of technical refinements such as the improvement of the light source, it had become a popular device for educating and entertaining. Few lecturers, especially those who hoped to gain their living from lecturing, could afford to be without this primitive visual aid.<sup>(209)</sup> A skilled operator could use the lantern to considerable effect. Twin Plates were available, for example, which were so constructed as to contain chemicals which, when heated by the lamp would give the effect of a volcano erupting.<sup>(210)</sup> It was much in demand. Sets of slides were available to illustrate every theme. There were sets of places and people of bible lands, landscapes and panoramas which were popular with clergymen to accompany their lectures on their tours to Switzerland or Germany. Slides could be obtained of historical events as well as famous personalities past and present. Lanterns were used by

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208. For Garforth, see Popple, Thesis, op.cit., p.65; for the Boro' of Hackney, see Echo, 12 February 1884.

209. B. Scott, op.cit., p.7.

210. Negretti and Zambra, The Magic Lantern, (1865); The Magic Lantern: Its History and Effects, (1854); "A Practised Hand," The Magic Lantern: Its Construction and Management, (1888); Scientific American, 30 May 1891.

academic as well as popular lecturers and a number of Extension courses were accompanied by the appropriate slides. (211) Organisations were quick to appreciate the importance of this aid. Thus the Union purchased a lantern for £28 in 1870 which it made available for hire together with sets of slides to its affiliates. (212) W. T. Stead initiated a mission to take religion to outcast London, the main means used to transmit the religious message being heavily illustrated simple lectures. (213) The power of the lantern was recognised by the M.R.F. Noting that people had an aversion to listening to dry lectures, the Secretary, John Maynes, decided that the League should purchase its own lantern. To raise the necessary £50 benefits were held at various London clubs, but progress proved very slow. (214) Some audiences were so spoilt by such excitement that they refused to attend any talk unless it was clearly stated that it would be illustrated. Even when things went awry, the audience was held by the spell of the lantern. Thus during the lecture at the Central Finsbury Club it was reported that the "slides got mixed up, and the explanatory part of the show was hardly in accord with the pictures," yet no member of the audience left. (215) Ingenious lecturers also used

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211. E. Welch, The Peripatetic University, (Cambridge 1973), pp.136-37.
212. CIU, Annual Report, No.8, (1870), pp.16-17.
213. "Magic Lantern Mission," Review of Reviews, Vol.2 (December), 1890; See also, "An East End Lecture Show," Optical Magic Lantern Journal, 5(64), September 1894. The scheme was very favourably looked upon for it was thought to draw the poor who would otherwise never enter a mission because they were willing "to go to a meeting where they are in darkness and where their shabby clothes and sin-stained features will pass unobserved." "Magic Lantern Mission," Bristol Christian Leader, 1(1) December 1891.
214. Club World, 29 September 1894. Another political organisation to make much use of the lantern for building up its popular support was the Primrose League, see, J. Robb, The Primrose League, 1883-1902, (New York, 1942), pp.92-93.
215. Club World, 4 January 1896.

the charms of music to attract and retain an audience. Mr. John Spence, enterprising lecturer of the Liberty and Property Defence League, advertised a lecture which would be delivered free to working men's clubs, illustrated by magic lantern and interspersed with suitable songs and recitations entitled "Pillage by Act of Parliament: Or, the Principles of the L.P.D.L. Properly Explained." (216) Clubs where interest in political discussions was flagging were also urged to make use of the illustrated, musical lecture pioneered by the Manchester Association. (217) More earnest spirits thought such innovations diluted the serious business of education.

Despite all this obvious activity by the late 1890's it was being frequently alleged that lecturing was on the decline in the clubs. This was a familiar charge. It had been made in the early 1860's, for example. (218) To many speakers in the 90's it appeared that their art was no longer in demand. The standard criticism was that audiences could not be drawn for a lecture. Club members seemed to prefer the companionship of the bar to that of the lecture hall. Numerous speakers bemoaned that the clubs had fallen under the charge of the strolling pot man, the political and educational activities languishing for want of something to do. Frederick Rogers gave one very well-known version of this thesis in his observation that his lectures on Shakespeare were frequently and irritatingly interrupted by calls for glasses to be re-charged and he found it difficult to make himself heard

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216. L.P.D.L., Annual Report, No.2, (1893-94), p.22.

217. CIJ, 9 July and 13 August 1892.

218. "Lectures and Lecturing," Eclectic Review, New Series, Vol.6, April 1864.

over the shouting for orders. (219) A reporter in the Woman's Signal wrote that it was impossible to hear speakers because their voices were "half-drowned in the click of billiard balls and the shouts beside the bar." (220) This paper, however, hardly qualifies as an innocent source for at the time of the piece it was engaged in a vicious attack upon the working men's club. The views of Rossiter, perhaps, had a greater claim to serious consideration. Speaking of his experiences as a lecturer for the S.P.E.L. he bitterly observed that in many instances:

the lecture is regarded as a kind of past-time, which gives a certain zest to the tobacco and beer, and enables the members to enjoy themselves with a certain profundity of sensation which they take to be thought. (221)

Solly too rued that "there are not more members of working men's clubs who have welcomed lecturers ... and forsaken the billiard room or card tables." (222) Some of these stories were no doubt exaggerated, others had a substantial basis in fact. Thus the lecture at the Hatcham Liberal Club was interrupted by "such an

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219. F. Rogers, Labour, Life and Literature, (1913), pp.73-75; Hyndman too found it difficult to address men in the clubs because he found himself continually disturbed by "endless potations" and shouting for orders; H. Hyndman, The Record of An Adventurous Life, (1911), p.344. See also, J. Williams, John Williams and the Early History of the S.D.F., (1886), pp.2-3.
220. Woman's Signal, 19 December 1895. F. Gould recalled that when he took over as the Secretary of Leicester Secular Society many of the members loved to "loungue in the club rooms, and chat over a glass of beer rather than hear lectures on Pauline theology or the possibility of miracles," F. Gould, Life Story of a Humanist, (1923), pp.85-86.
221. W. Rossiter, "Artisan Atheism," Nineteenth Century, Vol.21, February 1887, p.264.
222. H. Solly, Eighty Years, Vol.II, p.472.

uproar through the arrival of a brake party that the lecturer actually had to sit down for ten minutes."<sup>(223)</sup> To avoid potential difficulties and disturbances beer was not permitted to be taken into the lecture hall at the Eleusis Club.<sup>(224)</sup> Besides the attractions of the bar further evidence for the decline of lecturing was seen in the growth of variety type entertainment in the clubs and the falling off of audiences when other activities were going on in the club. A lecture in the Eleusis had to be abandoned in late September 1895 because it failed to gather more than six members into the hall, while at the same club many members and guests could not get into the hall when the very popular Paragon Opera Company paid one of its regular visits.<sup>(225)</sup> Similarly, the poor audience for a lecture on "Ireland" at the Patriotic Club was attributed to the superior attractions of the whist tournament also being played at the club.<sup>(226)</sup> However, the relationship was not as simple as the seductive equation decay of lecturing / rise of amusement would suggest. In considering the falling away of interest in lecturing either as a mode of instruction or as a form of entertainment a number of factors must be given due weight. It was not simply the case

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223. CIJ, 14 April 1888.

224. Echo, 20 February 1884. They order these things differently abroad as Samuelson noted at the Working Men's Institute at Elberfield, beer, coffee, and tobacco were allowed and "in order to enable members to partake of these with comfort, the hall is supplied, not with rows of uncomfortable benches, as with us, but with a great number of small oblong tables." J. Samuelson, The German Working Man, (1869), pp.5-6.

225. Club World, 5 October 1895.

226. CIJ, 15 January 1887. See also, Ibid, editorial, 5 September, 1891.

that the working man was pulled from his seat in the lecture hall by the blanchishments of beer or was drawn from the path of improvement by the arrival of a club dramatic company. One factor, which few lecturers mentioned, was the quality, both of content and of mode of delivery, of the lectures themselves. Potential lecturers of the working man were sagely warned that among their audience it would not be difficult:

to find many who are better able to compose essays upon the subjects treated by our amateur lecturers than they are themselves.

Moreover, after a hard day's labour the home has many more attractions than the prospect of:

tramping half a mile or so in the rain and snow, and sitting two hours in a damp, ill-ventilated schoolroom, listening to the crotchet of some gentleman who had pirated no inconsiderable part of his lecture... (227)

Poor lectures and indifferent speakers were less likely to be tolerated in the club, especially when there was an alternative to sitting in the hall. One club member was of the opinion that too many lecturers who applied for a booking in the club were "still serving their apprenticeship to lecturing." In such circumstances he did not find it surprising that most of his fellow members did not stray far from the bar. (228) Great attention had to be paid to the articulacy of a speaker for it was realised that one or two poor speakers "at an institution will so effectually end any inclination to go again, that no audience can be got together for

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227. Popular Science Journal, New Series, October 1862.

228. CIJ, 19 September 1891. Gaston too was critical of many of those who appeared on club platforms "with some abstruse subject, and soar away over the heads of the audience until the befogged hearers seek the shades of the bar and there restore exhausted nature." CIJ, 29 February 1884.

two or three years afterwards." (229)

Given the number of lecturers and the variety of lectures on offer there may have also been a minor "crisis of over-production" in the profession in the 1890's, with too many lecturers giving lectures of poor quality. There was certainly an expansion of sites where the man or woman called to lecturing could ply their trade. Besides clubs and the meeting places of political parties, there were open spaces where orators would gather, various kinds of Working Men's Institutes, secular and religious, Young Men's Associations, youth's institutes, Pleasant Sunday Afternoon societies, the list is very long. Following the example of Nottingham, moreover, a number of public libraries organised courses of popular lectures. At Bethnal Green, a total of 5,000 listened to the six lectures held in the Assembly Rooms, Mile End, organised by the free public library. (230) In Liverpool the Corporation, from 1867, provided lectures in the libraries. (231) Lectures, of a more scientific or educational character, were given by lecturers under the auspices of the Gilchrist trust and the Extension societies. (232)

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229. CIU, Annual Report, No.11, (1873), p.10.

230. T. Kelly, Books for the People, (1977), pp.120-24.

231. F. Dolman, Municipalities at Work, (1895), p.57. There is a discussion of various extension activities undertaken by libraries in T. Kelly, A History of Public Libraries, (1977), pp.94-98 and 199-202; See also, D. Davies, op.cit., pp.77-78.

232. For the work of the Gilchrist Trust see, A Hare, "Extension Courses in Science in the Bristol Region, 1877-1886," Studies in Adult Education, Vol.9(1), 1977; J. Harrison, Learning, p.242.

Audience comfort was a much neglected factor when considering the erosion of lecturing. Many lecturers found their audiences melting away because they would not sit in "draughty halls, full of fog and damp."<sup>(233)</sup> Had some club committees spent more time ensuring that the hall was in a suitable condition for the delivery of a lecture, for example the provision of a good fire in winter, then a larger audience might have turned up. Another matter not often mentioned was the importance of suitable advertising and publicity. Lectures needed to be properly announced sometime before their actual date of delivery and attractive publicity was of great value in assuring a good attendance.<sup>(234)</sup> Bills, "alluring in wording and artistic in colour and design," would draw a good crowd while a small notice tacked up in the corner of the bar would result in an almost empty hall.<sup>(235)</sup> The decline of lecturing has also to be related to wider shifts in working class attitudes. Members were becoming better educated, as a result of their own endeavours as well as state and voluntary action, and could often find more to interest them and glean more information from the newspaper, periodical or informal discussion thus they no longer had the patience or interest to sit in school-boy fashion, silent, regimented listening to the dry formality of the lecture.<sup>(236)</sup>

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233. CIJ, 11 February 1893.

234. B. Scott, op.cit., pp.13-14; CIJ, 4 March 1893. "Arrangements Recommended on the Occasion of the Delivery of Lectures at Working Men's Institutes," CIU, Occasional Paper, No.13, March 1870.

235. Temperance Worker, 3(28), April 1875. See also the discussion of the importance of publicity, organisation and comfort in Lecturers' Gazette, October 1861, February 1862, and March, 1866.

236. See Elocutionist, November 1885.



Lecturing did not die out suddenly or completely. Radicals and socialists, nonetheless, were strongly of the opinion that by the turn of the century audiences for political lectures were markedly on the decline. "Skipjack" reporter for the Shoreditch Social Democratic Club noted that had more members attended the recently given lecture they would have realised that education was essential to the working class cause for education made workers understand the "simple fact that capitalism is not only entirely unnecessary, but is a very expensive luxury for them to indulge in,"<sup>(237)</sup> Few members, however, seemed to find that prospect exciting. To restore the lecture to prominence the Union suggested that clubs might try the experiment of "lecturettes," which in essence were lectures combined with music:

The plan is to open by the performance of a string band. The speaker then occupies half-an-hour in discourse, on which no debate or discussion is permitted. A second piece by the band, followed by the usual vote of thanks, terminates the proceedings.

This plan, if generally adopted, would attract "the great bulk of club men once more to the lecture room," for it had become clear that "speech, unassisted by lighter attractions, has lost much of the charm it once had for workmen."<sup>(238)</sup> Thus although the number of lectures delivered at clubs declined in the early twentieth century, they continued to constitute an important means for club education.<sup>(239)</sup> After World War I, however, many London

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237. Club Life, 18 January 1902.

238. CIU, Annual Report, No.41, (1904), p.27

239. J. Argyle, "Education in Working Men's Clubs," Highway, 1(3), December 1908.

clubs began to disband their lecture programmes completely because of poor attendances. (240)

Besides classes and lectures, penny readings and discussion classes were also used for educational purposes, though of a less formal kind. Both proved very popular during the first fifteen or so years of the movement, although by 1880, except for rural clubs, they were of declining importance. The "penny reading" which had come to prominence in the early 1860's was commended to club men because it could combine elevation with rational amusement. An evening of readings could provide the fledgling club with an important source of revenue and amusement for the members who participated. (241) The discussion class was a hybrid combining the functions of formal class work education with the mode of collective learning and instruction present in the mutual improvement society. (242) Solly, for one, was keen to see every club found a discussion class for as he told Kettering Working Men's Institute such circles "led men to think and read, and desire knowledge ... They also tend to promote courtesy and gentlemanly manners among the members. (243) Pratt too had warm words for such

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240. H. Llewelyn Smith, (Ed), New Survey of London Life and Labour, (1936), Vol.9, p.129.

241. For a full discussion of "Penny Readings" see Chapter 6, below.

242. "Discussion Societies," People's Paper, 31 July 1858; "Conversation Classes," Workmen's Magazine, No.3, March 1873; J. Cassell, (Ed), Social Science, p.112; "Working Men's Clubs and Their Organisation," Social Science Review, Vol.2(8), 1864, p.144; H. Rawson, "Mutual Improvement Societies," Popular Lecturer, No.8, December 1856.

243. Lecturers' Gazette, November 1869. See also remarks of the Rev. Naylor, discussed by T. Kelly, "Continuous Education: A Nineteenth Century Pioneer," Journal of Librarianship, Vol.1(1), 1971, pp.64-65.

undertakings which acted as a powerful aid to clear thinking. He believed that by joining such a society the working man was sharply brought to realise the imperfections of his knowledge and had to subject his views to critical scrutiny. The cause of useful knowledge would also be served if an "impartial and well-informed president would sum up carefully at the close."<sup>(244)</sup>

Many discussion classes used their meetings to develop and deepen the speaking and reading skills of their members for elocution was held in great regard. Members of the discussion and elocution classes could usually be called upon to give their club a regular entertainment of speeches and readings. In late November 1875 the class of the Gifford Club gave an elocutionary entertainment consisting of readings from Shakespeare.<sup>(245)</sup> One observer commented that such evenings were very popular with metropolitan club men in the 1880's. He noted that the items usually chosen for the programme were in the main unobjectionable:

In only one or two instances did one discover that the elocutionist was going in for matter far better avoided. As wives, mothers, sisters, sweet-hearts, and children are almost always in the audience it is the most imperative of duties to be careful in the selection of items. <sup>(246)</sup>

Sadly one member of the Bryanston Club drew attention to the need for a strong Chairman at such evenings for at his club rowdy members often entertained themselves by interrupting the proceedings, a consequence of which was that many members were losing interest

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244. WMCJ, 9 January and 15 January 1876.

245. WMCJ, 27 November 1875.

246. Elöcutionist, September 1883.

in elocution and leaving the club. (247)

Discussion classes also formed the nuclei and supplied the personnel for many of the debating societies which sprang up in the clubs and elsewhere in the 1860's. (248) Love of literature and interest in science and art were all said to have been stimulated at the Boro' of Hackney Club following the formation of an Elocution and Debating Society. Founded in 1877, some 2000 persons were said to have attended its deliberations by 1879. (249) In 1882 the Union organised a debating competition for members of the London Clubs. It was organised in two rounds, the subject being for debate, in round one "The Sunday Question," and in round two, "The Competitiveness of English Labour compared to Foreign." Mr. Gardiner, of the Hatcham Liberal Club was the eventual winner. (250)

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247. CIJ, 19 September 1891.

248. See, for example, M. Stephens and G. Roderick, "A Passing Fashion in Nineteenth Century Adult Education: The Cambourne Debating and Mutual Improvement Society," Paedagogica Historica, Vol.10(1), 1970. In Birmingham artisans met weekly to listen and participate in the Sunday debates held at the Hope and Anchor Debating Society in Navigation Street. These debates, begun in 1854, attracted a regular audience of some 150. They lasted until 1886 when the public house was demolished. Political topics formed the major theme of debate. See Hooper, op.cit., pp.28-30; A. Crawford and R. Thorne, Birmingham Pubs, 1890-1939, (Birmingham, 1975), pp.12-13. The passion for formal debating was also responsible for the formation of numerous local parliaments which flourished in the 1880's, see, H. Lunn, "Local Parliaments: Their Place and Power in Civic Life," Social Centres of London, (1892).

249. Lecturers' Gazette, February 1879. See also the competition organised by the Livingstone Club, Barnsbury, CIU, Annual Report, No.16, (1878), p.31.

250. CIU, Annual Report, No.20, (1882), p.8. For the annual debate of 1884, held at the St. James and Soho Club, see CIJ, 15 February, 1884.

These societies were most active in clubs where members were free from restrictions on the discussion of political or religious topics, for these usually provided the staple fare of debating societies. At Hull Working Men's Club, for example, in December 1864 the members held a debate on the suffrage question. The proceedings terminated with the passing of a resolution strongly in favour of the extension of the franchise to working men. (251)

The case for the Sunday opening of places of rational recreation formed the topic debated by Members of the Bermondsey Working Men's Institute in March 1875. In the concluding vote 220 members voted for a "Free Sunday," only 11 voted against. (252) Even at those clubs where members were barred from discussing controversial matters, other subjects could be found to supply the debaters with issues for consideration. Oratorical skills, however, were not always the main attraction for some members of the audience. With great regret, one commentator observed that at the Working Men's debates held at Toynbee Hall:

the bulk of the audience, those who come pretty regularly and never speak at all, seem to enjoy the debate in proportion as it approaches a fight, and hard-hitting is freely applauded. (252)

Like those customers of the early coffee-houses, many club men gained their education through the spoken word. Men, often

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251. Beehive, 24 December 1864.

252. Free Sunday Advocate, April 1875.

253. Toynbee Record, 20(4), January 1908. The Englishman's love of a good fight was remarked upon by Ostragorski. He noted that in some towns enterprising publicans catered for such tastes by putting on debates at their public houses, giving "5/- to a good talker who opens the debate." Ostragorski, op.cit., Vol.I, p.416.

accompanied by their female companions, would listen to a lecture and a few would brave joining in the ensuing discussion. They could also participate in the discussion class, the speaking competition, the elocutionary entertainment, volunteer to give penny readings, choose a passage for reading out aloud in the reading circle, and rehearse dramatic or comic monologues. Declamation and good public-speaking were skills which had to be learnt. Maurice was moved by "the impulse to oratory" amongst working men, noting that "none can have listened to any of their speeches, without seeing how many ethical or metaphysical as well as political theories are seething in their brain."<sup>(254)</sup> Some men served their speaking apprenticeship on street corners as stump orators, others gained experience by appearance on temperance, secularist or socialist platforms. For members of the clubs it was possible to gain confidence by attending the various classes and groups which met in the club to foster the talents of would-be speakers. Members of the North-East London Club, for example, organised a competition in impromptu speaking in May 1865.<sup>(255)</sup> Some used the skills passed on in the clubs to enhance their political work, many others, on the other hand, contented themselves with delivering a selection from the great authors at the fortnightly concert. Training in speaking and inculcating an appreciation of its difficulties and potentialities was a central part of club education, one which was shared

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254. F. Maurice, Learning and Working, p.129. W. Picht, Toynbee Hall and the English Settlement Movement, (1914), similarly thought the English working man to be a "passionate and not unskillful extempore speaker," p.58.

255. Friendly Society Journal, 5(8) May 1865.

with friendly societies, mutual improvement societies, branch meetings of trades unions, and political organisations. Also, it was a form of education which has gone unrecognised because of definitions and approaches to educational endeavours which stress the passing of examinations and the gaining of certificates. (256)

Other ways in which the club could provide for the intellectual development of its membership included excursions, especially to places of historical interest, the establishment of museums attached to the club, the creation of libraries and reading rooms, and the holding of periodic industrial exhibitions.

Excursions for the amusement and relaxation of the members or to enhance friendly relations between clubs were part of the facilities for rational recreation supplied by the club. There were also visits which were intended for more serious ends, such as the special excursion organised by the CIU to Hurstbourne Park, the residence of Lord and Lady Portsmouth in August 1869. The visit was held to illustrate "a solidarity of classes to common interests in this country, where more than any other country perhaps, the political and social influence of the aristocracy is recognised and felt." (257)

The most sustained programme of didactic visits was organised by the Union for London clubmen on Saturday afternoons during the summer months. They were begun in 1870 because the Council desired that "the great boon of the Saturday half-holiday should be turned to more account ... in creating a taste for

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256. On the importance of elocution and public speaking, see J. Paterson, "Elocution Classes and Their Advantages," Public Good, No.6, June 1850; J. Carpenter, The Popular Elocutionist and Reciter, (1894).

257. Lecturers' Gazette, September 1869. S. Danziger in his Prize Essay also thought didactic visits would promote harmony between the classes, see, On the Best Methods of Promoting the Educational Aspects of Club Life, (Manchester 1898), p.4.

rational recreation."<sup>(258)</sup> Besides visits to places of historic or scientific interest in 1871 the Union also set up trips to interest clubmen whose tastes lay in matters botanical and geological. Visits to Hampstead Heath to examine its geology and flora were conducted by Mr. Caleb Evans,<sup>(259)</sup> Over 250 clubmen were given a conducted tour of the museum of the Royal College of Surgeons by Professor Flower in July 1875. After the visit the clubs were told that the Royal College had decided to recognise the Union as a learned society and would thus admit any club member to the museum when it was open.<sup>(260)</sup> Among the places visited in 1887 were Westminster Abbey, the museum of natural history at South Kensington and St. Pauls Cathedral where the clubmen were entertained to tea by Canon Scott Holland.<sup>(261)</sup> London club men did not seem to lose their interest in these visits and they retained their popularity well into the twentieth century and the range of places visited was similarly extended. In 1899 in addition to museums and galleries, club men could also visit the South Metropolitan Gasworks and the model works of Mr. Idris, the soft drinks manufacturer.<sup>(262)</sup>

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258. CIU, Annual Report, No.8, (1870); see also Ibid, No.9, (1871), pp.3-4. The Dean of Westminster, A. P. Stanley, was an ardent advocate of these visits and Westminster Abbey was one of the first places which clubmen were able to visit; R. Prothero, The Life and Letters of Dean Stanley, (1909), pp.427-31; see also, Escott, Transformations, pp.128-27.

259. Early Closing Association, Annual Report, (1871), pp.39-40.

260. WMCJ, 10 July 1875.

261. CIJ, 11 June 1887.

262. CIJ, August 1899. In its early years the W.E.A. also organised Saturday afternoon visits to such places as the House of Lords and Westminster Abbey; A. Mansbridge, "The Workers' Educational Association," International Labour Review, 6(4), 1922.



All clubs were encouraged to establish a library for their members, and should it not prove feasible to set-up a full library, then at the very least the club ought to set aside a room for use as a reading room.<sup>(263)</sup> Such rooms with a good stock of improving periodicals and newspapers were very attractive to working men. As Ludlow and Jones argued although the "cheap newspaper and periodical cannot perhaps be defined strictly as educators. Yet, for good or evil, and probably on the whole for good, they are very powerful ones."<sup>(264)</sup> Reading rooms tended to be very well stocked. The room at the Rectory Place Club, Loughborough, took over 29 newspapers and periodicals in the early 1860's, including the Beehive, the Daily Telegraph, the Illustrated London News and the Herald of Peace.<sup>(265)</sup> One year after opening, the Newcastle Working Men's Club took 19 newspapers and 49 periodicals.<sup>(266)</sup> The reading room at Batley Working Men's Club in the early 1870's subscribed to 9 daily and 21 weekly newspapers and periodicals.<sup>(267)</sup> There were also examples of clubs which grew from successful reading rooms such as the Farnham Working Men's Institute which evolved from a reading room set up by the Archdeacon of Surrey.<sup>(268)</sup>

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263. M. Feilde, On the Advantages of Free Public Newsrooms and Lending Libraries, (1858), pp.13-19; 40-42; "Village Clubs and Reading Rooms," Leisure Hour, No.873, Vol.17, 19 September 1868.
264. J. Ludlow and L. Jones, The Progress of the Working Classes, 1832-1867, (1867), p.181.
265. Solly Coll., Vol.XV, Section 13(a), Item 9(b).
266. J. Knott, "Libraries for the Working Classes in Nineteenth Century Newcastle," Bulletin, North East Group for Labour History, No.9, October, 1975, p.15.
267. J. Popple, op.cit., Vol.I. p.97
268. Lecturers' Gazette, May 1861. A club at Greatham, Stockton-on Tees similarly grew from a reading room, "Village Clubs...." Leisure Hour, Vol.17, No.873, 19 September 1868.

It would also contribute to the popularity of the room if attention was paid to decoration. The design should stress homeliness for an austere room was said to turn working men away. (269) The Rev. Basil Wilberforce urged benefactors to make rooms bright, a place where "pipes may be smoked, and politics may be talked, and refuge may be had from the discomfort of washing day." (270)

Donations of books and periodicals to club libraries were also recommended as a valuable means whereby the middle class friends of the movement could render assistance. Ladies and clergymen were said to be ever ready to come to the aid of any club which required a stock of books to get its work started. (271) George Humphrey, Librarian and Honorary Secretary of the Braby Institute, also called upon charitable ladies and gentlemen not to waste books once they had finished with them. Instead they should be sent to the nearby club where any donation would be gratefully accepted. (272) Members of the Cobden Club were fortunate to be the recipients of a generous gift of the complete works of John Stuart Mill given by Helen Taylor in January 1881. (273)

To foster and nourish the taste for good reading clubs organised "Library Nights," the aim of which was to introduce the membership to the work of the library and display the stock available for borrowing. (274) Grants of books and aid in setting up

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269. See the comments of J. Walker in Cassell, op.cit., pp.103-04.

270. Official Report of the Church Congress, (1879), p.189.

271. S. Smith, "Club and Institute Libraries," Library Chronicle, Vol.5(2), February 1885, p.29.

272. G. Humphrey, "The Reading of the Working Classes," Nineteenth Century, Vol.33, April 1893, p.701.

273. House and Home, 15 January, 1881.

274. CIU, Annual Report, No.12, (1874), p.23.

reading classes amongst the provincial clubs were given by the Union in 1874. (275) The Union also published a short list of items recommended for purchase because of their intellectual value and cheapness. Titles included Pilgrims Progress (1/1d), Alton Locke (6/0), Poems, by Burns (4/6d) and Godwin's Caleb Williams (2/6d). (276) Librarians and individual members were urged to take advantage of the Union's offer to sell off a number of surplus exam texts in 1887. They were all offered at the price of 1/- per volume, and included Paley's Natural Theology, Michelet's French Revolution, and Brassey's Work and Wages. (277) Librarians or would-be librarians were also advised that they must take seriously their duty of selecting books for stock. They were told to examine:

the soundness of the works ... Authors who lay down bad principles in disguise should be more carefully avoided than those who speak out. Seek to elevate the taste of readers, never to debase them. (278)

Library work was also to be encouraged in that it offered an invaluable means of involving the club in its local community. Members of the St. James and Soho Club were told by Mr. Freeman, custodian of the Workman's Library attached to Messrs. Broadwood, that by having a library the club could extend the privileges of improvement to the fair sex, thereby introducing a high tone into club life. (279) Club men were also urged to think of others in

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275. Capital and Labour, 8 April 1874.

276. WMCJ, 16 September 1876

277. CIJ, 17 September 1887.

278. George Humphrey in CIJ, 31 October 1884.

279. WMCJ, 9 February 1878. See also CIJ, 29 August 1891.

Further support for the encouragement of reading was given by the creation of the Union "Circulating Library" in the early 70's. Suggested by James Hole who had pioneered the use of the travelling library in his work for the Yorkshire Union, by 1878 the CIU had 146 boxes in operation containing over 4,000 volumes. Twenty four boxes were added between 1878-79 as a result of the substantial donations made by friends of the movement including Lord Erabazon and Maurice.<sup>(286)</sup> By 1902 the number of book boxes reached 385, and this figure had nearly doubled to 673 by 1909.<sup>(287)</sup> In 1923 the Union issued 615 boxes containing a total of some 20,000 volumes.<sup>(288)</sup> Clubs in particular districts could also take advantage of peripatetic libraries set-up by other associations. A number of village reading rooms and institutes in the north east, for example, were supplied with books from the Northern Union of Mechanics' Institutes which had established its circulating library in 1849.<sup>(289)</sup> In 1880 the Guild of Co-Operators organised an itinerant library of books relevant to the promotion of the co-operative cause.<sup>(290)</sup> Travelling boxes specialising in literature on political and social questions could be hired from the Fabian

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286. CIU, Annual Report, No.12, (1874), pp.5-6; Ibid, No.16, (1878), p.8. For Hole's work see, J. Harrison, Social Reform in Victorian Leeds: The Work of James Hole, 1820-1895, (Leeds, 1954), pp.39-41. On the work of the circulating library see, Smith, op.cit., Other donors to the boxes included George Howell and the Queen, the latter donating copies of her Journal of a Tour to the Highlands; for examples of donations, see CIU, Annual Report, No.13, (1875), pp.28-29.

287. CIU, Annual Report, No.47, (1909), p.24.

288. Handbook of Adult Education, (1923), p.88.

289. R. Grimshaw, "The Northern Union of Literary, Scientific, and Mechanical Institutions," (Library Association, Prize Essay No.189, 1951), pp.15-17.

290. Co-Operative News, 31 July 1880.

their area by taking up the cause of Free Public Libraries. They should organise public meetings and lectures and get up petitions calling for the establishment of a library. For any club "that had succeeded in obtaining a library for the district might well feel proud of its success, and such a result would do more to justify clubs in the eyes of the world than anything else."<sup>(280)</sup>

Clubs varied greatly in the size of their library provision. Holloway club was inaugurated with a library of over 350 volumes.<sup>(281)</sup> The Newcastle Working Men's Club did not establish a library until 1886, when the pressure of immediate financial circumstances eased. The library opened with 430 volumes, with access initially restricted to those who paid their subscriptions quarterly.<sup>(282)</sup> The Mildmay club, one of London's largest in the 1890's, however, had only a small library of something like 400 volumes by the end of the century.<sup>(283)</sup> It was very rare to find clubs with large libraries in the 1870's and 80's. Clubs such as Saltaire with 4,000 volumes or the London and South West Railway Club with over 5,000 volumes in 1887 were the exceptions.<sup>(284)</sup> From the mid-80's library provision expanded markedly in many clubs. By 1901 there were numerous examples of clubs with good size libraries such as Gainsborough Working Men's with 5,500, Sheerness Victoria with 3,000, Batley also with 3,000 and Swansea with over 4,000.<sup>(285)</sup>

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280. CIJ, 15 January 1886.

281. Beehive, 6 February 1864.

282. J. Knott, op.cit., p.15.

283. Club Life, 17 January 1899.

284. For Saltaire, see Capital and Labour, 3 February 1875; for London and South-West, see CIJ, 29 October 1887.

285. CIJ, October 1901.

Further support for the encouragement of reading was given by the creation of the Union "Circulating Library" in the early 70's. Suggested by James Hole who had pioneered the use of the travelling library in his work for the Yorkshire Union, by 1878 the CIU had 146 boxes in operation containing over 4,000 volumes. Twenty four boxes were added between 1878-79 as a result of the substantial donations made by friends of the movement including Lord Brabazon and Maurice.<sup>(286)</sup> By 1902 the number of book boxes reached 385, and this figure had nearly doubled to 673 by 1909.<sup>(287)</sup> In 1923 the Union issued 615 boxes containing a total of some 20,000 volumes.<sup>(288)</sup> Clubs in particular districts could also take advantage of peripatetic libraries set-up by other associations. A number of village reading rooms and institutes in the north east, for example, were supplied with books from the Northern Union of Mechanics' Institutes which had established its circulating library in 1849.<sup>(289)</sup> In 1880 the Guild of Co-Operators organised an itinerant library of books relevant to the promotion of the co-operative cause.<sup>(290)</sup> Travelling boxes specialising in literature on political and social questions could be hired from the Fabian

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288. Handbook of Adult Education, (1923), p.88.

289. R. Grimshaw, "The Northern Union of Literary, Scientific, and Mechanical Institutions," (Library Association, Prize Essay No.189, 1951), pp.15-17.

290. Co-Operative News, 31 July 1880.

Society at the modest cost of 6/- per year for four different boxes.<sup>(291)</sup> Clubs in the Manchester Association could also make use of its four boxes. The Association also entered into an agreement with the Fabians whereby the latter agreed to contribute a substantial proportion of the books in each box.<sup>(292)</sup>

Tantalisingly little is known of what and how working class club men read.<sup>(293)</sup> At the Newcastle Club the scanty evidence suggests that clubmen were not untypical from many other working class readers in having a liking for popular novelists, Dickens and Scott in particular.<sup>(294)</sup> A member formerly involved with the Boro' of Hackney club noted ruefully that "few working men read about their own class, the lives of the reformers, the Chartists, and others who have worked hard to make England free." Instead the plebeian reader wanted his stories to be about nobles, full of heroes and heroines and concerned with high life. The chastened member had even been asked for a copy of the Newgate Calender, though happily he was able to record that "such morbid readers are few and the lives of murderers are not very greatly requested."<sup>(295)</sup>

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291. Fabian News, Vol.10(10), December 1900.

292. Manchester Association, Annual Report, No.28, (1905), p.21.

293. For some examples of the working class library see, H. Francis, "Survey of Miners' Institute and Welfare Hall Libraries in South Wales," Library History, Vol.3(1), 1973; S. Shipley, "The Library of the Alliance Cabinet Makers' Association in 1875," History Workshop Journal, No.1, Spring, 1976; L. Barrow, "The Homerton Social Democratic Club, 1881-1882," Ibid, No.5, Spring 1978.

294. J. Knott, op.cit.

295. Club World, 4 May 1895. For some interesting observations on working class literary taste see, J. Leigh, "What do the masses read?", Economic Review, Vol.14(2), 1904, especially pp.171-72.

How working men read is even more difficult to reconstruct. The image of the autodidactic soberly pursuing knowledge is one of considerable validity. Yet the comments of George Acorn reveal that at least one working man read with a fine disregard for the moral lesson of the tale. Referring to the works of George Eliot he recalled that as a youth:

I read solely for the story. I used to skip the parts that moralized or painted verbal scenery, a practice at which I became very dexterous. Such mental gymnastics were forced upon me by the flood of goody-goody literature which was poured in upon us. Kindly institutions sought to lead us into the right path by giving us endless tracts, or books, in which the comparative pill of religious teaching was clumsily coated by a mild story. (296)

No doubt it was to avoid such idiosyncratic readings that the Union issued circulars in early 1891 explaining the valuable educational work which could be carried out by reading parties.<sup>(297)</sup> Libraries and reading rooms especially were well used by club men. Peppin's humorous aside that almost all books "are regarded with reverence by clubmen" which they did not seek to convert "into contempt by undue familiarity" was precisely that, a light-hearted observation, not intended to be taken as a literal interpretation of this aspect of educational work.<sup>(298)</sup> The quiet work of the club librarian and the use made of library and reading facilities in the clubs made an invaluable contribution to members education.<sup>(299)</sup>

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296. G. Acorn, One of the Multitude, (1911), p.50.

297. CIJ, 21 February 1891.

298. T. Peppin, op.cit., p.58.

299. For the importance of the library to adult education see, B. Headicar, "Libraries," W.E.A., Education Yearbook, (1918).



For those clubs with the necessary room or an interested body of members much good could be done by the establishment of a local museum, especially if it was concerned with the display of artifacts illustrative of commercial or industrial matters and was open at a time when other working men could attend. (300)

The Working Men's College had established a museum in 1856, which rapidly became popular attracting over 500 visitors in 1859. (301) Museum work was said to implant new tastes in the working man who took it up and had a great value in promoting technical education. (302) To present the case for setting up museums to club men a conversazione was held in the Agricultural Hall in September 1865, at which resolutions supporting museum work as liable to encourage interest in industry and applied science were unanimously passed. (303) A number of clubs in small towns and villages set-up museums, illustrating for example, local geology or history.

More popular than museums were industrial exhibitions which

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300. See, "Museums as Aids to Education," Leisure Hour, Vol.17, No.878, 24 October 1868. The Society of Arts was also keen to see the establishment of local museums; Hudson and Luckhurst, op.cit., pp.217-21. See also, "Provincial Museums," Industrial Art, Vol.I(5), November 1877 and A. Wallace, "Museums for the People," Studies Scientific and Social, Vol.II, (1990), p.3.
301. Working Men's College Magazine, April, 1859.
302. L. Thorne, "Technical Education," British Almanack and Companion, 1885, p.52; Lecturers' Gazette, February 1862; Working Men's College Magazine, November 1860; K. Hudson, A Social History of Museums, (1975), pp.58 & 63.
303. Inquirer, 16 September 1865.

were a feature of working class life in the 1860's and 1870's. (304) George Murphy, popular temperance lecturer, in alliance with the South London Working Men's club organised a very popular one in February 1864. Held in Lambeth Baths over 30,000 persons visited it in nine days, paying the admission price of 2d. (305) It was followed by successful exhibitions in West London, held at the Floral Hall Covent Garden and a North London Working Class Industrial Exhibition held in October, (306) The quality and range of the objects made for these events was taken to be indicative of "the growing intelligence of the working classes." (307) Philanthropists were given tips on how to set about organising them. (308) In the wake of the highly successful exhibitions in Wakefield and Birmingham, the failure of many middle class men and women to give their support was strongly criticised. Such denial of duty was not only a transgression of Christian behaviour but was also a

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304. Industrial Exhibitions were not an invention of this period, nor can they be seen simply as a consequence of the Great Exhibition of 1851. Industrial Exhibitions, for example, had been a feature of the extra-mural provision of some Yorkshire mechanics' institutes, see, Yorkshire Union of Mechanics' Institutes, Annual Report, No.4, (Leeds, 1841), p.9. For a general discussion of the phenomenon in the context of artisan life in the early nineteenth century see, T. Kusamitsu, "Industrial Exhibitions before 1851," History Workshop Journal, (forthcoming).
305. Nonconformist, 23 March 1864; Beehive, 5 March 1864; Monthly Review of Friendly Societies, April 1864; British Workman, 1 February 1865.
306. Friendly Society Journal, June 1865; British Workman, 1 January 1865.
307. "The Shoemaker's Holiday," All Year Round, 15 December 1866.
308. The Working Man, 3 January 1866; International Courier, 6 January and 20 April 1866.

neglect of the "dictates of political prudence."<sup>(309)</sup> In July 1865 the South London exhibition was repeated with great success. This was followed by the first East London Exhibition opened by Shaftesbury also in July.<sup>(310)</sup> The idea of industrial exhibitions was warmly commended by Mr. Layard, M.P., during the CIU sponsored series of lectures at the Exter Hall. During the ensuing discussion working men came forward to extol these exhibitions for giving them the opportunity both to display their skills and acquire new levels of craftsmanship.<sup>(311)</sup> During the 1860's and 70's numerous clubs held such exhibitions. Leighton Buzzard held an exhibition in 1868 to raise money to repay the loan which had been contracted to pay for the library. Members gave over 1,700 items.<sup>(312)</sup> Seven years later the exhibition was organised to raise money for the club's lecture programme. A number of local gentry, including Lord Rothschild, lent exhibits.<sup>(313)</sup> So popular did the industrial exhibition organised by the Wandsworth Club prove that the doors had to be opened four hours in advance to accommodate the queues.<sup>(314)</sup> Peterborough club held an exhibition in April 1862 which, in addition to the exhibits made by the members, had a display of

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309. Guardian, 6 September 1865.

310. Beehive, 22 July 1865.

311. Ibid., 1 July 1865.

312. L. Sprowell, "Leighton Buzzard Club and Institute," Bedfordshire Magazine, Autumn 1978, p.256.

313. L. Dyer, "Leighton Buzzard Working Men's Club and Institute," Part I, Adult Education, Vol.21(3), 1949, p.147; WMCJ, 5 June 1875.

314. CIU, Annual Report, No.9, (1871), p.22.

mechanical objects lent by the South Kensington Museum.<sup>(315)</sup> As late as 1900 the exhibition was proving its popularity when the Mildmay Club laid on a very lavish industrial display. The example of the club was commended to club men. They should try to emulate it, they were told, for a club without educational ambitions was no better than a public-house.<sup>(316)</sup> The Union also co-ordinated two extensive exhibitions in the Agricultural Hall Islington in 1891 and 1892.<sup>(317)</sup>

These activities did not exhaust the educational provision found in the clubs. The Union had a collection of drawings and engravings which could be lent to affiliates for decoration. Spelling Bees, an idea imported from the United States, enjoyed a brief but extensive popularity in the late 1860's and early 70's. For those who wished to discuss what they read in the newspaper clubs organised weekly lectures called "Events of the Week" during which members could exchange opinions on current topics. All these undertakings showed that many clubs took educational work seriously, even if the membership appeared dilatory in their support for some of the ventures. It remains to examine the interpretation of this provision and its place in club life.

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315. Lecturers' Gazette, May 1882. Other examples of exhibition work include, Longroyd Bridge in 1867 (Hemming, op.cit., p.173), Dulwich Working Men's (WMCJ, 30 October 1875), East London, (CIJ, 23 April 1887), Kettering, March 1893 (CIJ, 8 April 1893), and Plumstead Radical, March 1894, (CIJ, 24 March 1894). For a rather patronising description of the taste manifested by such exhibits see, "University Men and East London," All Year Round, 6 June 1885.

316. Club. Life, 24 March 1900.

317. CIU, Catalogue of the Industrial Exhibition, (1892).

One of the most important forms of education supplied by the clubs was that which accompanied the very act of membership itself. Coming to work together with other members for a set aim or seeking to develop the corporate well-being of the institution were educational functions. Education in the clubs, therefore, was not simply to be measured by the number of classes or lectures. There was the education which came from social intercourse. In clubs men mix together "and often receive instruction from their fellows, who may in conversation unconsciously teach many valuable lessons. There are men who would not enter a lecture room but will listen for hours to men better informed than themselves."<sup>(318)</sup> Against those critics who thought the Union and its clubs did not do enough for education the club journal argued that:

in a thousand nameless, unremembered acts it goes toward its task, making men more self-reliant and more self-restrained, more conscious both of power and responsibility, teaching them from splendid actualities how wide and far-reaching is the world of possibilities, and developing the fraternal and social ideal the one quality in man without which all his other advancements will be as dead sea fruit. (319)

This was taken to be essential educational work. Formal education may have been difficult to sustain in all clubs yet there was no doubt as far as the Union was concerned at the turn of the century that:

in training men to business habits, to become gentlemen in the truest sense, to cheerfully accept discipline when it is democratic, in all that makes both the social man and citizen, the clubs do as much education as ever. (320)

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318. CIJ, 28 October 1893.

319. CIJ, August 1897. Original emphasis.

320. CIJ, July 1899; See also, Common Good, 22 January 1880.

This training in self-management was also noted by Ingram who praised:

the astonishing education in self-government which a club ... gives its members, and especially to its committee.

Such education gave the working man the ability to rise above the everyday. (321) The most extensive recognition of this form of "education by membership" thesis was provided by Anson in his observations on east end clubs:

A well ordered club offers to the working boy or man the nearest available approach to the particular advantages which I attribute to college or (public) school. It creates a standard of conduct below which its members will not fall. It gives an object and stimulus to action which takes a man outside of the selfish ends of daily life. He feels that he belongs to a society whose credit he is bound to maintain and to promote ... He who has learned to be loyal to his school, to his college, or to his club is the less likely to play false to a friend or neighbour, or to fail in the wider duties of citizenship. (322)

There is no doubt that club membership gave many workmen an education and training which the formal school system neglected or denied. In common with friendly and trade societies the club trained its members in how to conduct a meeting, speak in public, address the chair, in other words to accept the discipline of democratic procedure. Membership may have also had the elevating effect on character that the quotations cited indicated (and they were a welcome change from the carping criticism to which the movement was subjected in the late 1890's), but the most important form of socialisation was this transmission of values and standards of

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321. A. Ingram, "Working Men's Clubs," J. Knapp (Ed), The Universities and the Social Problem, (1895), p.46

322. W. Anson, "Oxford House in Bethnal Green," Economic Review, 3(1), 1893, p.17.

behaviour appropriate to the conduct of democratic organisations. <sup>(323)</sup>

A shift can be seen in the ideologies which informed the various undertakings and practices of club education, a transposition of emphasis from the centrality of ideas of "improvement" to concern with "education for citizenship." During the early years of the club movement, say until the early 1870's the educational work to be pursued in the clubs was much influenced by Smilesian precepts of self-help. Education was an integral feature of that ideology which stressed to the working man the importance of thrift, self-discipline and control, the pursuit of knowledge, temperance, if not abstinence, and regard for the rights of property. It was not simply a form of "bourgeois ideology" or social control. For many artisans the attainment of such standards of behaviour was essential to the enhancement of the dignity of labour and for nourishing the self-respect and pride in class identity of the skilled workman. While it might have been hoped by some philanthropists that concern for "improvement" would have produced a supine and obsequious working class, for many working men the pursuit of improvement did not entail reneging on one's class but acquiring skills and self-confidence necessary to push

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323. The educative consequences of membership were also noted by the New Survey: "Clubs may not exert ... a specifically educative influence on their members, but many of them do perform a valuable service for the community by affording opportunities for working men to widen their outlook by social intercourse with their fellows." (Vol.9, p.132). The idea of the educative role of membership in working class organisations had earlier been stressed by the N.A.P.S.S.; see, E. Yeo, op.cit., pp.259-62.

forward the social and political claims of working men. (324)

Partly as a consequence of the passing of the Second Reform Bill and partly as a response to the interests and beliefs of those entering into membership of the clubs the concern for "improvement" as an individual attribute diminished, being replaced by an emphasis on the value of training for citizenship, that is on the ideas and behaviour necessary and appropriate for participation in democratic government. In any discussion of "citizenship" in the late nineteenth century it is essential to note that there was a marked variability in definitions of the term and a lack of consensus on what citizenship education would achieve. (325) There

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324. For a discussion of the relation of self-help to education and the complex of meanings attached to the term, see, J. Harrison, Learning, especially, Chapter 5; R. Peers, Adult Education: A Comparative Survey, (1958), p.33; D. Vincent, "The Growth of Working Class Consciousness: A Study of the Autobiographies of Working Men," (Ph.D. Thesis, Univ. Cambridge, 1976), Chapter 6.
325. The seminal discussion of citizenship is that of T. Marshall "Citizenship and Social Class," in Sociology at the Crossroads, (1963). For Dahrendorf, following Marshall, the defining characteristic of citizenship is full participation in community political life, R. Dahrendorf, "Citizenship and Beyond: The Social Dynamics of an Idea," Social Research, Vol.41(4), 1974, pp.678-79. See also H. Van Gunsteren, "Notes on a Theory of Citizenship," in P. Birnbaum et al, op.cit., pp.10-11. Some of the difficulties in the use of the term are clearly seen by comparing the stress on citizenship as part of the rhetoric of respectability of the strata of the skilled working class in mid-nineteenth century Lancashire, a language which signified their incorporation into capitalist society, with the understanding of the term by Tawney where it becomes a key term in his approach to the meaning and achievement of socialism. On these issues, see N. Kirk, Thesis, op.cit., pp.196-97 and R. Terrill, R. H. Tawney and His Times, (Cambridge, Mass., 1973), pp.181-82 and 210-212. See also the idea of citizenship as service to the state in A. Mander, The Gospel of Citizenship, (1920).



were different languages of citizenship developed by different groups, although a major contribution was made by those philosophers and educationalists influenced by idealism.<sup>(326)</sup> Toynbee, for example, argued for the expansion of co-operative education which would provide citizenship training for co-operators, one consequence of which would be to dispel apathy regarding political and social questions.<sup>(327)</sup> Acland and Jones believed, like the S.P.E. L., that promoting citizenship education in co-operative societies would permit the study of political questions "without any party spirit, and a man who studies them in this way is more likely to be a good co-operator and a good citizen than if he always approaches them from a partisan point of view."<sup>(328)</sup> This interpretation of citizenship as a form of counter-balance of the clamour of party factionalism was also put forward by the Marquis of Ripon who supported extension work because it would promote "habits of sound thought" preserving thereby young men from that "vulgarity of thought and judgement which enters too often into political matters."<sup>(329)</sup> Whatever the particular definition adopted all ideas of citizenship agreed that education was of crucial importance to the moulding of the democratic citizen. Knowledge appropriate to the understanding of political issues had to be

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326. P. Gordon and J. White, Philosophers as Educational Reformers: The Influence of Idealism on Educational Thought and Practice, (1979), pp.89-97; M. Richter, The Politics of Conscience: T. H. Green and His Age, (1964); G. Parry, op.cit., pp.46-47.

327. A. Toynbee, The Industrial Revolution, (1887), pp.226-29.

328. A. Acland and B. Jones, Working Men Co-Operators, (1884), p.124; See also, A. Acland, The Education of Citizens, (Manchester, 1883).

329. University Extension Journal, April 1896.

sought out and to fit one's self for the duties of citizenship required special study. (330) All discussions of citizenship, moreover, placed great weight on the citizen as an active person, one who did not limit their democratic participation to simply voting in local or national elections. A true citizen was a person who took part in political life, attended meetings, listened to political debates, took an intelligent interest in the affairs of government, and recognised that government was a complex and serious business not to be lightly undertaken, nor amenable to the slogan-mongering of the demagogue. (331)

Citizenship was and remains a fundamental component of the ideology of pluralist democracy. As it came to be elaborated in the nineteenth century, citizenship lost its flavour of Jacobin extremism when members of radical societies had addressed each other as "Citizen." Instead it came to be synonymous with the proper behaviour of the individual member of the democratic polity. It was a concept amenable to both radical and liberal interpretations, although it was in essence antagonistic to notions, found amongst conservative philosophers that the masses should take little

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330. J. Bryce, "The Teaching of Civic Duty," Contemporary Review, Vol.64, July 1893; J. Masterman, "Democracy and Adult Education," in R. St. John Parry, op.cit.; H. Laski, "Knowledge as Civic Discipline," in O. Stanley (Ed), The Way Out: Essays on the Meaning and Purpose of Adult Education, (1923), pp.48-50; H. P. Smith, Labour and Learning, (Oxford, 1956), p.35 and 56; Rev. J. Smith, "From Classroom to Citizenship," Journal of Education, 1 June 1888; E. Carless, in Report of the Proceedings of the University Extension Congress, (1894), pp.101-02; B. Bosanquet, "The Duties of Citizenship," in Idem, Aspects of the Social Problem, (1895); M. Quin, The Politics of the Proletariat, (1919), Chapters 1 & 2.

331. Ministry of Reconstruction, Interim Report of the Committee on Adult Education, P.P. 1918 ix p.3.

interest in politics and should rest content with following the political leads given by those persons of greater political literacy and experience.

Three characteristics of the working men's club were said to fit it for contributing to citizenship training. First, by the development of specific programmes of instruction suitable for obtaining an understanding of political issues. This had been the intention of the S.P.E.L. besides the various other bodies who had come to address the clubs. Even if some of the lectures or discussions were fiercely partisan by welcoming all opinions into the clubs and by encouraging debate and interchange of views on political topics the clubs were helping to socialise their members into the rights and duties of citizenship. Second, the values taught by membership itself were conducive to an understanding of the nature of citizenship. Clubs were thus "nurseries of democracy" as Hall told members of the Irthlingborough, Northampton, Club.<sup>(332)</sup> By standing for election to committees, by helping to run different events and sub-clubs, and in a thousand countless ways, members learnt about political organisation and the values of co-operation. Third, by involving themselves in local issues and by encouraging the members to stand for office in local government, the clubs could provide an invaluable training ground for citizens. The Union very strongly supported this argument. All Annual Reports from 1887 contained a table showing the number of clubmen who occupied positions in local government. Members were encouraged to stand as poor law guardians and for election

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332. Club World, 3 October 1896. See also CIJ, June 1896.

to the school board as these were seen as agencies which were crucial to the well-being of the local working class community. The interest taken in bringing club and community into closer relation was indicated by an editorial in the Club and Institute Journal in 1898. "If we were asked" said the editor:

to indicate the direction where modern clubs could do most good, we should say in training men for local public service. If democratic government is to succeed, the people must train themselves for the work and do it. No agency which we know of is so suited for this task as the clubs. (333)

Thus the values espoused by club education and the kind of work undertaken or encouraged came to be particularly associated with the advance of the working man seen as a citizen. Citizenship became the dominant ideology of club education.

Opinion within and without the club movement was divided on what club education had achieved. Visitors to the clubs were alleged to remark on the lack of interest in lectures amongst the membership and the shelves of undisturbed books in the library, although there was a "considerable run upon those news papers which devote themselves to sport."<sup>(334)</sup> Critics from within the movement despaired of interesting the bulk of the membership in anything other than variety entertainments. Interest in political

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333. CII, July 1898. E. Jebb saw the clubs as "a training ground for the wider duties of a citizen's life in the world outside," Cambridge: A Brief Study in Social Problems, (Cambridge, 1906), p.136. A writer in Highway, Vol.4(46), July 1912 argued that "indirectly the clubs have been valuable training grounds for public service." Part of the success of that training was seen in the large numbers of club men who held public office in their local communities.

334. Temperance Record, 16 May 1889.

lectures was said to have fallen away in the late 1890's notwithstanding the pressing need to counter the "lies and misrepresentations" being broadcast about the working class,<sup>(335)</sup> Too much pandering to the element who wanted comic singers every night, it was charged, was driving away a great number of "superior men who would be of great assistance in helping forward the club movement."<sup>(336)</sup> These statements cannot pass unchallenged. In the 1890's, to be sure, the clubs and the Union underwent some self-examination during which the role of education was considered. However, many of the criticisms of club educational work considerably over-stated their case. Political, especially socialist clubmen and their friends, were disappointed at the diminishing response of the clubs to their appeals, although individual clubs continued to make an important contribution to the labour movement and club members maintained their strong, indeed growing, involvement with local government. Yet to argue, as some socialists were wont to do, that serious political work had been jettisoned by the clubs because of the members love of comic singers, was a gross misrepresentation of the truth. It left out of account, conveniently, any examination of the shortcomings of the socialist theory and practice with regard to the clubs, placing the blame for any deficiencies squarely on the shoulders of the clubs' membership. In some clubs numbers attending lectures did fall away, but this was not simply to be understood in terms of educational decline. Furthermore, many of the criticisms of club

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335. Club Life, 21 April 1896.

336. Club World, 12 October 1895.

life, especially education, came from groups who had particular grievances against the clubs such as the licensed victuallers and the temperance movement. Their attacks upon the clubs were often inspired by selfish motives. They were not concerned to present an objective or balanced account of club life, but to stir action against them. Their portrayal of clubs, therefore, tended to stress the bar and omit the class room.

The problems faced by the Union and its affiliates in stimulating and developing educational work were not unique. In trying to present an ideal of clubmanship beyond billiard tables the Union shared much in common with the obstacles present in the co-operative movement where propagandists were anxious to set before their membership a higher objective than that of the prosaic "divi."<sup>(337)</sup> There was a similar stress in both movements on education for citizenship.<sup>(338)</sup>

The Union also pressed for closer ties between itself and the many other organisations established in the late nineteenth

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337. On Co-operative education see, for example, Miss Sharp, Co-Operative Education, (Manchester, 1886); B. Jones, "The Progress, Organisation and Aims of Working Class Co-Operators," Journal of the Royal Statistical Society, Vol.51, March 1888, especially pp.44-47; F. Garnett, Co-Operative Classes: How to Make Them More Attractive and Successful, (Manchester, 1890); W. Carter, Suggestions for the Guidance of Education Committees, (1889), "Education in relation to the Co-Operative Movement," Progressive Review, Vol.I(4), 1897; A. Bonner, British Co-Operation, (Manchester, 1961), pp.119-22; D. Flanagan, A Centenary History of the Co-Operative Union, (Manchester, 1969), Chapter 3, especially pp.27-31.

338. J. Gray, Co-Operation as a Factor in the Education of the Citizen, (Manchester, 1891?); Canon Masterman, The Education of the Citizen, (Manchester, 1911); speeches of Dent and Fuller at the Co-Operative Congress, Plymouth, 1886, Report of the Co-Operative Congress, (Manchester, 1886), p.72.

century to provide adults with education. London clubmen were urged to take advantage of the facilities for study given by the university Extension scheme. East London clubs, for example, were given tickets granting free admission to the Toynbee Hall centre in 1892. (339) To enhance the members' appreciation of reading the Union campaigned for the clubs to found ties with the Home Reading Union. Established in 1889 through the energy of J. Paton, the Union was willing to assist the clubs in setting up reading parties to read and discuss set texts issued by the Union. (340) Representatives from the clubs attended the annual meeting of 1893 in York, and Dent was a member of the Committee. (341)

One organisation with which the Union enjoyed the closest of relations was the Workers' Educational Association (W.E.A.). In 1906 the executive of the Association included Knight (S.P.E.L.), Berry (Co-Operative Union) and Jesse Argyle (CIU). (342) At Wellingborough a conference was held in October 1905 called by Hill of the CIU and chaired by Argyle to consider the means by which the W.E.A. could expand its activities in Northampton and the assistance which the clubs could give. (343) Annual Reports show that clubs

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339. CIJ, 15 October 1892

340. J. Marchant, J. B. Paton, pp.247-49; J. Collins, "The National Home Reading Union and Its Prospects," Contemporary Review, Vol.58, August 1890.

341. CIJ, 8 July and 2 September 1893.

342. W.E.A., Annual Report, No.3, (1906), p.7. For a perceptive account of the establishment and vision of the Association, see J. Harrison, Learning, Chapter 7, passim. Argyle was made Vice-President of the Union in 1909. Formerly a secretary to Charles Booth he had been instrumental in the establishment of the Mildmay Club in north London.

343. W.E.A., Annual Report, No.3, (1906), p.7.

comprised a fair number of bodies affiliated to the Association. In 1912, for example, of the 1879 organisations affiliated, 153 were working men's clubs.<sup>(344)</sup> During the early years of the Association, the clubs and the Union provided a valuable base for its activities as well as bringing the Association into contact with an important cross-section of working men.<sup>(345)</sup>

In memory of Hodgson Pratt the Union in late 1908 established a scholarship to Ruskin College. It was the intention and hope of the Union that its holder would be "possessed of the true spirit of comradeship and fraternity - in short, that he will be a really "clubbable" man."<sup>(346)</sup> Two scholarships to the University summer school were set up in 1909 and in October of the same year, following the student strike and the adoption of a new constitution the

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344. Ibid, No.9, (1912). See also the list of clubs given in Appendix I, Ibid, No.6, (1909), pp.40-50.

345. On the links between the Union and Association, see Highway, Vol.2(14), November 1909 and Vol.5(56), May 1913; W.E.A., The W.E.A. Considered in Relation to Working Class Organisations, (1911); W. Lowth, "Education and the Clubs," Appendix 3, CIU, Annual Report, No.51, (1913); A. Mansbridge, An Adventure in Working Class Education, (1920), p.68.

346. Highway, Vol.I(4), January 1909. Questions to be answered by the competitors for the 1912 Scholarship included:

- (1) "The Working Mans' Club is the most effective weapon for Temperance." Discuss this statement.
- (2) Examine the arguments for and against the nationalisation of railways.
- (3) What should be the relationship between the Co-Operative Movement and the Trades Union Movement?

CIU, Annual Report, No.50, (1912), p.17. The first holder of the scholarship was Mr. S. Smith, aged 25, of the Bradford Engineers' Club. By trade a metal turner he had been a member of the club for three years. In addition he was check book-keeper of the Bradford Branch of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers; CIU, Annual Report, No.47, (1909), pp.32-33.



General Council of Ruskin was in future to include two representatives from the Union. (347) By 1914 there were four club students at Ruskin three supported by the Union and one by the Durham branch. This number had reached ten by 1922, of which four came from the Union, six from Durham. (348) To assist other club students the Union organised correspondence classes with Ruskin. These began in 1923. (349)

The work carried out by the clubs in preparing their membership for further study through class work and lectures was commended by the Ministry of Reconstruction report in 1918, (350) and during the early 20's the Union was devoting some £3,000 or 25% of its expenditure to educational work. (351) There was thus every indication that both the Union and its affiliates would continue to make provision for the instruction of their members with an education informed by the wish to develop in club men regard for humanity and interest in co-operation. (352)

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347. W.E.A., Annual Report, No.6, (1909), p.16; The Story of Ruskin College, (Oxford, 1955), p.18. In 1914 the Union accepted an invitation to send two representatives to sit on the Council of the Working Men's College; CIU, Annual Report, No.52, (1914), p.62.
348. CIU, Annual Report, No.52, (1914), pp.261-64; W.E.A., Education Yearbook, (1918), pp.384-85; Labour Yearbook, (1925), p.305.
349. Handbook and Directory of Adult Education, (1927), p.88.
350. Ministry of Reconstruction, Interim Report, op.cit., p.5. See also, Labour Yearbook, (1919), pp.291-93.
351. B. Hall, Foreward to A. Temple, What Might be Done, (1923); Stanley, op.cit., p.107; W. Williams (Ed), The Auxiliaries of Adult Education, (1934), pp.11-12.
352. A. Temple, The Educational Policy of the Union, (1922), pp.10-11; T. Levitt, "Adult Education in Working Men's Clubs," Adult Education, Vol.28(4), 1956.

The problems faced by the clubs in beginning and maintaining educational work were not unique. Every organisation pledged to further the cause of adult education had to overcome the same structural, material difficulties, such as fluctuations in finance, variability of the working class student's income which might make regular attendance at courses difficult, interruptions in patterns of study caused by job changing and shift-working, and difficulties or changes in family of wider domestic circumstances which could all work against a sustained pattern of educational work. Often these were much more formidable impediments to advance than the frequent allegations of working class indifference to the importance of education. (353)

Hall presented one estimate of the movement's achievements in 1904. Echoing (or plagiarising) Lord Rosebery's 1875 address, the secretary argued that:

if the aesthetic miner is looked for, he must not be expected to be found in large numbers. He is not a type which is very common or popular in the clubs... Yet by every means in its power the Union endeavours to promote the educational and intellectual side of life in its clubs. It does not meet with the success which it wishes. (354)

Others dissented from this balance sheet believing that it underestimated the range of educational activities offered by the clubs as well as the general interest of the membership in matters touching upon education. (355) Hall's comments also belittled the enthusiasm

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353. There are useful summaries of the barriers to the progress of adult education in R. Moulton, University Extension, (1887), pp.20-21 and Ministry of Reconstruction, Interim Report, pp.6-17.

354. B. Hall, "Rev. H. Solly: The Harvest of His Work," Appendix to H. Solly, Working Men's Clubs and Educational Institutes, (Revised edition, 1904), pp.175 and 197.

355. J. Johnston, of the Manchester Branch, addressing Co-Operative Congress, Report of the Co-Operative Congress, (Manchester, 1894), pp.14-15; E. Pratt, Policy of the Licensing Justices, (1909), pp.40-41.

which both the Union and the Manchester Branch had put into the educational cause from the 1870's. There had been the financial grants, propaganda work, supplies of books and teachers, and the publication of several prize essays which offered advice on how clubs could proceed to enhance educational work.<sup>(356)</sup> Besides work done inside the clubs any objective judgement of education ought to include the support given by clubs to outside causes which had improving objectives, such as the campaign to open the art galleries and museums on the sabbath. That this struggle for a "Free Sunday" attained many of its objectives in the mid 1890's was in no small measure due to the activism of the clubs. London clubs in particular were seasoned veterans in the struggle against narrow sabbatarianism. Clubs also gave their support to various campaigns during school board elections. London radical clubs through the agency of the M.R.F. formed part of the Central Democratic Committee which successfully campaigned for the return of Annie Besant in the 1888 school board elections.<sup>(357)</sup> St. Pancras Working Men's club joined with the Workmen's Peace Association in a deputation to the London School Board in 1875 to protest against the use of military drill in schools.<sup>(358)</sup> Individual clubs in both London and Manchester were active in the

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356. See, Practical Club Management, (1883) and Danziger's essay, op.cit., a prize essay written for the Manchester Branch.
357. D. Rubinstein, "Annie Besant and Stewart Headlam: The London School Board Election of 1888," East London Papers, Vol.13(1), 1970, pp.3-5, 19-22.
358. J. Hurt, "Drill, Discipline, and the Elementary School Ethos," in P. McCann (Ed), Popular Education and Socialization in the Nineteenth Century, (1977), p.184.

establishment of youth' institutes and recreative evening schools.

The numbers of club men elected to local office were also taken to be indicative of the success of the educational work, while, more modestly, one club man of pacifist persuasion was happy to note that:

Club audiences ... are not very excited with songs about "Fight the Enemy" and feeble applause generally follows the artist's attempts. Education, although making its way very slowly, is convincing men of the foolishness of strife. (359)

Education did progress slowly, not making the headway, perhaps, many of the movement's ideologues wished. But progress there was. Club education was more successful and more extensive than has sometimes been claimed. Those who dismissed it as a failure misread its character and achievements, a reading symptomatic of their own political or ethical preconceptions. Clubs, thus, made serious and worthwhile attempts to provide their members with worthwhile instruction. (360) Their work deserves to be better known and their place in the general advance of working class education needs to be recognised.

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359. Club World, 11 January 1896.

360. The very variety of activities sustained by the club and its democratic organisation and procedure have been seen by some educationalists as providing potentially the most important base for working class education; see, UNESCO, Sur le Rôle des Institutions-Clubs dans l'Education des Adultes, (Prague, 1960); Second World Conference on Adult Education, (Paris, 1963), Recommendation No.I, p.23. For a definition of the club which sees it as synonymous with the elaboration of working class culture and political education, see, "Clubs," Great Soviet Encyclopaedia, (Translation of third edition, New York, 1976).

CHAPTER 6: AMUSEMENT AND ENTERTAINMENT IN WORKING  
MEN'S CLUBS.

Love of amusement ... is a leading principle of the human mind ... If we would form a just estimate of national manners, let us look into popular amusements; for the great mistake of the generality of observers is to regard and record everything as serious. (1)

The amusement of the people is as natural and wholesome a necessity as their health or spiritual welfare. (2)

After work, when effort is relaxed, the mind hangs loose, ready to be played on. It is then open to all the influences that pour upon it from associates and surroundings. We have not yet realised the importance of these social hours and the necessity of filling them brightly and recreatively, so as to quicken the intelligence and elevate the taste. (3)

The vulgarity of the cheap trip, the inanity of a music hall entertainment and the general low tone of popular manners, are no necessary characteristics of hard hands and short purses, but are due to the way in which for so long popular education and recreation have been discountenanced. (4)

One of the major forces behind the creation of the club movement was the concern to present the working man with an environment where he could enjoy healthful recreations. For some supporters of the Union the main task of the clubs was to set before their members antidotes to the foul and pestilential amusements common at the low music halls and singing saloons. If clubs could draw men away from such resorts, usually set up for the profit of the publican, then much good might result. Provision of recreation was thus seen to be part of the philanthropist's task and clubs

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1. "Public Exhibitions," Monthly Chronicle, Vol.3, March 1839.
  2. H. Irving, The Amusement of the People, (1916), p.25.
  3. J. Paton, John Brown Paton, (1914), p.218.
  4. W. Jevons, "The Amusements of the People," Contemporary Review, August 1878.

could act as a crucial test of the attractiveness of schemes of rational recreation. This Chapter examines the kinds of activities clubs provided for the amusement of their members. It considers the ambiguities and lacunae of the early rational recreation movement, the development of forms of leisure provision in the clubs, and the response of the club ideologues to the kinds of freetime pursuits favoured by the membership. It does not consider in detail the different programmes of entertainments given in every club but is concerned to set out some of the major contours of club recreation and to note their contribution to club life.

The loose amalgam of reformers, clerics, philanthropists and employers which constituted the rational recreation movement agreed that some initiative from the higher classes was necessary if the working class were to be won away from the patronage of low and debasing pastimes. They did not agree with unbending evangelicals that the only place of true recreation was the home. They did not seek to undermine the sanctity of the domestic hearth but they argued that the gregarious instincts of man as well as the poor surroundings of the working man's home required the provision for recreation outside the home. Many of them were also convinced that England had much to learn on the question of rational recreation from the action of continental states particularly Germany where, for instance, there were attractive parks and gardens in which families could spend their free time. (5) Beyond these

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5. Rev. Gurney, "Working People," Churchman's Family Magazine, November, 1866, pp.385-93; W. Hardwicke, in Transactions, N.A.P.S.S., 1868, pp.473-74; R. Dale, "Amusements," Good Words, May 1867; Jevons, op.cit., pp.500-503. See also, "Rational Amusement of the People," East End News, 17 February 1893 where it was argued that municipal activity could do much to assist the progress of rational recreation.

points of agreement all was hazy. There was no common policy of what was appropriate as forms of rational recreation for the sons of toil. Moreover there was much discord concerning certain kinds of provision which it might be fitting for elevating institutions to undertake. A review of some potential forms of rational recreation will make these points clear.

One fertile source of dissent and secession in the mechanics' institute movement had been the propriety of admitting works of fiction and light literature into libraries and reading rooms. Many institutes, especially those heavily dependent on religious support, barred such literature, which further lessened their attractiveness to the working man. The reasons for the prescription on novel reading were complex. Some critics were against the morality said to be taught in many of these books. All too often vice was presented in a good light and virtue seemed dull and insipid by comparison. It did not matter that within the structure of the novel good usually triumphed over evil for it was the style of presentation which was said to encourage the reader to identify with those characters who set orthodox morality at a discount. Such fears were intensified by the rapid rise to popularity of the "sensation" novels of the 40's and 50's many of which were serialised in the developing working class press. There were authors, Scott for example, who wrote novels in which manly and christian virtues were pleasingly portrayed. But even these fell foul of evangelical opinion. Here the objection was more general; that is to say it was not the content of the book that was at issue but its form. Novel reading was said to foster worldliness, encourage day-dreaming, stimulate a love of romance, detract from concern



with the mundane, and in some cases stimulate discontent with one's lot. (6) These were strong reasons for forbidding recreational as opposed to improving literature from institutions set up to benefit the working man. By the mid 1850's the force of evangelical argument was weakening. Few of those active in the cause of rational recreation supported it, although on occasions a lone voice could be found to defend it. Nathaniel Bushell, a popular lecturer, wrote a fearsome attack upon novel reading which he characterised as a positive evil, an inducement to idleness and every form of vice. (7) The club movement was little troubled by the issue. No patron seems to have forbidden the acquisition of certain books for the libraries. Nevertheless some figures in the movement were insistent that the popularity of novel reading did little to uphold "tone" in the clubs. Addressing the 1895 Annual Meeting Pratt criticised modern fiction. Such works, he observed, tended to dwell upon the ugly and corrupt side of life and led younger (and more impressionable readers) to doubt the importance of honour, purity or goodness. (8) Although evangelical opposition died away, its spirit of criticism lived on.

Drama was another popular amusement which found little favour. Opposition to the theatre had been an aspect of the puritan conscience

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6. S. Ellis, Novel Reading: Intellectually and Morally Injurious, (Sheffield, 1845); D. Rosman, "'What has Christ to do with Appollo?': Evangelicals and the Novel," in D. Baker (Ed), Renaissance and Renewal in Christian History, (Oxford, 1977); Altick, op.cit., pp.108-15; 195-97.
  7. Lecturers Gazette, July 1862. The only objections to novel reading amongst the rational recreation groups came from those who were worried about the effects of "penny dreadfuls" upon working class youths.
  8. CIU, Annual Report, No.34, (1896), p.66.

from the seventeenth century and hostility to theatricals was kept alive in the Victorian era by various lay and clerical figures. Criticism of the theatre was the monopoly of no particular religious persuasion, although sections of the evangelicals and the stricter nonconformist denominations led the attacks. Even relatively enlightened clergy such as Clarke vigorously derided theatre going and acting in general. Stewart Headlam could still provoke great outrage amongst his brothers of the cloth by a modest defence of the popular theatre and the music hall in the 1870's. (9) Like opposition to the novel the case against the theatre was complicated. There was the objection to the tone and content of plays, which, like too many novels, were said to lampoon conventional morality and give vice the best of the argument. (10) The acting profession was said to attract men and women of dubious virtue, while acting was condemned for its similarity to dissembling. The preoccupation of the drama with artifice and disguise was alleged to encourage its devotees to transfer such behaviour into ordinary life. In this respect theatricality and all it implied was in direct opposition to the dominant Victorian insistence upon sincerity and earnestness. (11)

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9. See, for example, Orens, op.cit., pp.68-72; "Temples of Vice," Social Notes, 1(12), 25 May 1878. The thinking of the established church changed sharply by the early twentieth century. Now the stress was on the role of the church in improving theatre standards, see C.O.P.E.C., Leisure, (Commission Report No.5, 1924), pp.51-57.
  10. See, for example, Rev. T. Best, Two Sermons on the Subject of Theatrical Amusements, (Sheffield, 1824).
  11. On opposition to the drama see J. Barish, "Anti-theatrical propaganda in the nineteenth century," University of Toronto Quarterly, Vol.40(4), 1971.

That the drama was popular with the labouring classes was undeniable. <sup>(12)</sup> Artisans, small tradesmen, and labourers in London, for example, were regular, discerning (if occasionally noisy) patrons of many of the smaller theatres bordering on plebeian districts which survived on a staple bill of melodramas and comedies. <sup>(13)</sup> Dickens presented a number of humourous but sympathetic portraits of the working man and his family at play. <sup>(14)</sup> Contrary to those who stressed the immorality and license of the cheap theatre Dickens stressed its domestic character. All members, from the oldest to the babies would adjourn for an evening in the gallery. Food would be brought along and drink purchased in the theatre. In Dickens' estimate the sentiments taught by the plays, though mawkishly presented, were sympathetic not antagonistic to morality. <sup>(15)</sup> His defence of the cheap theatres was in contradistinction to many of his contemporaries who pointed to

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12. For an excellent case study of the development of popular theatre and dramatic taste see, J. Higley, "A Study of the Social, Literary, and Dramatic Aspects of Victorian Popular Theatre as illustrated by the Britannia Theatre, Hoxton, 1830-70," (Ph.D. Thesis, Univ. London, 1973), especially, pp.19-42.
13. T. Wright, Habits and Customs, pp.161-62; A. Ogilby, "Amusements on the Cheap," Once a Week, 2 December 1866; E. Bramley, "Life in the New Cut," Good Words, (1883), p.379, complained that "the entertainment is not sufficiently leavened with selections of a patriotic character;" "Public Amusements," Detective, 1(9), 4 February 1860; G. Scrimgeour, "Nineteenth Century Drama," Victorian Studies, 12(1), 1968, pp.93-94. For a study of the social relations and repertoires of the theatres in the plebeian districts, see, A. Cowan, "Popular Entertainment in London, 1800-1840," (Ph.D. Thesis, Washington Univ., 1978), especially Chapters 2 and 5.
14. See, P. Collins, "Dickens and Popular Amusements," Dickensian, Vol.61(1), 1965; W. Axton, Circle of Fire: Dickens' Vision and the Popular Theatre, (Lexington, 1966), Chapter 2, passim.
15. "Amusements of the People," Household Words, 30 March and 13 April 1850, especially pp.14, 57-59; "Mr. Whelks at the Play," All Year Round, 23 June 1866.

the vicious bearing of those who attended the performances and the base nature of the dramas presented. (16) The "Penny Gaff" was singled out for especial condemnation because it was the favourite haunt of working class adolescents for whom its cheapness was an especial attraction. To many reformers time spent at the "gaff" marked the first steps in an apprenticeship to crime and depravity. (17)

The attacks did little to diminish working class enthusiasm for the drama. Early nineteenth century drama with its simple story often highlighted by spectacular effects obtained a strong purchase upon popular culture. (18) In the 30's and 40's a theatrically less elaborate form of melodrama touched upon themes and problems in labouring life in a radical way. Plays centred upon themes of industrial life and conflict enjoyed a wide popularity in the 30's, for example, J. Walker's "Factory Lad" (1843), and

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16. H. Jones, "The Theatre and the Mob," Nineteenth Century, Vol.14, September 1853, pp.445-46. Even Annie Besant who otherwise took a quite sympathetic line towards popular amusements derided the "unreal and intensely vulgar pictures of life," afforded the working class at the theatre. Under socialism, she argued, the theatre would be an educative force. "Amusement," Our Corner, Vol.7, May 1886, pp.267-68.
17. J. Grant, Sketches in London, (1861 edition), Chapter V; J. Overton, Harry Hartley, (1859), pp.20-27 contains an amusing description of the "gaff." Higley, op.cit., pp.56-60; In his evidence to the Select Committee on Theatrical Licensing, Mayne, Commissioner of Police for the Metropolis thought that the gaffs although bad did "nothing to justify police interference," S.C. Theatrical Licensing and Regulation, P.P. 1866 xvi, Q.1015. See also G. Caunt, "Penny Gaffs," East London Papers, 14(2) 1972.
18. M. Booth, English Melodrama, (1965), pp.56-63; F. Rahill, The World of Melodrama, (Pennsylvania, 1967), pp.xviii-ix and Section II; P. Brooks, Melodramatic Imagination, (1976), p.13 argues that melodrama has a "radical democratic striving to make its representations clear and legible to everyone." For an older, but still useful study, see M. Disher, Blood and Thunder, (1948).

G. Taylor's "Factory Strike" (1836). (19) The potential for expressing advanced political opinions was fully realised by the radical movements of these years, especially Chartism, which used drama among its means of propaganda. (20) In the 1850's the directness of morality taught by the melodramatic formula was used to great effect by the temperance movement. Plays such as "Ten Nights in a Bar Room," movingly showed to the audience the moral and economic consequences of strong liquors and was perhaps a more effective and emotional means of communication than even the most simple tract. (21) Melodrama also used mythic themes to great effect and by the middle decades of the century was underscoring the "domestic bliss of married life." (22)

Thus two views of drama can be set out. One, the ultra puritan, held that the theatre had no value, being an irrational form of amusement. The other, the didactic, argued that the theatre could prove an invaluable aid to the rational recreation cause for it could serve as a great popular educator. (23) There was no inherent reason why plays supportive of virtue could not

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19. On the factory drama see, S. Vincent, "Trouble up at t'mill: The rise and decline of the Factory Play in the 1830's and 1840," Victorian Studies, Vol.20(2), 1977.
20. C. Barker, "A Theatre for the People," in K. Richards and P. Thomson (Eds), Essays on Nineteenth Century British Theatre, 1971.
21. M. Booth, "The Drunkard's Progress: Nineteenth Century Temperance Drama," Dalhousie Review, Vol.44(1), 1964; I. Dobrzycka, "English Nineteenth Century Melodrama: Themes and Techniques," Kwartalnik Neofilologiczny, Vol.22(4), 1975, pp.405-06; Booth, op.cit., 131-36.
22. K. Von Rosado, "Myth and Victorian Melodrama," Essays and Studies, 1979, pp.112-13.
23. Rev. J. Kay, The Church and Popular Recreations, (1883), pp.11, 14-15; J. Leigh, "Economics and the Drama," Economic Review, Vol.19(2), 1909, p.180; M. Fowler, The Morality of Social Pleasures, (1910), p.8.

win popular acclaim. This latter thinking was to find much support in the club movement from the early 80's.

Other forms of rational amusement produced the same divided reaction. Least divisive were entertainments of a musical nature. Whether it was listening to a concert, forming a band, or joining a choir music was thought to have properties which quelled and moved the plebeian breast. (24) There was much evidence that music of all sorts was widely appreciated and enjoyed in working class circles shown for example by the attendance of upper sections of the labouring classes at choral societies and cheap popular concerts. (25) Music was thus one form of improving amusement which ought to be found in every club especially as Clarke had enjoyed such success with his modest experiments in Derby in the 1850's and 60's. (26) Furthermore this was work which every reformer could take up for one way of providing cheaply and wisely for the free-time of the masses was to provide bands and other musical entertainments in public parks. (27) If clubs were to give their members music the exact form that provision would take had to be

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24. "Music in Humble Life," Household Words, 11 May 1850; Pangbourn noted that music to the working man could become "a source of balance, poise and perspective, a compensation in part, [and release] from the turmoil and haste of industrial life," W. Pangbourn, "The Worker, Leisure and Individuality," American Journal of Sociology, Vol.27(4), 1922, p.441. See also the rather patronising comments on musical taste among the working class in F. Kingsley (Ed), Charles Kingsley, (1877), Vol.2, p.232.
25. See Ludlow and Jones, Progress, pp.190-93; W. Weber, "Artisans in Concert Life of Mid Nineteenth Century London and Paris," Journal of Contemporary History, Vol.13(2), 1978. See also, Leisure of the People: A Handbook, (Manchester, 1918).
26. E. Randolph, "Social Conditions and Recreations of the Poorer Classes," Official Report of Church Congress, (York, 1867), p.45.
27. E. Hopkins, Work amongst Working Men, (Fourth edition, 1882), pp.133-34; A. Paterson, Across The Bridges, (1911), p.217.

left to the discretion of the individual club. In setting up musical entertainments a variety of obstacles had to be overcome. Suitably qualified musicians and singers might not be available and if a band was to be formed the training of the players and the purchase of the instruments might be difficult. (28) However, the music offered had to be of the highest class. Clubs were not intended to supply the kind of songs popular with audiences at publicans' "free-and-easies." (29) Musical taste should be elevated not debased by association with a club.

Sport also generally met with favour, although some reformers were dubious regarding Kingsley's proposition that pugilism could be an adjunct to spirituality. Nevertheless, gymnastic exercises and outdoor pursuits, especially if the latter included team games, could supply a valuable outlet for surplus energy as well as training in collective discipline and organisation. (30) On an instrumental level they could act as the means whereby the club's membership could be kept together in the summer months when there was a tendency for numbers to fall away. Clubs in small towns and country areas were urged to find an open space near to their premises for use as a recreation ground. Sports could also act as means of bringing constituent clubs into closer relations through the medium of Union prizes for excellence and achievement.

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28. On the cost and availability of musical instruments see the discussion in V. Berridge, "Popular Journalism and Working Class Attitudes, 1854-1886," (Ph.D. Thesis, Univ. London, 1976), pp.166-74.
29. On the music at the "free-and-easy," see the evidence of F. Bishop, S.C. Public Houses, P.P. 1852-53, xxxvii, p.229.
30. H. Jones, "The Amusements of the People," Good Words, (1891), pp.165-66; Rev. John Johnston, Parks and Playgrounds for the People, (1885), p.5; W. Picht, op.cit., p.66.

By 1902 clubs could compete for trophies and prizes in angling, billiards, rowing, football, shooting, and cricket, as well as whist and cribbage. (31) In addition to the formal Union contests and sports' days there were regular competitions between club teams in particular sports.

Indoor games, though recognised as a source of income, were sometimes looked upon with less favour. There is evidence here that some patrons would not admit the familiar bagatelle or billiards tables to clubs under their control. The same prohibition was also applied in a number of clubs with regard to card-playing which was thought to stimulate inevitably the love of gambling. The founder of the Social Institutes movement told a worried clergyman that the propriety of having a billiard table in a club could not be determined a priori. From his own experience he told his correspondent that when starting up a club in Sheffield "the one game I had to forbid was dominoes because that was the game associated with gambling in all the public houses round about. I think the rule ought to be allow no game which in the public houses and generally in the neighbourhood is associated with gambling." (32)

Dancing, like the drama, had its supporters and its critics. Dances were said to induce love of dressing up, vanity, extravagance, and immorality. (33) Those favourable to the dance replied that

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31. CIU, Annual Report, No.40, (1902), pp.34-35.

32. J. Paton, op.cit., pp.220-21. Lady Manners also held that if gambling was to be prevented in club rooms then strict rules and constant vigilance were necessary, see, Encouraging Experiences of Reading and Recreation Rooms, (1886), pp.27-28.

33. "Public Dancing Rooms," Meliora, Vol.8(35), 1865; Elizabeth Morpeth, "daughter of an operative," in J. Cassell, op.cit., pp.132-33; E. Walker, "Christianity and Amusements," Wesleyan Methodist Magazine, Vol.14, April 1890; Captain S. Nicholls, Chief Constable of Newcastle, S.C. House of Lords on Intemperance, Second Report, P.P. 1877 xi, p.64; J. Greenwood, Low-Life Deeps, (1876), pp.121-22.



it was healthy and if properly supervised would prove a harmless pastime which could be enjoyed by working men and their families. (34)

There were some reformers, like Solly, who tried to take an intermediary position. They could see the benefits in dancing, for example as a form of physical recreation, but they were also alert to its potential dangers. Solly thought it should not be permitted among young people except under the most stringent supervision because of the excitements it aroused in their impressionable personalities. (35) Many clubs, at least in the early years, could only hold dances if they moved outside their own premises for few had the space to accommodate the dancers and musicians. A hall thus had to be hired, but given that admission could be thrown open to all the dance could be a means of providing the club with extra revenue.

Finally there were excursions. These might be thought to be held in universal regard by the rational recreationists inasmuch as they took trippers out of their surroundings into the countryside or seaside there to enjoy the benefits of a healthy environment. (36) Excursions had grown markedly in popularity with the

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34. Writing at the end of the century Booth remarked that he had been told that "nowhere else in London are there so many respectable dancing saloons as there are in Southwark and Bermondsey, and that balls and concerts are got up spontaneously by the working classes in these districts," Life and Labour of the People in London, Series I, Vol.1, (1902 edition), p.289.
35. See also the remarks of J. Bullock, Adult Education and How to Promote It, (1861), p.50. He suggested that institutions should only have a dance once a year at the annual soiree when persons of mature years and judgement would be in charge.
36. For examples of the type and cost of trips available see, Knight's Excursion Companion, (1851). See also Allen, Thesis, op.cit., Chapter 8. See also, W. Besant, "The Amusements of the People," Contemporary Review, Vol.95, March 1884, pp.344-5.

modest rise in real incomes among sections of the working class in the 1860's and the lowering of fares by the railway companies following the lead of the London-Midland in offering special third-class fares for trippers. (37) However, many critics of the excursion argued that too often the tourists were attracted solely by the chance to visit as many inns as possible and having removed themselves from their own-community, where they were known, to make as much trouble and noise as they pleased. (38) Moreover, most excursions were organised to take place on the sabbath when the family should be at divine worship not carousing in the country. Sunday trippers abused the sanctity of the sabbath by forcing others to work and by their disporting abused what had been ordained as a day of rest. (39) Only trips organised for some improving purpose, for example a supervised nature ramble or visit to an historic monument, could be tolerated. (40)

These remarks on the nature of rational recreation have been offered to illustrate three points. Firstly, as Bailey has clearly

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37. G. Martin, "Some Aspects of the Provision of Holidays for the Working Classes to 1947," (M.A. Thesis, Univ. Leicester, 1968), pp.28-29. See also, Berridge, op.cit., pp.153.59.
38. C. Bickersteth, Lend a Hand: Or, Help for the Working Classes, (1866), pp.171-72; C. McCarthy, "Holidays, Poverty, and Human Life," Westminster Review, Vol.170, September 1908, p.257 thought that for many excursionists the objective was dissipation not recreation. Discussing the working class use of the Bank Holiday Harry Jones observed that the beneficiaries did not seek true refreshment and stimulation but sought pleasure in trivial matters - "donkey rides, knock-'em downs, and kiss-in-the-ring," Good Words, 32(12), 1890, p.164.
39. Church of England Quarterly Review, New Series, No.10, April 1856; British Workman, 1 April 1865; London City Mission Magazine, Vol.61, June 1896.
40. For a more favourable description of the working class tripper see, C. Smith, Curiosities of London Life, (1853), pp.314-16.

demonstrated, although rational recreation became a public issue in the twenty years after 1848 there was no unity in the movement as to what constituted rational amusement. There were divisions regarding what type recreation ought to be offered to the working man as well as bitter disagreements regarding such matters as the use of the sabbath as a day of healthy recreation. (41) Secondly, it followed that there were no sets of activities clearly labelled "rational amusements" which could be adopted by the clubs. To develop a programme of recreation various practical and ideological obstacles had to be overcome. If a patron set his or her face against dancing then it was very unlikely that the clubs would have dances for members. If a club was small and poor and the members musically illiterate then there was little likelihood of the club being able to start up its own band. Few London clubs had a piece of ground nearby which could be taken over for use as a recreation field and while space was at a premium in the early clubs it would not be possible to turn over a room solely for use as a theatre. Finally, although there were divisions concerning what constituted the practice of rational recreation, most reformers were agreed that improving amusements were those which in some

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41. See, for example, T. Guthrie, Popular Innocent Entertainments, (Glasgow, 1856), which was adamant that rational recreations be provided for the poor but was equally insistent that the sanctity of the Lord's Day must not be breached.

way elevated and refreshed their participants. (42) Music was the example cited most often. Listening to some masterwork was said to transform the audience, arouse new and higher tastes and make working men discontented with the low ballads which passed for music in singing saloons and publicans' music Halls. (43) Rational entertainments set before their audience higher ambitions and aroused nobler sentiments than their low counterparts. (44) By their effects rational recreations were to be known. With regard to the club movement healthful amusement was to contribute to the "tone" of the institution. (45) If the clubs failed to give their

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42. G. Boole, The Right Use of Leisure, (1847); "The Philosophy of Amusement," Meliora, 6(23), 1864, p.203; "Recreation and Amusements," Christian Pioneer, Vol.22(262), April 1868; H. Jones, "Recreation," Official Report of Church Congress, (1874), pp.425-29; "Gospel of Idleness," Chambers Journal, 20 March 1875, pp.177-78; "Recreation among the Poor," Charity Organisation Reporter, Vol.13(563), 20 December 1884. To subscribers to the Leeds Working Men's Institute troubled by the arrangement of concerts and "free-and-easies" the Directors wrote: "Some of the entertainments may appear frivolous to the religious minded person but ... their object is not merely to provide for the taste of the respectable working man, but to draw the vicious and degraded from their usual haunts," Leeds Working Men's Institute, p.3; T. Woollcombe, "Value of Social Clubs for Working Men," Economic Review, Vol.13, October 1903, pp.422-23.
43. Elocutionist, December 1885; C. Scott, "The Modern Music Hall," Contemporary Review, 56, December 1889, pp.688-89.
44. But as with all ventures to civilize the superior working man matters had to proceed slowly. For if the independent artisan saw the hand of patronage behind any venture he was as likely as not to turn away. Furthermore potential beneficiaries of the labourer would have to be sensitive to his cultural tastes and interests. Many reformers were not successful in this for as the history of numerous counter-attractionist bodies showed "bible classes and billiards were uneasy bedfellows ..." Reid, Thesis, op.cit., p.70.
45. Solly, as might be expected warned promoters of clubs to beware of the operation of the "Gresham's Law" of culture-bad activities drive out good. "Do not for the sake of popularity," he said, "imitate the vile taste of the London music-halls. Once accustom the audience to low buffoonery and what is really good in music and poetry will become distasteful," CIU, "Working Men's Clubs and Institutes," Occasional Paper, No.15, June 1870, p.2.

members improved tastes then the movement would have failed in one of its objectives. (46) Having discussed the general features of the rational recreation movement the forms of entertainment found in the clubs can now be reviewed.

One of the most popular forms of amusement in the club movement from its earliest years was the "penny reading." Two claimants aspired to the title "originator of penny readings." One Mr. Taylor stated he had begun to hold readings in Hanley in 1854. These early meetings being successful he expanded the programme and took over the town hall in September 1856. His readings gathered a large, predominantly working class audience eager to pay the 1d admission fee. (47) Charles Sulley began a similar movement in Ipswich in 1859 after a proposed series of lectures at the mechanics' institute failed to pay its expenses. His readings were based upon the institute's elocution class and again great success resulted. (48) "Penny Readings" referred to an evening's entertainment which consisted mainly if not exclusively of readings from a variety of authors. Admission was set at the lowest possible price in order to persuade the working classes to

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46. The quality of rational entertainments also troubled supporters of the counter-attractionist party in the temperance movement. One teetotaler for example was shocked when attending a temperance hall to listen to a lecture on "Electro-biology" to find the discourse illustrated with "vulgar songs such as 'Champagne Charlie,' [sic] with an addenda of obscene actions and insinuations which would have disgraced any of the penny gaffs," Temperance Star, 2 September 1870. A correspondent agreed that he too was troubled by the means being developed to induce working men to sign and keep the pledge. Mesmeric illusions, comic songs and clog dancing would not uplift the masses; Ibid, 16 September 1870.

47. S. Taylor, Records of an Active Life, (1886), pp.22-24.

48. C. Sulley, Penny Readings in Ipswich and Elsewhere, (1861), pp.5-10.

attend. A programme of readings would usually include some poetry, selections from the classics, a religious story or two, and perhaps a piece of comic verse or prose. In the 1860's every town and hamlet had its committee to organise penny readings for the winter months. Such committees usually comprised magistrates, clergy, local gentry, lady reformers, senior policemen, and local employers.<sup>(49)</sup> Their job, besides organising the meeting was usually to vet the readings to ensure that nothing impure reached the stage. Given the level of support from local dignatories for the experiment it is rather inaccurate to suggest that the establishment of readings "was a living challenge to the spirit of patronage conspicuous in the mechanics' institutes."<sup>(50)</sup> Readings proved popular on the one hand because they were cheap, cheerful and amusingly instructive.<sup>(51)</sup> They also responded to the wide working class interest in readings and recitations.<sup>(52)</sup> Many clubs and institutes soon established a regular programme of readings. At Stoneham they began in 1860 and were soon attracting audiences of over 200.<sup>(53)</sup> Mrs. Bayly's Notting Hill Hall set aside every Friday for readings.<sup>(54)</sup> Local

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49. For an example of the composition of a "Penny Readings" Committee see, Coventry Evening Press and Midland Telegraph, 12 December 1862.

50. H. Smith, Literature and Adult Education A Century Ago, (Oxford, 1960), p.7.

51. WMCJ, 20 November 1875.

52. P. Collins, Reading Aloud: A Victorian Metier, (Tennyson Society Monograph No. 5, Lincoln, 1972). There is a fine description of a penny reading in F. Thompson, Lark Rise to Candleford, (Harmondsworth, 1973), Chapter XXXIII.

53. St. James Magazine, 9 January 1864.

54. Bee Hive, 13 January 1866.

gentlemen came forward to take their turn as readers. Among those who appeared at the Stourbridge Institute in the early 60's was Lord Lyttelton who read from Carlyle. (55) Most readers at the Dorking Club were also drawn from the local middle classes. (56) A further attraction at some readings was the addition of music from a choir or band between the different readings. (57) Readings won a wide popularity and a working man and his family was thought to be greatly improved by regular attendance. (58) Certain problems did have to be carefully watched. As was indicated above, one was the content of the readings. Committees were told that the selection had to be made with care in order to avoid "songs savouring of the music hall, and readings consisting of extracts from senseless stupid farces." (59) It was thought that the inclusion of comic pieces, though popular, were dangerous in the long term, for it tended to "make the juvenile portion of the audience intolerant of graver pieces." (60) At Benego Club the rector suggested that the men refer to him pieces for perusal but it was

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55. H. Palfrey, op.cit., p.30.

56. Lecturers Gazette, February 1862.

57. Working Man, 3 March 1866.

58. Habits and Customs, pp.174 and 183; "Mechanics' Institutes," Melliora, No.7, 1860, p.7; G. Huntington, Amusements And the Need of Supplying Healthy Recreations for the People, (1868), pp.52-53; "Origins and Progress of the Penny Reading Movement," in J. Carpenter (Ed), Penny Readings in Prose and Verse, Vol.1, 1865, pp.1-7.

59. WMCJ, 20 November 1875.

60. W. Sterne, "Penny Readings," Sharpe's London Magazine, April 1865, p.216.

soon dropped as "impracticable." (61) Songs and readings for rendering at the Tee-To-Tums, on the other hand, continued to be vetted well into the 90's. Any play text or song with dubious words was deleted from the programme. (62) Finding the right balance of the evening taxed many committees. One observer thought that they tended to divide into two factions, the comic party who wanted reading reflecting jollity and merriment, and the serious faction who wanted to devote the time to readings of a morally and religiously uplifting character. (63) Practice taught reformers that mixtures of sacred and secular material were not popular with the audience; a humorous sketch and a biblical reading made the audience uncomfortable and unable to relax. (64) Readings, which like so many other entertainments in the clubs were open to non-members, had to appeal to men and women, young and old. On occasions the youthful members of the proceedings had to be disciplined for their lack of good behaviour. Notices were posted at Faversham Institute warning that unless accompanied by an adult boys would no longer be admitted to readings because of the disorderly conduct of many of them in the back seats. (65) It was not always the youths who were the cause of disorder. It

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61. Catt, op.cit., p.14. At Northgate Working Men's Club, Rutland, recitations and readings for the monthly entertainment had to be submitted to a special committee beforehand, CIU, Annual Report, No.19, (1881), p.23.

62. Club Life, 3 November 1894.

63. "Our Penny Readings," Leisure Hour, 16(786), 19 January 1867.

64. E. Orr, Our Working Men: An Attempt to Reach Them, (1885), pp.69-70.

65. Faversham Institute, Monthly Journal, No.3, February 1868.



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64. E. Orr, Our Working Men: An Attempt to Reach Them, (1885), pp.69-70.

65. Faversham Institute, Monthly Journal, No.3, February 1868.

was occasionally necessary to reprimand adult members of the audience for chatting during performances. (66) For many clubs a public evening of readings, perhaps given by the elocution class or friends of the institution, could be a ready means of raising money. Over £10 was realised by a performance in the local town hall by the Windsor Street Club, Brighton in 1868. The readings were given by amateurs and professionals who appeared for free. (67)

An unrelieved diet of readings was soon found to be limited as a means of entertainment and many clubs sought ways to liven up familiar readings from the authors. (68) Members of Chelmsford Working Men's Club took the novel step of delivering the readings in character, an innovation which greatly amused both readers and audience. But the move did not please all supporters of readings who thought that such theatricals made the evening little different from that of the music hall and destroyed the potentially uplifting nature of readings. (69) Clarke, who had been a prime mover of readings, was saddened by the vulgarisation which he claimed overtook the movement in the late 60's. Rather than improving the audience idiotic ditties had prepared men and women for amusements favoured at the public houses. (70) Though the morally improving

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66. CIJ, 19 June 1886.

67. CIU, "Experiences in the Management of Working Men's Clubs," Occasional Paper, No.12, (August, 1868).

68. See the complaints against readings made by members of the Stoke Athenaeum, Social Science Review, 2(35), 7 February 1863.

69. Penny Readings Record, Vol.3, January 1866, p.3.

70. E. Clarke, "Recreations of the People," Church Congress, (Liverpool, 1869), p.125; see also "Sunday Evening Amusements," Elocutionist, September 1883.

emphasis of the "penny reading" movement diminished in the early 70's, readings and recitations continued to form an important part of the ordinary entertainments of the club. At members' concerts amateurs and paid performers would deliver a variety of monologues and dialogues from such popular authors as Dickens and Sims, author of the "Dagonet Ballads." Comic readings were mixed with serious ones, many were aided in their delivery by the speakers adopting character. (71) One west end club's programme in the mid 80's included Mr. Adams, reading "The Drunkard's Death" and "Greenwich Fair," both from Dickens, Mr. Broadway reading the "Rural Postman," and Mr. Quick reciting poems from Eliza Cook, the whole proceedings being interspersed with selections from the classics played on the piano by a member. (72) Of Mr. Darwood's recitation of "The Dying Communist," a club reporter noted that "so powerfully realistic was the piece that men who came to the club in 'good health' had a sudden seizure of catarrh." (73) Gaston was well known in club land for the delivery of his humorous peices but he also numbered in his repetoire a lecture and recitation on "The Poets of Labour,"

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71. On the popularity of the recitation and the changing vogue in readings see, V. Brattan, The Victorian Popular Ballad, (1975), Chapters 2 and 5, passim. Sims' autobiography contains an interesting account of the evolution and success of the "Dagonet Ballads," see, G. Sims, My Life, Sixty Years' Recollections of Bohemian Life, (1917), Chapter 21. Examples of the range of material available to the would-be reciter are illustrated by the catalogue of the publisher Abel Heywood. In the early 70's his list included dialect pieces, selections from standard authors such as Shakespeare and Dickens, "Negro entertainments," and humorous dialogues.

72. CIJ, 20 November 1886.

73. CIJ, 14 May 1887.

where he read from and discussed poets such as Burns, Shelley, Leno, and Thomas Cooper. The popularity which attended Gaston's delivery of the readings attested to the continuance of the working class interest in poetry especially where it touched upon the conditions of labour. (74)

In addition to the culture of the spoken word there was also a flourishing musical culture in the clubs. The strength of working class affection for all forms of music was illustrated by the popularity of the musical evening put on by publicans. Here, traditional singers, glee parties and even small choirs could practice and entertain the customers. (75) Much of this musical taste was transferred to the clubs. And, in common with recitations, concerts could provide clubs with the means of increasing their income. To assist with the purchase of new furniture members of the St. James and Soho organised a concert in the Cambridge Hall in late 1863, singers and musicians coming from the club and from the choir of the Working Men's College. (76) A quite elaborate entertainment in aid of funds for the club was put on by members of the Herne Hill Club. Held in the local assembly rooms the evening consisted of comic songs and dances, "all of which suited the taste of the audience judging from the

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74. On the tradition of working class involvement in poetry see, P. Collins, Thomas Cooper, The Chartist: Byron and the 'Poets of the Poor.' (Nottingham, 1969), pp.18-24; M. Vicinus, The Industrial Muse, (1974), Chapter 3(i).

75. On working class musical culture see, R. Colls, The Collier's Rant, (1977), Chapter 3; R. Elbourne, "Industrialisation and Popular Culture," (M.Phil Thesis, Univ. of London, 1974), especially pp.199-205; D. Harker, "Popular Song and Working Class Consciousness in the North East," (Ph.D. Thesis, Univ. Cambridge, 1977).

76. Bee Hive, 21 November 1863.

loud applause which greeted each separate act. The entertainment was closed, after lasting nearly four hours, by a boxing match." (77) Sometimes the club's musical skills were put to less mercenary ends. From the late 80's the band of the Boro' of Hackney club, for example, would give weekly concerts during the summer months in Victoria Park. (78) Bands were one major area of club activity. Usually they were of the familiar brass type but many clubs had fife and drum bands as well as or instead of the brass one. Brass bands had grown in popularity since the 1820's. The Stalybridge Band, for instance, was formed in 1815 and had played at Peterloo. Some bands were formed by model employers in the 1840's and 50's and good players could be assured of a steady job and favourable treatment. One recent study of the movement explains their attractiveness thus:

brasses best suited the needs of the amateurs. The instruments were easy to maintain and were practically trouble-free, compared to the woodwinds which were sensitive to weather changes, mechanism failure and the continued need for attention to the reeds. The less complicated valves were more suited to the working man who laboured every day with his hands. Also the technique and later the fingering system for all the brasses were practically identical for all the instruments. Finally, and possibly the most influential factor, was the exciting, bold and masculine sound of the brass band which appealed to the working man. (79)

Members of the drum and fife band at the Notting Hill club put away

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77. CIJ, 19 March 1887.

78. CIU, Annual Report, No.20, (1882), p.27.

79. J. Scott, "The Evolution of the Brass Band and Its Repertoire in Northern England," (Ph.D. Thesis, Univ. Sheffield, 1970), Vol.1, p.124. See also, J. Russell and J. Elliott, The Brass Band Movement, (1936).

a small sum every week in order to purchase a "handsome uniform."<sup>(80)</sup> But few other clubs set the band members apart in this way. In February 1876 a West Central Union Brass Band was formed composed of twenty-four men drawn from the St. James and Soho Club, St. Martin's Club and St. John's Club. Members paid three pence a week subscriptions and the Union made a donation of £10 towards the purchase of instruments.<sup>(81)</sup> Members of the Walworth Radical club resolved to form a band after a lecture and recital on popular music had been given by Mr. Nobbs, late of the Scots Guards. Upon hearing this Mr. Nobbs offered to take charge of the aspiring musicians.<sup>(82)</sup> Visitors and members of the Buxton Club, Walthamstow, were given a special whitsun treat in 1887. Members of the club fitted up a temporary stage on the club's lawn and there the band entertained members and guests over the holiday period.<sup>(83)</sup> Politics were also not forgotten while the bands played. At the East Finsbury Radical during intervals between songs resolutions condemning coercion in Ireland were passed.<sup>(84)</sup> Bandsmen at the Alliance Club were certainly kept busy. They were often out for a hospital parade or:

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80. British Almanack and Companion, 1865, p.89.

81. WMCJ, 6 June 1875. A few weeks later the Union published the Rules for Brass Bands and then the Rules for Fife and Drum Bands, see, Ibid, 11 September, and 23 October 1875.

82. CIJ, 23 October 1886.

83. CIJ, 4 June 1887.

84. CIJ, 17 September 1887.

on behalf of men on strike. Last Saturday the services of the musicians were given to the mathematical instrument makers who have been out since April last from Messrs. Harlings, in London Fields. A good sum was collected on the march, and for one of the blacklegs the "Dead March" was played which did not make the aforesaid blackleg very merry. (85)

There were also examples of clubs which grew from brass bands, such as the Dobcross (Huddersfield), which took premises as a club and affiliated to the Union. (86) By the mid 90's clubs without a band or some group of musicians were rare. In terms of quality, however, London was said to be eclipsed by the provincial clubs. At the 1897 Band Competition held at the Agricultural Hall, Islington, most of the honours went to clubs from Lancashire and Yorkshire. (87) A number of club bands also took prizes at national band contests. Leicester Imperial, for example, took the £50 Prize Shield at the National Contest held in 1902 at the Crystal Palace. (88)

Besides bands clubs had many other forms of musical entertainments. One popular type was the "Free-and-Easy" which went under a variety of names - members' concert, smoking concert, chairman's concert - but which all consisted of a variety of songs sung by members and friends. "Free-and-easies" had an unsavoury reputation

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85. Club World, 28 July 1894.

86. H. Livings, That the Medals and Batons Be Put on View, (Newton Abbott, 1975), pp.34-35; The famous "Besses o' th' Barn" Band had purchased a building in order to have their own social club in November 1885, see, Russell and Elliott, op.cit., p.163.

87. Club World, 5 June 1897. For a chatty but informative study of bands in the north see, T. Cooper, Brass Bands of Yorkshire, (Clapham, Yorkshire, 1974).

88. CIU, Annual Report, No.40, (1902), p.15.

because of their association with entertainment nights held at public houses. However, it was thought that their popularity would act as an inducement to join the club while careful supervision of the programme would ensure that nothing of an indecent character was put on. (89) At the Leeds Working Men's Institute they were held because they were known to be "attractive to the rougher portion of the members." (90) Once again to the money hungry club the free-and-easy was a useful means to increase prosperity. They were organised on a regular basis at the Batley Club in order to pay off the debts of over £200 incurred in renovating and furnishing a concert room. (91) Songs were of every type, comedy usually proving the most popular but in common with the music halls "coster songs" enjoyed a spell of popularity in the

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89. On the development of "free-and-easies" see Harker, op.cit., pp.409-11 and 424-26; M. Smith, "The Growth and Development of Popular Entertainments and Pastimes in Lancashire Cotton Towns, 1830-1870," (M.Litt Thesis, Univ. Lancaster, 1970); W. Shimmin thought the innovation of temperance "free-and-easies" to be only a marginal improvement upon its low rival, see, Town Life, Chapters X and XI. J. Ritchie also thought that the songs enjoyed by the company at such an evening were usually indelicate, see, Night Side of London, (1858), pp.22-24. For a more sympathetic portrayal of an evening's entertainment see the description given of a free and easy near Sadler's Wells organised by jewellers to raise money for the inmates of the jewellers' almshouses, A Ogilvy, "Haunts of Harmony," Once a Week, 9 March and 16 March 1867.

90. Leeds Working Men's Institute, p.4; See also "A Night Club in a Country Village," Parish Magazine, 2(9), September 1860.

91. CIU, Annual Report, No.11, (1873), p.23.



clubs in the mid 90's. (92) Such songs included "I saw her raise her apron to her eye" which told of a working class mother's reaction to the death of a loved infant. Those who charged that such songs were absurdly sentimental were firmly reproached. "They are full of homely feeling and general pathos," claimed one defender, who argued that coster songs "have done more good than sermons, and have taught better lessons than we hear from pulpits." (93) Long after the clubs were held to have become the domain of the professional artiste the amateur "free-and-easy" type entertainment retained its popularity. They were easy to put on, and for the smaller clubs with perhaps little money to lavish on expensive professional singers they were cheap. Another reason for their popularity was, as Dickens noted with regard to the music-hall, "the liberty afforded to the audience of taking part in the performance." (94) In most clubs, small or large, the members concert would be held sometimes once a week, certainly once a month. If the club had a band, a choir, and an elocution class to supply some reciters then a fine evening could be had at little expense. The combination of musical, spoken and dramatic entertainments is illustrated by the programme of the Brittainia Working

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92. On the "coster song," see, L. Senelick, "A Brief Life and Times of the Victorian Music-Hall," Harvard Library Bulletin, Vol.19(4), 1971, pp.388-90. The great populariser of the "coster song" was Albert Chevalier. While the "coster song" may have disappeared club audiences seemed to have retained their affection for the grandly emotional song, see, R. Hoggart, Uses of Literacy, (Harmondsworth, 1958), pp. 154-55.

93. CIJ, 14 April 1894.

94. "Mr. Whelks Revisited," All Year Round, 16 June 1866.

Man's Club, Kings Cross. (95) Its programme for mid February 1879 organised to raise funds for the clubs was:-

Opening piano solo

Song - "Minnie Lee" - James Munro

Recitation - "Yarn of the Nancy Bell"- Robert Kidd

Scene from "The Hunchback" (Sheridan Knowles)

Song - "The Fairy Tempter" - Miss Thompson

Recitation - "Charge of the Light Brigade" - Mr. Kidd

Domestic Sketch - "The Worritts"

Song - "The Dear Little Shamrock" - Mr. Munro

Recitation - "Ask Mamma" - Hetty Sleep

Song - "Thady O'Flynn" - Miss Thompson

Conclusion - Comic Drama: "Good for Nothing"

Scene: Room in a Cottage in Windsor.

Tom Dibble (a gardener) - James Denby

Harry Collier (railway fireman) - Robert Kidd

Charles (a carpenter) - W. Pearce

Young Mr. Simpson - H. Langford

Nan - Lydia Knibb

Clubs in London also benefited from musical evenings put on by bodies established to elevate popular musical taste. A series of concerts were organised by the People's Concert Society at the Eleusis Club in 1878 for which an admission charge of 3d was made. Attendance was poor so the last concert was given free. On the evening the hall was packed. But the following season the Society decided that because of poor acoustics the club would no longer be used as a venue. (96) Following an invitation from the Bethnal

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95. Britannia Working Men's Club, Programmes, (1878 and 1879).

96. F. Marshall, "The People's Concert Society," Macmillan's Magazine, Vol.43, April 1881, p.434.

Green Club four concerts were given by the "Popular Ballad Concert Committee." The concerts, which consisted mainly of choral performances were most successful.<sup>(97)</sup> Although the choir of the Working Men's College often visited clubs few were stimulated into forming their own choirs. A rare example of a club choir was that formed at the Boro' of Finsbury Club in the early 90's. The group had been started by members anxious to replace the diet of comic songs which they claimed was dominating London clubland.<sup>(98)</sup> There was thus a very energetic and diverse musical culture developed by the clubs, one which took a variety of forms from bands to ballad concerts, from the handbell ringers who enjoyed a vogue in clubland in the mid and late 80's to the Sunday evening sing-song at the Boro' of Hackney which always ended with the Marseillaise.<sup>(99)</sup>

Entertainment of a different kind was provided by the drama. Some clubs were forbidden to put on plays. At the Leeds Working Men's Institute, for example, after a short trial, the directors decided that theatricals were not suitable for such an organisation. But by the mid 80's many London clubs devoted part of their programme of entertainments to dramatic performances. The Albion

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97. CIJ, 1 January 1887. The Concert Committee had been founded by Mrs. Hart to provide high class music at low cost to clerks and respectable artisans, and to furnish opportunities for musical education, see, Philanthropist, December 1884. In addition there were concerts organised by the People's Entertainment Society, the Kyle Society and popular concerts sponsored by the Sunday Society.
98. CIJ, 15 May 1893. After inquiries among affiliates the Union discovered that the establishment of choirs was making progress in the north, especially Yorkshire. Because of its growing popularity the Union contemplated initiating an annual competition, see, CIU, Annual Report, No.47, (1909), p.35.
99. On bell ringers see, CIJ, 18 December 1886; for the Boro' of Hackney, evidence of Rev. Spence, S.C. Clubs Registration Bill, pp.144-45.

drama company appeared at the Eleusis in May 1879 in a benefit night to raise money to improve the stage and to obtain new scenery. They played to a highly appreciative audience though a club drama critic thought their performance well below par, one actor in particular was admonished for "the manner in which he forgot or misplaced his h's." (100) The drama programmes varied greatly. Mr. Chamberlain's Company, which appeared before the members of the United Radical, in May 1879 put on two pieces. A modern one-act drama, "Our Bitterest Foe" which dealt with the Franco-Prussian war, and a two-act domestic drama written by the leader of the company, "The Poor Engineer." (101) At some clubs whole plays would be performed, at others the performance would consist of a series of extracts from different dramas. The plays put on seem, as far as can be determined, to have reflected general popular taste. Throughout the 60's and 70's and in some cases into the 80's melodramas and social realism dramas dominated the popular theatre. (102) Precised plots of some plays performed in the clubs suggest they fitted into these genres. "The Warrior's Return" performed for example at the Decorators' Club in early June 1886 told the story of a soldier fighting in a far off land who was captured but managed to escape only to learn that his wife had died in abject poverty. Broken-hearted he sought "her grave to breathe his last breath on her resting place." (103) In early

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100. Social Club Journal, 1(4), June 1879.

101. CIJ, 19 March 1887.

102. Higley, op.cit., pp.196-207; M. Booth, "East End Melodrama," Theatre Survey, 17(1), 1976.

103. CIJ, 5 June 1886.

November 1894 the Holborn Thespians acted in "Retiring," a typical melodrama:

One Samuel Snaffles retires from business and he and his wife, worthy people in Tottenham Court Road, feel out of place among elegant surroundings. A charge of receiving stolen property is made against Mr. Snaffles, but the real culprit makes a confession, and all ends happily by the marriage of Miss Snaffles to the son of a proud stockbroker. (104)

A similarly melodramatic plot marks the play "Sunlight and Shadows," which concerns:

the self-sacrifice of a lame, deformed man, who loves in secret a young lady and whose declaration of passion comes at a time when the young lady's heart is engaged to another ... The man is also wed to a dissipated woman thought to be long since dead, but who reappears when all looks bright and cheery. (105)

Factory plays were also put on by club companies. Darwood's company made their debut at the Carlyle Club in "Factory Girl," which proved very popular with the audience who at the correct moments greeted the villain with "loud groans." (106) In 1887 The Glenwood club's dramatic society performed "Maria Martin," while at the Excelsior members acted in Jerrold's "Mrs. Caudle's Curtain Lectures," one of the many Jerrold plays popular in clubland. (107) By the late 80's club thespians began to put on Shakespeare in the clubs, a move welcomed by many friends of the movement as indicative of the improving tastes of the membership. The Byron Ballard Company took "Othello" to the United Radical

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104. Club World, 10 November 1894.

105. Club Life, 8 December 1900.

106. CIJ, 10 January 1891.

107. CIJ, 15 June 1887. Other Jerrold plays popular in the clubs were "Rent Day" and "Black Eye'd Susan."

early in 1887. (108) The company had put "Hamlet" on at the United the previous year and had played to large audiences. The success of the projects confounded critics who had suggested that it was "presumptuous and absurd" for an amateur company to attempt the piece. (109) Gaston, as might be expected, was well to the fore in the Shakespeare experiment. At his own club, the Boro' of Hackney, he produced "Macbeth" with Byron Ballard playing the lead, Mrs. Ballard, Lady Macbeth and Gaston as Banquo. All expressed themselves delighted with the performance and the club was congratulated for the fine scenery and music which accompanied the production. (110) "Hamlet" was also performed at the Southwark Radical in July 1894. A critic reported it to be "brightly acted," and noted that the members and friends who packed into the hall "were quiet and appreciative." (111) The clubs interest in Shakespeare is further evidence of the stature of the playwright as a popular dramatist in the century. (112) This suggestion is given further confirmation by the popularity of the Shakespeare Society at Toynbee Hall. It met regularly to study the plays and once a year put on a public performance. Of the acting it was noted that

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108. CIJ, 21 January 1887.

109. CIJ, 11 September 1896.

110. CIJ, 6 November 1896; see also, Ibid, 16 June 1888.

111. Club World, 21 July 1894. Madam Gratienne's Company also specialised in Shakespeare. The Company put on "Twelfth Night" at the South Bermondsey Club, for example, in January 1896, Ibid, 18 January 1896.

112. See, C. Barker, "The Chartists, Theatre Reform, and Research," Theatre Quarterly, Vol.1(4), 1971.

although

East Londoners do not always succeed in their representation of Royalty, yet they largely make up for their defects by their enthusiasm which gives to their performance a value far exceeding that of mere entertainment. They get completely outside the life of today to transport themselves into a more beautiful world, into life on a larger scale... (113)

Many London clubs had extensive facilities for the performance of drama as well as for the more humble variety entertainments and concerts. South Hackney was reputed to have one of the best appointed stages of clubs in its district while in the late 80's the stage of the Netherlands underwent alterations and improvements costing some £2,500. (114) The new hall built at the Bright Radical held over 400 while the new Mildmay club seated over 800. (115) Although there was much expansion and alteration in metropolitan club land from the late 80's not all clubs were as well endowed with space as the examples quoted. It was admitted that a great many clubs still required halls big enough to hold the members and friends who sought entrance on entertainment nights. "A front parlour is usually large enough," Gaston joked "when Professor Bawlded arrives to give his lecture upon 'Ancient Barrows' (which some members take to mean vehicles used by prehistoric costers), but when a concert or dramatic show is announced a theatre is

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113. W. Picht, op.cit., pp.46-47. There was also the interest in Shakespeare evidenced by the study groups reading his plays in the clubs.

114. CIJ, 21 May 1887.

115. CIJ, 4 June 1887. Information on the Mildmay comes from a personal communication from the Club secretary.

hardly large enough." (116)

The most important source of theatrical talent in the clubs was the Clubs Dramatic Association (C.D.A.) which was founded in June 1894. Under its first Honorary Secretary G. Reynold the Association encompassed all the major companies performing in the clubs. The clubs involved in the first months of the Association are given in Table 20 below:

TABLE 20: The Clubs' Dramatic Association.

|                   |                   |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| Garrick           | H. Norman's       |
| Holborn Thespians | Basil North's     |
| Violet Langley's  | Rovers            |
| Hinton's          | Utopians          |
| Wilson Howard's   | Bransby Williams' |

SOURCE: Club World, 11 May 1895.

Williams left the Association soon after because of disagreements about fees but his Company continued to appear in the clubs and he remained a popular figure in the clubs whether appearing with his company or doing one of his many comic routines such as "The Penny

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116. Club World, 25 January 1896. Some comparison of club facilities with those of other institutions can be gleaned from the S.C. Theatres and Places of Entertainment, P.P. 1892, xviii, Appendix 9; for example:

| PLACE                              | SEATING CAPACITY |
|------------------------------------|------------------|
| Alhambra music hall                | 2,799            |
| Alma music hall                    | 300              |
| Bermondsey Constitutional club     | 140              |
| Bow & Bromley Institute            | 1,050            |
| Canterbury music hall              | 1,480            |
| Jewish working men's club          | 640              |
| Penge Constitutional club          | 262              |
| South Hampstead working men's club | 200              |
| Star music hall                    | 1,150            |



Showman." (117) These drama companies had been appearing in the clubs since the mid 70's and were composed of amateurs and semi-professionals, although some of the moving figures in the companies often turned professional. Hall noted that the dramatic societies of the clubs had been the training ground for much professional talent. (118) Many of the companies began as totally amateur undertakings. A few members would get together to stage a particular production. If it proved successful in their own club then they might "tour" other clubs in the district. Having braved the first public performance the members might decide to stay together to put on further pieces. So a club drama society came into being. The Criterion Company was born when a few members of the Boro' of Hackney met together in 1877. To assist them with their first effort other members built the scenery and wives of members rallied to find clothes and make props. (119) The Holborn Thespians, one of the moving forces in the C.D.A. began as an acting group at the Holborn Gladstone Club. During the winter season of 1889-90 the group performed at other clubs. Inspired by the reception they were given they decided to form themselves into a company in 1891. (120) Being a member of a company required stamina as well as acting skill. The programmes carried out by the companies were quite

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117. See, Club World, 26 October 1895; B. Williams, An Actor's Story, (1909), Chapters 2 and 3.

118. Hall in Solly, op.cit., p.211.

119. CIJ, 21 January 1887.

120. Club Life, 7 January 1911.

demanding as the booking of the Holborn Thespians for January 1894 shows: (121)

| <u>DATE</u> | <u>VENUE</u>            |
|-------------|-------------------------|
| 7th         | Cobden Club             |
| 8           | Manor Rooms Tee-To-Tum. |
| 10          | Hackney Radical         |
| 11          | Holborn Gladstone       |
| 14          | Carlyle                 |
| 15          | Stamford Tee-To-Tum     |
| 17          | Boro' of Hackney        |
| 18          | Stamford Hill T.T.T.    |
| 21          | Bermondsey Gladstone    |
| 28          | Hackney Radical         |
| 30          | South Bermondsey        |

Companies in the C.D.A. were praised for providing performances of plays which otherwise would have been beyond the reach of working men. (122) Occasionally club thespians would have to overcome those problems which dogged the amateur theatre circuit. A visit of one C.D.A. group to the West Ham Club had to be cancelled as the actors would not appear because of the poor playing of the club's pianist. (123) A performance of the "Green Bushes" at the North London Club had to be cut short because of pressure of time. The summary removal of the last two acts, it was reported, "had the effect of producing a tame and unsatisfactory ending." (124) On the other other hand the audience of the United Radical was well-

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121. CIJ, 6 January 1894.

122. Club World, 21 July 1894; see also, R. Gaston, "Amateur Theatricals," CIJ, 17 April 1888.

123. Club Life, 7 January 1899.

124. Club Life, 24 November 1900.

regarded by the actors for whereas at some clubs "any manifestations of romance, as kissing or embracing, is met with silly guying that unnerves the actors," at the United the members were "as well behaved as that of a West-End house." (125) Play performances in the mid 90's had brought some difficulties with the law of copyright. In 1891 the North East Bethnal Green Club was successfully prosecuted for breach of copyright. Some club delegates pressed the Union to defend the club but the Union, advised by counsel and by the Legal and Parliamentary Committee, refused. Clubs were warned that if they were putting on dramatic performances then the permission of the author, if required, would have to be obtained. However, the major theatrical publishers, Samuel French, agreed to allow all clubs performing copyright plays to have a preferential rate. (126) Club drama, whether performed by amateur or semi-professional was thus an extensive part of the amusement programme of the clubs. Metropolitan clubs, in particular, were favoured with a wide range of sources from which dramatic performances could be obtained. And, while the role of the amateur in the provision of club amusement may have been on the decline in this period the popularity of the dramatic companies and club companies showed there was still much scope for individual initiative, and participation.

The rise of the club was co-extensive with the rise of the music-hall. Thus it is not surprising to find that the music-hall

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125. Club Life, 8 December 1900. See also the illustration "Dramatic Entertainment at the Boro' of Hackney Club," in R. Woods, et.al., The Poor in Great Cities, (1896), p.25.

126. CIU, Annual Report, No.30, (1892), p.15.

type of entertainment, was popular in the clubs. (127) This usually took the form of a variety evening consisting of a range of acts - singers and comedians mainly supplemented by various speciality turns. Sometimes the talent would be drawn from the club, other times entertainment secretaries would be hiring from the music-hall labour market. (128) Club variety evenings also continued to use chairmen to preside over the evening's varieties even though the practice was on the decline in the halls. (129) The range and mixture of acts which appeared on the club stages defy categorisation. A variety evening at the Netherlands early in 1887, for example, consisted of singers and dancers and an American indian who concluded the programme with a display of rifle shooting. (130) West Marylebone's Bank Holiday variety concert, also in 1887 included:

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127. On the rise and character of the music hall see among the more useful literature, C. MacInnes, Sweet Saturday Night, (1969); A. Wilson, East End Entertainment, (1954), pp.214-19; P. Bailey, Leisure and Class, Chapter 7; G. Rusell and E. Campagnac, "Poor People's Music Halls in Lancashire," Economic Review, Vol.10(3), 1900 is still useful. See also P. Summerfield, "The Effingham Arms and the Empire: Working Class Culture and the Evolution of the Music Hall," (Paper presented to 1975 Society for the Study of Labour History on "Leisure: Class Expression or Social Control?") This last paper is a valuable counterpoint to other recent studies which have stressed the conservatism of the halls, usually through a study of the songs popular at the halls rather than an analysis of the full range of entertainment offered; see especially, L. Senelick, "Politics as Entertainment: Victorian Music Hall Song," Victorian Studies, Vol.19(2), 1975 and G.S. Jones, "Working Class Culture and Working Class Politics in London, 1870-1900; Notes on the Remaking of a Working Class," Journal of Social History, Vol.7(4), 1974.
128. Booth, op.cit., Vol.1, p.101. For an interesting account of the variety night see, Peppin, op.cit., pp.81-82.
129. Senelick, Harvard Library Bulletin, pp.384-86.
130. CIJ, 19 March 1887.

Mr. Charles Shepard - "The Brokendown Fairy," in which he impersonated a negress ballet dancer, Mr. Fred Lemure with a topical song for the jubilee, clog dancing from Richard Anson and 'eccentric polka-dancing' from Thomas Lloyd. The evening concluded with a duet from Misses Laurie and Watson, and a members' dance which went on until the early hours of the morning. (131)

Supper parties popular at the Kettering club comprised glees, recitations and clog dancing. (132) To consider ways of obtaining better acts for the clubs a conference of club delegates was held in the autumn of 1889. Speakers noted that it was important to supervise amusements carefully in order that the wives and daughters who were present on these evenings were not offended. (133) In common with drama, club variety was said to have given much support to the development of professional talent. Any examination of music hall programmes claimed one clubman, included "many old favourites of the clubs, whose salaries are now reckoned in sovereigns where once they were glad to take shillings." (134) Certainly the entertainment secretaries of the larger London clubs had, by the late 80's become powerful figures in the labour market. Mr. Barnes of the North London club told Booth how clubs obtained professional acts. They would go down to the corner of Waterloo

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131. CIJ, 4 June 1887. Sometimes members could be given a surfeit of variety entertainment. At the Walworth Radical over 45 acts were booked to appear in a Sunday variety evening including a company of mandolinists, a blackface comedian, handbell ringers and a skate dance. Only considerations of time prevented the Committee from hiring other artistes for the evening, CIJ, 4 January 1896.
132. CIJ, 10 January 1891.
133. CIU, Annual Report, No.27, (1889), p.19.
134. Club World, 18 December 1897.

Road and select the appropriate turns from the groups of music hall artists gathered there seeking employment. The usual price paid was between 2/6d and 3/- per turn and it was common for 8 acts to appear in the course of the evening. Larger, and more prosperous clubs would have more acts. Smaller clubs might have a larger bill over a holiday period, although the bill might comprise a mixture of semi-professional talent and volunteers from the membership. Barnes agreed that a number of music hall turns served their apprenticeship in the clubs. "In small places they begin for nothing. Then they get a paid job - they get to know people. Finally they may be seen by the manager of a large hall and so get on." (135) The question of reward was at times a contentious matter. Bransby Williams, as has already been noted, left the CDA because of a dispute concerning fees paid to his company. A singer in the clubs similarly complained that club men expected artists to work for nothing. Artists did much unpaid work for the clubs, for example, on benefit nights, but if they asked for reward then some clubs simply offered a glass of ale and a cigar. If monetary payment was asked for committees behaved as if they were being swindled. (136) Another entertainer attacked the club audiences for always demanding something new but never wanting to pay for it. (137) Drama companies were paid little more than the music hall turns. The Cobden Club, for instance paid drama

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135. Booth Collection, Section B, Vol.156, f.176-82. The power of the Entertainments Secretary, or Concert Secretary as he is now called remains undiminished, see the comments of P. Honri, Working the Halls, (Farnborough, 1975), p.53.

136. Club Life, 13 October 1894.

137. CIJ, 4 September 1896.

companies £1.10/- which worked out as 3/- per member. (138)

Actors were unhappy that from this small sum they had to learn parts, attend rehearsals, travel to the venue, and purchase props. (139)

Some club men resented these criticisms. At the Hoxton Radical in late 1894 it was decided by the entertainments committee that all professionals appearing in the club had to be formal members of the CIU. The committee were of the opinion that "if an artiste will not support the club from which he draws part of his living he is a mean fellow, and not worthy of encouragement." (140) A frustrated club thespian also rebutted the complaints of the semi-professionals. When clubs began, he noted, the stage and its equipment were makeshift and simple. Few companies were then interested in the clubs so for drama the clubs had to rely upon their own members. Now as facilities had grown permanent and more extensive the companies had come to dominate the clubs and the old amateur was excluded. (141) Whatever the merits of the arguments it is clear that London clubs which had the necessary finance were paying out in the mid 90's about £1 a week for variety acts and perhaps a further £1 or 30/- for a drama company.

Besides the variety entertainments of singer, comedian, juggler or magician, many clubs enjoyed a performance from the blackface minstrels. "Negro minstrelry" had been very popular in

138. Club World, 1 December 1894.

139. Club Life, 7 January 1899; Club News, 4 March 1911.

140. Club World, 1 December 1894.

141. CIJ, 16 January 1892.

the 1850's but by the early 60's in some areas it was on the decline. (142) At the predominantly working class music hall, the Alhambra, it was said to enjoy little favour with the audience. (143) However, in clubs and in other organisations minstrelry was to enjoy a new vogue. Counter-attractionists in London in the mid 70's formed the "Temperance Ethiopian Minstrels" to give songs and comic sketches illustrating the teetotal cause. (144) Many clubs also had their "ethiopians" drawn from the membership. Members and friends at the Camden and Kentish Town Club formed their troupe "The Georgia Minstrels" in early 1887. (145) There was a similar troupe formed at the Buxton Club. Their debut won wide acclaim from the membership. The club reporter noted that they held the audience for over three hours and the "songs and choruses went almost without a hitch, and the smart repartees between tambourine, bones and Mass<sup>a</sup>Johnson ... were in many cases new and applicable to current events." (146) The fashion for minstrel troupes was still strong at the end of the century when the Mildmay formed their "Maryland Minstrels." (147) Minstrel entertainments formed

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142. H. Reynolds, Minstrel Memories, (1928), provides basic information upon these entertainments but a new study is needed comparable to the recent work published by American historians, see, for example, R. Toll, Blacking Up: The Minstrel Show in Nineteenth Century America, (New York, 1974), and O. Suthern, "Minstrelry and Popular Culture," Journal of Popular Culture, Vol.4(3), 1971.

143. Evidence of F. Strange, managing director, to S.C. Theatre Licensing, P.P. 1866 xvi.

144. Weathercock, 16 October 1876.

145. CIJ, 28 January 1887.

146. CIJ, 7 May 1887; see also Institute, 3(23), January 1890.

147. Club World, 15 May 1897.



a regular part of the weekly variety programme. Given that many of the troupes were amateur some variation in quality of performance was to be expected. Most companies seemed to give a competent turn although the Star company was chided by one reporter for its lack of coordination and the acting of one of their number who although made up to resemble a "venerable ethiopian" in "brogue he was decidedly Hibernian." (148)

Many of these variety entertainments were used by clubs as benefits, that is the proceedings of the evening's entertainment would be donated to what the club deemed a worthy cause. Sometimes it was the member of the club who was honoured. At the South Hackney Club there was a variety evening for the President of the club. The presentation was made by Mr. Hart, clubman and member of the school board. His services were being rewarded, Hart told a cheering audience in respect of his "untiring efforts to bring the club to its present prosperous condition, and superintending the fitting up of the hall, and for obtaining the lease of the club for ninety-nine years." (149) A variety night at the Mildmay in late October 1900 was devoted to raising money for a servant of the club who had been forced to resign because of ill-health. (150) Benefits were also given to friends of the movement who had fallen upon hard times such as the veteran Chartist and poet J. B. Leno who had been a popular reciter in the clubs with his "Smock-Frock" entertainments. His benefit at the Boro' of Hackney included readings from his own poems. (151) The widow

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148. CIJ, 5 February 1887.

149. CIJ, 4 June 1887.

150. Club Life, 27 October 1900.

151. CIJ, 29 April 1893.

of Edward Dowsett, a comedian popular in the clubs, was given a benefit night in the Central Hall in early December 1900. (152)

Then there were the benefits for causes, benevolent and political, supported by particular clubs. (153) Members of the Woolwich Club, for example, hoped to raise over £10 in a benefit they organised for the local unemployed in February 1887. For the benefit of the MRF, hosted by the Boro' of Hackney, the Criterion Dramatic Company appeared in "Colleen Brown" and a short farce. (154) A benefit to extend the premises of the Gye Street Club, Vauxhall in mid-1890 drew a very distinguished audience. The evening was chaired by Will Thorne and Keir Hardie and the reciters included Aveling, reading from Shelley, and Eleneor Marx reciting the "Song of the Shirt." (155) A lighter note was struck by the evening at the Battersea Radical to raise money for its banner fund. Acts included Dick Spark, "a favourite comedian," and comedy sketches from Bob Cassidy's company. (156) In mid March 1887 the Bow and Bromley Institute held their benefit in aid of the Post Office Orphans' Fund. The evening comprised a full entertainment from well-known club artists. The Orphans' Benefit was an annual event at the club. (157) Club men were rightly proud of this benefit activity. To them, despite the occasional carping from a club performer who thought there were too many demands for free enter-

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152. Club Life, 15 December 1900.

153. CIJ, 19 July 1887.

154. CIJ, 27 November 1886.

155. People's Press, 19 July 1890.

156. CIJ, 3 January 1891.

157. CIJ, 19 March 1887.

tainment, these evenings showed that the clubs were concerned about their memberships and their communities. When attacked for selling drink clubs often replied that few publicans organised benefits or many of the other benevolent works undertaken by the club movement.

The evolution of the clubs' entertainment activities is illustrated by the programme of typical London clubs published in the club journals. While they do not necessarily reflect the exact balance of different kinds of entertainments found in the clubs in each period they do show what was being offered to members and what price, if any, was charged for entry. (See Tables 21-23 below). The question of charging for admission to entertainments of all kinds had become a controversial issue in the mid 90's. Until then most, if not all entertainment had been free. Two kinds of problems forced some clubs to re-examine the policy of free admission. One was the increasing cost. As members expressed the desire to see better acts on their stages, or listen to plays acted upon more polished stages so there was a need for the clubs to expand the budgets of the relevant committees. Partly, increases in expenses could be underwritten from profits made by the bar or games room, especially in clubs with large and flourishing memberships. For smaller clubs the need to charge may have been caused by the need to put on entertainments comparable to those found at the more affluent clubs in order to retain membership. Secondly, there was the problem of the associate privilege. As has already been seen in the discussion of drink, the associate scheme troubled some clubs. They were not opposed to the principle but did not want the practice abused, for example, by visiting clubs solely when the pubs were closed in order to get a drink. To

TABLE 21 : Club Entertainments, January and November 1891.

| CLUB:              | ACTIVITIES:  | DATE:          |
|--------------------|--|----------------|
| North London       | Concert; Collin's and Clares' Company; Fred Davies and Company; The Rovers' Company. | January 17-21. |
| Walthamstow Social | Ballads and Readings; Concert; E. Smith's Benefit                                    |                |
| East St. Pancras   | Harmonic Night; The Marionettes; Cinderella Dance.                                   |                |
| Mildmay            | Variety; Brothers Marsden and Company; Miss Bradbury's Dramatic Company.             | November 14-21 |
| United Radical     | Concert; Ballad Morning; Drama Company; Mr. Norton's Benefit; Grecian Company.       |                |
| West London Trades | Band and Concert; Variety; Programme Concert; Dance.                                 |                |

SOURCE: CIJ, 17 January and 14 November 1891.

TABLE 22 : Club Entertainments, May and August 1900.

| CLUB:   | ACTIVITIES:   | DATE:                                |
|---|---|--------------------------------------|
| Grange Club<br>North Camberwell Radical<br>North London | <p>Variety evening; Tom Foster and Company; Select Concert.</p> <p>Variety entertainment; Grand variety evening; dramatic company.</p> <p>Variety concert (1d); Vaudeville dramatic company (2d); Open-air concert (1d); Star Dramatic Company (1d); Dance (2d)</p> | <p>May 26-28</p> <p>August 11-14</p> |

SOURCE: Club Life, 26 May and 11 August 1900.

TABLE 23 : Club Entertainments, 1911.

| CLUB:             | ACTIVITIES:  | DATE:            |
|-------------------|--|------------------|
| North London      | Social and dance; Grand variety concert; Billiards match; Special concert; G.Reynold's Company - "Katherine Kavanagh."   | January 7-11     |
| Boro' of East Ham | Variety concert; Arthur Sweet's Company-"The New Secretary"; (2d) Grainger Benefit Night; Whist drive (4d)   | January 21-28    |
| Central Finsbury  | Popular variety (1d); Albion's special variety; Dance (2d); Warren and Conrad's Company-"A Tight Corner"; Boxing Competition.  | February 4-10    |
| Mildmay           | Quadrille assembly; Dramatic evening; Variety morning; Albion Company-"The Second Mrs.Tanqueray"; Bohemians Mixed whist drive; Warren and Conrad's Company; Mildmay Chums Concert. | March 25-April 1 |
| Patriotic         | Select dance; Variety concert; Free-and-easy; Band night; "Cosmopolitan Girls."  | June 10-19       |

SOURCE: Club News, 7 January, 21 January, 4 February, 25 March, 10 June 1911.

combat this some clubs refused to serve visitors on Sunday morning or late at night. A variation of the same theme occurred with regard to entertainments. In 1889 at the annual meeting there was a discussion on the propriety of Sunday games during which delegates noted that clubs which prohibited such games rarely upset their membership who simply used their pass cards to gain admittance to those clubs where there was no prohibition. This often resulted in the members of the host club being unable to get near the games room because it was taken over by visitors. It was suggested that Sunday visitors should only be allowed if they came from clubs where games and entertainments were permitted on the sabbath. <sup>(158)</sup> In the mid 90's some of the larger and more popular clubs abolished the free admission system and replaced it with the "compulsory programme," that is members or visitors wishing to see a play or a variety evening had to purchase a programme which usually cost 1d or 2d. The change in policy followed a conference at the United Radical early in 1894. Almost all delegates attending agreed that some charge was necessary. Moreover they believed their memberships would not object to paying the odd copper when the Tee-To-Tums were already charging 3d. <sup>(159)</sup> These charges for the "compulsory programme" were then introduced by most London clubs. Besides these charges most clubs which admitted women to entertainments required the male member to purchase

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158. CIU, Annual Report, No.27, (1889), pp.74-76. George Howell urged delegates to outlaw all games on the sabbath and devote the time to classes and lectures.

159. CIJ, 20 January 1894. There were those who objected to the innovation arguing that the payment made for pass cards in order to become an associate should guarantee right of free entry to all club activities. Despite some individual grumbling most clubs by the turn of the century seemed to have made some charge for admission to at least some of the week's amusements.

a "ladies ticket" in order to gain admission, the ticket usually being valid for one month. At the North East Bethnal Green Club, for example, members were charged 2d for the ticket. (160)

Thus by the turn of the century the clubs, particularly those in London, had evolved a basic programme of entertainments for the members. The usual timetable would be for concerts to be held on Monday and Saturday, with the Monday evening often rounded off with a members' dance, while Sunday evening and perhaps Wednesday were reserved for the drama. Smaller clubs which had less money to lavish on amusements would probably have varied the programme with a greater reliance on amateur talent drawn from the membership and friends but the structure of the entertainment would have remained much the same. Evidence suggests that the position of the professional in club land was being strengthened throughout the period, although some clubs were unable to fend off the attractions of the music halls and in the early years of the new century some smaller clubs closed. Moreover the expenditures required to mount an attractive programme of entertainments such as booking of artists and appropriate facilities for staging, placed a strain upon the more vulnerable finances of smaller clubs. (161) Towards the end of the period under discussion new competition this time from the cinema was also posing a problem for some clubs although clubs were replying by putting on cinematic performances themselves.

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160. CIJ, 13 February 1894.

161. For a full discussion of the impact of professional entertainment on club life see, T. Ashplant, "The Provision of Entertainment in London Working Men's Clubs," (Unpublished paper, 1975; delivered to Society for the Study of Labour History Conference on Leisure.) especially pp.13-16



They were reminded, however, that to do so they required a license as laid down by the Cinematograph Act, 1910. (162) Clubs which forgot this rule, like their predecessors regarding the need to observe copy right could expect no help from the Union.

The growing professional presence on club stages and the links between music hall and club were indicated by the prominence given to matters of entertainment in journals such as Club World and Club News. They carried regular review features on club shows as well as biographies of popular artistes. They also set aside a page in every issue for small adverts from the artistes which gave the magazine the appearance of the music hall or variety journals.

Yet these growing indications of professional takeover should not obscure the continued activity of the members in matters of amusement. One innovation pioneered by the Bryanston Club in the early 80's was the Childrens' Party. (163) Usually held around Christmas these parties were given either to the offspring of members and friends or for deprived children of the district. At the South Hackney Club over 300 youngsters were given a fine tea followed by magicians and other entertainers and then given a toy each before departing. (164) Some of these parties were lavish affairs. The Central Finsbury Entertainment's Committee, for example, put on an evening for over 1600 children. Aply super-intended by the wives of the members the revellers put away over

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162. CIU, Annual Report, No.50, (1912), p.36. Clubs did not require licences to allow music and dancing unlike music halls or many temperance halls.

163. CIU, Annual Report, 21, (1883), p.38.

164. CIJ, 22 January 1887.

64 gallons of milk and 144 gallons of ginger beer besides all the other accompaniments of such parties. (165) In the mid 70's several clubs began the practice, again around Christmas, of putting on evening's entertainment in the workhouse. The band of the St. Pancras Club together with a group of eager amateur variety artists amused the inmates of the Westminster Union workhouse in April 1876, while the Minstrel Troupe from the West Kensington Park Radical visited the Kensington bastille at Christmas 1892. (166) The entertainments programmes cited earlier indicates that dances had become very popular in clubland. In the early 80's a club like St. Agathas, London Docks, which held a members' dance once a month was unusual. (167) But by the end of the decade most clubs would have a dance if not fortnightly then certainly once every month. At Tee-To-Tums dances were organised weekly because the event proved "a distinct good and a restraining influence of considerable value." (168) The ball which accompanied the Annual Soiree of the Vauxhall club was a grand occasion. Held in a specially decorated room among those who were seen dancing merrily after the meal were "several members of the Fabian Society, usually associated with less frivolous occupations." (169) Coit also adopted the dance with great enthusiasm in his neighbourhood guild.

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165. Club Life, 31 March 1890.

166. WMQJ, 8 April 1876; CIJ, 21 January 1893.

167. CIU, Annual Report, No.19, (1881), p.23.

168. "Tee-To-Tums," Economic Review, Vol.2(3), 1892, p.355.

169. People's Press, 12 April 1890. See also the description of the dance at Walthamstow Social, CIJ, 24 July 1886.

In the guild a weekly Saturday night dance was held because it was seen as one of the best means of indirectly educating members in the grace of motion, good manners, and chivalrous attention to others. (170)

The range of entertainments discussed so far were certainly popular with the bulk of the membership but there were others who were not so sure that the programme developed within the clubs served the best interests of the working class or dignified the good name of the club movement. One major source of criticism was the socialist and radical groups. They claimed that love of low comedy and sentimental balladry was incompatible with sound political work. Variety further reinforced the hold of pleasure upon members, a position which was the immediate consequence of allowing intoxicants to be supplied. The criticism that too many members were queuing for the concert room while the lecture room was empty was a familiar one. (171) It has been noted already and

170. S. Coit, Neighbourhood Guilds, (1891), pp.110-111. The popularity and acceptability of dancing require further investigation. Respondents interviewed by Roberts stated that in their youth dancing was seen as a pastime for young, single people. She recorded no cases of married people going dancing, see, E. Roberts, Working Class Barrow and Lancaster, 1890-1930, (Centre for North-West Regional Studies, Occasional Paper No.2, Lancaster 1976), p.54.
171. One wag hinted that if politicians were being pushed out by entertainments then the solution was for the Fabians and their friends "to train their members in the art(?) of comic songs, and put a speech or two in between," and then packed houses would be guaranteed, Club World, 16 November 1895. There were clubs which tried to mix amusement with improvement, for example, at the Upholsterers' Club in late October 1894 a special entertainment was put on by the "At Home" Company which consisted of three parts:
- (1) Songs, serious and comical
  - (2) A speech on "Health and Food Reform."
  - (3) A one-act farce.
- Club World, 3 November 1894. For a general discussion of the politics v. entertainments issue in the club see also, J. Taylor, From Self-Help to Glamour, (Oxford, 1972), Chapter V, passim.

requires no further elaboration. What needs to be given more serious consideration is the volume of criticism concerning the popular taste displayed in the clubs which came from ideologues or members of the club movement.

Pratt was occasionally troubled by the cultural fancies of the ordinary membership. Speaking to the 1888 Annual Meeting he told the audience that he was disturbed by much of the music performed at concerts. He often wished that such pieces "satisfied the soul as well as the ear." (172) He returned to this theme of the needs for improvement in 1893. Committees needed to find ways to ennoble the taste of the membership. "To see the play of 'Hamlet' and to hear a sham negro sing an idiotic ditty - both come under the head of recreation," he observed, but, he concluded "the character and depth of the enjoyment afforded in the two cases are by no means the same. I don't say exclude sambo, his bones and his banjo; but I say give club members a chance of hearing the very best music your powerful Union can command." (173) The low entertainments countenanced in some clubs also provided Solly with his last criticism of the movement. Writing in 1891 he expressed himself saddened by "the prevalence of stupid music-hall comic songs, clog dances, silly farces, and unseemly chattering." He looked forward to that "happy day" when such degrading appetites would be lost and the majority of the membership "prefer lectures, conversations, readings ... recitations and good music in their clubs." (174)

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172. CIU, Annual Report, No.26, (1888), p.56.

173. H. Pratt, An Address, (1893), pp.10-11.

174. Our Magazine, No.12, December 1891. Solly's characterisation of unenlightened working class culture had changed little over time, see, H. Solly, Destitute Poor and Criminal Classes, (1868), p.11.

Others in the movement supported the worries of Pratt and Solly. Vanderhout of the Whitechapel Club argued that the quality of entertainments had declined markedly since the 1860's. Once, club members had taken great pleasure in the delivery of readings of high quality but these had been replaced by second rate concerts. (175) The decline in standards was thought to be illustrated by the songs popular in the clubs which one observer thought to be in need of fumigation. (176) The vulgarity of the club singer was allegedly of little consequence compared to the poverty of taste displayed by the comedians favoured by the clubs. The low comedians enjoyed by club audiences were denounced for their "disgusting combination of ignorance, mannerisms, conceit and caddism." (177) To those concerned with the good name of the club movement the growing popularity of the comedian was a check to the progress of the movement. (178) On the other hand some reporters believed that the lack of originality displayed by comics was resulting in whole audiences falling asleep during their performances. (179) To many critics of the entertainments programmes the solution lay in the power of the Entertainments Committee. If these men used their growing stature and importance in the clubs to elevate the culture of members then the downward slide of amusements

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175. CIU, Annual Report, No.30, (1892), p.59.

176. South London Chronicle, 5 November 1892.

177. Social Club Magazine, 1(3), May 1879.

178. CIJ, 12 November 1892; see the comments of the "Stroller," Club Life, 3 March 1900.

179. Club World, 29 September 1894; CIJ, August 1904.

could be halted. Mr. Phair of the Mildmay Club was adamant that it was the duty of the Committee to scrutinise the lyrics of songs to be sung on club stages. This procedure was necessary "so that while every opportunity be given for wholesome humour and fun, any gross departure from decorum and modesty should be immediately suppressed." (180) It was the "low and depressed tastes" of some entertainments secretaries which explained the prominence given to comics on club stages. (181) At Tee-To-Tums great care was taken by those charged with organising entertainments to exclude "vulgarity from the performances, and as a consequence members' wives and sweethearts can be admitted as visitors." Moreover the presence of females in the audience had the further beneficial effect in acting as "a restraining influence on those members who are inclined to express their disapproval in language more forcible than polite." (182) On the other hand some clubmen meanly attributed the changing quality of club amusements to the admission of women to the clubs:

Time was when women were admitted occasionally as a sort of treat that was looked forward to. Now we find they crowd the club halls three or four times a week. The decline in legitimate drama may be attributed ... to the increased influence of women, for men sacrifice their own tastes and desires to please their female friends. Men appreciate Shakespeare and rigorous plays in which patriotism is set forth, and are ready to applaud the heroes who fight and die for their country. Such sentiments do not appeal to

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180. CIU, Annual Report, No.44, (1906), p.224. During the early years of the club movement it had been noted that those charged with organising amusements for the working man should take care that "the recitations and songs selected should bring the minds of the people into contact with some of the best authors, and so the mind instead of being weakened by needless self-indulgence would be ennobled by right feeling and pure sentiment." Lecturers Gazette, December 1878.

181. CIJ, 28 March 1896.

182. "Tee-To-Tums," op.cit., p.355

women; they feel no interest in the plot of such plays, and naturally induce their male friends to patronise houses where a light and frivolous entertainment is provided. (183)

Clubs were also warned not to countenance any rowdyism on entertainment nights. At one London club eight members were expelled for the relatively trivial offence of banging a tambourine during a concert. (184) Like breaches in the regulations regarding the supply of excisable offences against good order in the club were severely punished. Sometimes the noise which accompanied an evening entertainment brought the club unwanted publicity. One Dr. Bouch, for example, sought an injunction against the Battersea Progressive Club which adjoined his residence. He told the court that the "members danced and sang all night, and the noise was so great that it was impossible for him or his maids to obtain any sleep." (185) Gaston was also prompted to rebuke his fellow clubmen for their lack of discrimination in entertainments. He was, however, pleased to observe that the music-hall style of variety nights were losing out to the drama companies fostered by the clubs. By taking up drama clubs were unconsciously "educating the members under the guise of amusements ... The clubs have done good work and will increase their usefulness if instead of the stupid and oftentimes vulgar variety, dramatic performances take their place and so tacitly acknowledge the growing taste of the members." (186)

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183. CIJ, 13 January 1894; see also, Ibid, 21 November 1891.

184. CIJ, 22 January 1887.

185. Liberty Review, 15 June 1895. His action was unsuccessful.

186. Club World, 26 January 1895; see also, CIJ, 28 February 1891.

Occasionally the Union was forced to admonish the clubs for innovations in entertainments which if continued would threaten the integrity of the movement. In the early 1890's for example, London clubs were criticised for giving prominence, in their programmes, to evenings of boxing. To continue this practice would "attract into the clubs a not very desirable class of members." The Union took particular exception to the clubs concerned, in contravention of every club procedure, admitting the general public to these matches. Clubs were thus asked to stop these evenings. The clubs complied and boxing was restricted solely to sporting contests between clubs. (187)

If club amusements had their critics they also had their defenders. One clubman rebutted those who charged the clubs with neglecting lectures and classes while the comedian and thespian flourished. Comedy and drama had didactic purposes and were more successful in arousing the feelings and stimulating the imagination of the working man than the dry formality of book learning. (188)

Another challenged the claim that club stages were the monopoly of the clog dancer and the low comedian. Their day, he suggested had passed. By studying the clubs' calenders it was clear that many clubs were favouring evenings of drama and superior ballad concerts. (189)

The improvement in the character of Sunday entertainments was registered by one reporter:

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187. CIU, Annual Report, No.30, (1892), pp.3-4.

188. CIJ, 19 May 1894.

189. CIJ, 18 November 1893.



Artistes with absurd make-up, with loud untuned voices, singing stupid, inane songs, with coarse and vulgar dialogue, have found their occupation gone in many a club on Sunday evening, and in their places appear ballad singers, bands of musicians, glee-parties, and dramatic companies with comedies conveying a wholesome moral. (190)

One particular advance in club entertainments was said to be the lack of interest displayed in the jingoistic songs popular in the music halls:

It is a cheering sign of the times to notice the little attention given to the death or victory kind of songs introduced on club stages. Time was when "Rush onto Victory," "We'll Lay the Enemy Low," "Our Brave Old Flag," and sentiments of that kind were met with rounds of applause; now they go without a hand. What the British working man has to fight is not a nation made up of men like themselves, but the sweater, the slum owner and the privileged classes. (191)

Defenders of club amusements did not silence the critics, while those troubled by the tastes of club members were looked upon as uncharitable and ill-informed by those who thought the history of the movement showed a marked improvement in the cultural pursuits of the membership. In the early years of the club movement when ballads and readings provided the staple fare of entertainments there was little need to worry over the programme of entertainments set up by the clubs. A greater concern for the quality of amusements was evinced in the years after the "Revolt." Partly this was a consequence of the changing character of club amusements. From the 80's there was a greater use of variety type amusements as well as drama, dances, and a broader range of music. Thus there was the possibility that clubs would become little better

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190. CIJ, 6 January 1894.

191. CIJ, 28 January 1893. see also, Ibid., 6 June 1896.

than co-operative music halls where members could see the current idols of the halls at lower prices than they would be charged at the Trocadero or the Alhambra. Partly also this was the response of club ideologues who felt impelled to keep before the movement ideals of community service and sociability rather than allow cheap entertainments to be seen as the end of the movement. To those concerned with directing the democratic club movement there was the worry that entertainment would drive out all other features. The issues raised did not permit of easy resolution. Although difficult to quantify it does seem that drama was advancing in the clubs throughout the period which many took to be indicative of the success of the movement in elevating the sensibilities of its membership. The concern, or obsession, with variety entertainments should not obscure the prominence which drama had attained in the clubs nor should the popularity of variety be interpreted solely in terms of a lowering of club standards. If the debate between club critics and defenders on the issue of entertainments was inconclusive its existence pointed to the continuing importance within the club movement of concern with the ultimate ends of clubbability. Notwithstanding the 'revolt' many club members held fast to ideas that clubs should set before the membership goals beyond that of simply providing rational recreation. The club movement had to retain its character as a social movement even if the content of that ideology had shifted from one which stressed class harmony and individual improvement to one which pressed forward the claims of labour as part of the democratic polity.

Extensive provision was also made for excursions and trips

within the movement. During the paternalist period the Union had arranged an Annual Excursion which normally visited the house and grounds of an aristocratic subscriber. Clubmen and their families would travel down in special trains. Upon arriving they would be given dinner then the afternoon would usually be devoted to sports or touring the grounds and gardens and, as a special treat, the house was often thrown open to the visitors. The proceedings ended with a tea and speeches from the dignitaries involved and votes of thanks from the clubmen. Among the places visited were Hurstbourne Park (Earl of Portsmouth) in 1870 arranged by Auberon Herbert, and Hatfield House (Lord Salisbury) where 1200 members and families were entertained in 1871 and again in 1881. In 1872 the visit was made to Panshanger Park (Earl Cowper) and in 1880 Cassiobury Park, residence of the Earl of Essex.<sup>(192)</sup> These sojourns to the homes of the great were taken as evidence "of a solidarity of classes to common interests in this country where more than any other the political and social influence of the aristocracy is recognised and felt."<sup>(193)</sup> Various difficulties prevented the Union from organising such a visit in 1882 so the Boro' of Hackney stepped in, arranging an August Fete held in Epping Forest which attracted over 4,000 people.<sup>(194)</sup> A year later over 1,000 visited Brassey's home at Normanhurst, the cost of the trip being borne mainly by Brassey himself. These visits ended with the 'revolt' and by the turn of the century the Union

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192. For these trips see, CIU, Annual Report, No.8, (1870), p.9; No.9, (1871), p.6; No.10, (1872), p.7; No.18, (1880), p.14; No.20, (1882), p.12; Workman's Magazine, No.9, 1873; Labour News Almanack, 1874.

193. Lecturers Gazette, September 1869.

194. CIU, Annual Report, No.21, (1883), p.17.

was urging its membership to visit the annual Co-operative Festival where the Union had a stall. The rise of the Union coincided with the modest expansion of working class holidays at the seaside and the Union made several attempts to assist its members to take advantage of a day trip or longer stay by the sea. (195) In 1878 the Union opened a seaside home in Margate. It had been leased in order to provide members and their families with a place to stay at the seaside at low prices, for example a married couple could stay a week for 6/6d. (196) A year later it was forced to increase the fees to off-set the deficit on its operation but few visited and shortly afterwards the home was closed. One further reason for the failure was the refusal of the railway company to allow the clubman some preferential fare from London to Margate. (197) Over a decade later the Union engaged in similarly unsuccessful negotiations with the railway companies to allow members and friends discount rates on trips to popular resorts around London. (198) Many clubs also organised an annual excursion for their members. In summer 1870 members and friends of the Leighton Buzzard Working Men's Club went to Kew. The trip was a successful one and the club realised £2 profit. (199) Over 500 members and guests went

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195. See for the growth of the seaside holiday, J. Walvin, Beside the Seaside, (1978), especially Chapter 3, and J. Walton, The Blackpool Landlady: A Social History, (Manchester, 1978), Chapter 2.

196. Daily News, 3 September 1878.

197. CIU, Annual Report, No.18, (1880), pp.14-15.

198. CIU, Annual Report, No.30, (1892), p.27.

199. CIU, Annual Report, No.9, (1871), p.21. See also the trip of St. Marks Working Men's Institute, Friendly Societies Journal, August 1865.

on the annual excursion of the Leamington Liberal Working Men's Club, one party going to Rhyl and one to Liverpool. (200) For its sixth annual trip members of West Southwark Liberal and Radical went to Box-Hill a spot popular with working class Londoners. (201) Arundel was the spot chosen by members of the North Lambeth Liberal and Radical 1891:

On arrival at their destination, the party visited the local places of interest, the park and the "Black Rabbit" coming in for a very fair share of the patronage ... At two o'clock the party sat down to a really good English dinner ... after dinner Mr. J. Astley (Chairman), in proposing the health of the club, said it afforded him great pleasure to see the club in so sound a condition, and trusted that they might go on as they had hitherto had done, that was everything for the advancement of the Liberal Party. (202)

Less fortunate in their trip were the members of the Lansdowne Park who took five brakes to the forest at Lambourne End. As they were getting ready to leave the party was set upon "by fifty to sixty gypsies who made for the brakes." The driver of the first brake was "rendered senseless by a stone" and a terrific fight ensued. Upon return the club held a meeting where members complained that it was nothing less "than a public scandal that a forest bought at the expense of £72,000 should harbour a lot of scoundrels who waylay harmless excursionists out for a holiday." (203)

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200. CIJ, 24 July 1886.

201. Club World, 7 July 1894. The previous year over 700 had gone from the club to Ramsgate and the committee had travelled in its own saloon carriage, CIJ, 8 July 1893. The Walthamstow Club because of its small membership had to wait until 1898 to organise its first trip, A. Barker, op.cit., p.56.

202. CIJ, 29 August 1891.

203. Club World, 10 August 1895.

Like its London counterpart the Manchester Association also tried unsuccessfully to organise trips for its members. In 1891, for instance, it arranged a series of summer rambles, but few members took advantage of the scheme. (204) From the early 90's members were also advised to take advantage of the cheap trips and outings offered during the summer months by the National Sunday League. Adverts appeared regularly in the club journals from April to August. The trips were designed to cater for all tastes in the places chosen for visits as the selection in Table 24 indicates.

TABLE 24: Trips organised by the National Sunday League 1894.

| DATE     | -PLACE                     | COST                             |
|----------|----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 16 April | Brighton                   | 3/- return                       |
| 23 April | Hythe and Sandgate         | 3/6 return                       |
| 14 May   | Guildford & Haslemere      | 2/6 return; children half price. |
| 14 May   | Folkestone & Dover         | 4/- return; children half price. |
| 3 June   | Colchester & Ipswich       | 3/- return                       |
| 3 June   | Weybridge & Virginia Water | 2/- return                       |
| 17 June  | Hampton Court              | 1/6 return                       |

SOURCE: Club World, April-June 1894.

In May 1875 over 200 clubmen from the Preston Central Working Men's Club visited London where they were entertained by London Clubs. (205) This was one of a number of trips made by provincial clubs to promote good fellowship between the metropolis and the

204. Manchester Working Men's Club Association, Annual Report, No.15, (1892), p.5.

205. WMCJ, 22 May 1875.

rest of the country. In the 1880's many London clubmen favoured the 'brake visit' as a way of combining a trip out with promoting good feeling between the clubs. The pattern of the visit was simple. Members of one club would set off in a brake or series of brakes to visit a club or other clubs in different parts of London. At the clubs speeches of good-will would be made and perhaps an entertainment given. After a drink and sometimes a meal the itinerant members continued on their travels. Members of the United Radical took a brake visit to the Gosport Club, Walthamstow in May 1887. Upon arriving a capital entertainment was given and while the visitors were refreshed, they listened to speeches from hosts and their own representatives. Then off to the Buxton Club also in Walthamstow. In the afternoon the United men returned to their own club via a short stop at the South Hackney. (206) Thirty members of the St. Georges Liberal club, in south-east London, took a brake to Virginia Water. After the brakemen had been photographed outside the club the trip began the journey being "enlivened by some capital selections on the violin by Mr. Levy." (207) Sadly the committee at the Hatcham Liberal Club voted to end hosting brake visits in 1887. They were forced to take this action because the club lay on the main route out of London into Kent. This made the club very popular with brake visits. Consequently on a Sunday morning, the customary day for the visits, the club was crowded out with visitors from different

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206. CIJ, 7 May 1887. It was usual for a brake to visit several clubs, for example the Carlyle club visited the Boro' of Hackney, the Clapton Park, Walthamstow Social, Buxton Social, and Gosport Social in the course of one Sunday, see, CIJ, 13 November 1886.

207. CIJ, 3 September 1887.

clubs, and the ordinary membership found it hard to obtain admission. (208) So popular was the brake visit that in 1894 Club World introduced a column devoted to reporting the activities of the brakemen. (209) Some observers thought these trips to be less useful. Often they were little more than an excuse to indulge in liquor and disturb the peace claimed one temperance critic. (210) One clubman thought that those hostile to the brake had once been justified in their opposition. He was very pleased that the Mildmay Club had disciplined some of its younger members for misbehaving on a brake trip. Such trips he believed:

are 100% better than they were some ten years ago when it was supposed to be the correct thing to sing noisy songs, and brandish aloft beer and spirits bottles while on the road and generally spoil the peace of Sunday. (211)

At a time when London club land was growing larger both in terms of total membership and total number of clubs the brakes were a convenient and pleasant way of maintaining good relations between clubs and a way of showing clubs in different parts of the capital the amenities and work of fellow clubmen.

Besides these formal activities there were the innumerable informal undertakings set up to pass the free time of the members.

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208. CIJ, 8 October 1887.

209. Strangely despite the popularity of the excursion and brake there is little evidence that club men took up that craze of the late nineteenth century - cycling. There were few adverts for cycles or equipment in the journals and almost no mention of the hobby amongst the membership. On the importance of cycling see, D. Rubinstein, "Cycling in the 1890's," Victorian Studies, Vol.21(1), 1977.

210. Sons of Temperance, Vol.2(23), September 1883.

211. CIJ, 27 May 1893.



There were the informal discussions in the smoking and reading rooms, the gatherings around the bar, meetings of clubs and societies to which members belonged, and the undiminished popularity of the games room. Billiards had become very much the clubman's game having eclipsed the earlier popularity of the bagatelle table. George Edwards, a London billiard table maker had made his fortune from supplying clubs with first class tables at prices they could afford. By 1895 his son was supplying some 1,000 clubs. (212)

Adverts for the makers of tables and the paraphernalia of the game - scoreboards, chalk, and cues - filled the club journals. The only problem caused by the game was the occasional complaint about the rowdiness of those who took part in the game in particular the "thumping of cues upon the floor and the idiotic yells which take place when a player makes a bad shot" were regarded as disgraceful. (213)

Cards too proved a popular pastime in the clubs and their tolerance did not seem to lead to difficulties over gambling which many critics of card-playing alleged would inevitably follow.

Clubs thus made an extensive and varied provision for the leisure of their members. If such entertainments did not always meet with the approval of club ideologues the membership found in their associations a range of activities which few other institutions could match. Most of the entertainments could be presented as tending to the elevation of the membership. Furthermore, notwithstanding the growing use of the professional or semi-professional entertainer in the clubs there was still considerable scope for the

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212. Club World, 19 January 1895.

213. Club Life, 6 January 1900.

amateur to take part in activities. There were no complaints in this period of the curse of "spectatoritis" which was always being charged against popular amusements, that is they encouraged people to watch activities rather than to join in themselves.<sup>(214)</sup> Clubs did vary considerably in the provision of amusement of their members. In London, for example, entertainment seemed to be more widespread and provision more elaborate than in the provinces, although there would be very few clubs which did not have the most minimal forms of amusement such as the programme of readings or the occasional concert. This provision for the amusement of members constituted one major distinction between the elite clubs and the working men's club. No member of the Athenaeum or the Reform went to their club to see opera or listen to a concert. Such cultural activities were clearly separated from other free time provision. This was not so in the working man's club. Moreover, like the drink issue, the provision for amusement became an important element in defining the public image and understanding of the working man's club. For this reason, if for no other, the leaders of the movement were anxious

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214. See Jones, in Good Words, op.cit., p.165; A Firth, "Adult Education and Leisure," Rewley House Papers, Vol.5, February 1932, p.208. Eliot made some interesting observations on the decline of the "active audience" which accompanied the contraction of the music hall. "The working man who went to the music-hall and saw Marie-Lloyd and joined in the chorus was himself forming part of the act; he was engaged in that collaboration of the audience with the artist which is necessary in all art and most obviously in dramatic art. He will now go to the cinema where his mind is lulled by continuous senseless music and continuous action ... He will also have lost some of his interest in life." T. A. Eliot, "Marie Lloyd," Selected Essays, (3rd edition, 1951), pp. 458-59.

that the amusements found in the club should bring credit to the movement. It was felt that the movement's claim to offer the individual member the means to improve himself and to advance thereby the dignity of labour would be contradicted if the clubs were to confine themselves to providing vulgar comedians and vacuous music-hall nights. Thus committees and members had to remain vigilant in order to ensure that the entertainments' programmes developed in their respective clubs assisted the general advance of the club cause. Most spokesmen in these years expressed themselves to be generally satisfied with the progress registered by the clubs, though there might be room for some improvement in the amusement programmes found in individual clubs. Clubs, therefore, had done much to attain the goal set by the movement's founders in adding to the range and type of rational leisure activities available to the working man (and on occasions his family) in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

CONCLUSIONS.

For a great many people the first real contact with the meanings and responsibilities of self-government has sprung from and still flourishes in the humble field of recreation. (1)

It should be felt an honour to belong to a club, and a pride should be felt in the membership. They should not get men to join merely to increase their numbers but only when they would conduce to the respectability and stability of the club. Let them make clubs not only places of amusement, but instruction, so that men might be able to manage public affairs from the knowledge gained at working men's clubs. (2)

The club movement has at bottom a spiritual and redeeming aim, and in relation to that aim all the various club activities...are but so many contributory means. (3)

In June 1912 the Union celebrated its fiftieth birthday. A special Jubilee dinner was held in Holborn to which senior club men, distinguished friends of the movement, and other allies were invited. The 250 guests included Minet, Judge, Slater and Zimmern, while Dent and Hall presided over the evening's speeches.<sup>(4)</sup> There were to be similar junketings in the provinces later in the month.<sup>(5)</sup> Such an event naturally supplied many of those active in the movement an opportunity to reflect on the progress of the club cause since the meeting in the rooms at Waterloo Place in 1862. It also provides a

1. P.E.P., Clubs, Societies and Democracy, (1947), p.3

2. J.Dent, CIJ, 14 January 1893

3. H.Llewellyn Smith, The Borderland Between Public and Voluntary Action in the Social Services, (Oxford, 1937)

4. CIJ, July 1912; Club News, 22 June 1912.

5. Club News, 29 June 1912.

a useful vantage point to survey and to offer some conclusions on the character of the club movement.

Of those attending the celebrations only Sir Edward Clarke remained from the original Council. Death had robbed the movement of many of the figures who had greatly influenced its development. Solly and Pratt had died early in the century, while Stephen Tayler, President after Pratt's retirement had passed away in 1909. Of the working class clubmen who had helped to shape the movement in its middle and later years only Hall and Dent survived. Paterson, the first important working class member of Council, Lowe, Cuerel and Gaston did not live to see their contributions brought to fruition. A new generation of clubmen were emerging who were to emulate the example of those who had selflessly laboured for the advancement of the cause in the 70's and 80's. Edward Garrity, for example, who had served as Secretary of the M.R.F., was a member of the Borough of Finsbury Council, a Poor Law Guardian, and President of the Central Finsbury Club, or John Thompson who represented the Northern Counties on the Executive, by trade a carpenter, he had been active in trade union work, served in his local friendly society, and was Vice-President of the Durham Branch.<sup>(6)</sup>

Most of the speeches at the various celebrations, as well as discussions in the club journals, dwelt on the themes of progress and achievement. While such whiggishness might indicate complacency and self-satisfaction, there was much to justify the pride which club men felt when they

6. Hall, Fifty Years, Chapter XVI.

spoke of their movement. An organisation which had begun with some 25 clubs had increased to some 1,500 affiliates with a total membership in excess of 250,000. Even this number fell short of the number of clubs known to the Union. Hall recognised that the Union still had much missionary work to do if the 1,000 or so clubs outside the CIU were to be brought into formal affiliation.<sup>(7)</sup> Thus there was still much to do in the way of propaganda and there were some parts of the country where the writ of the Union was unknown. The task of popularising the Union was one which the new generation of clubmen would have to continue.

In organisation and finance the Union had also undergone major changes. The Honorary Officials of the infant Union had been replaced by a paid secretary, assistant secretary and accountants. The Union also retained a solicitor. Government now rested with the delegates who composed the Executive Council. The balance sheet neatly illustrated the contrast between foundation and fiftieth anniversary. From the few hundred pounds realised mainly through donations which supplied the resources for the first year of work the Union now commanded thousands of pounds. Clubs too reflected this prosperity. Returns from over 1,400 clubs in London and the Provinces showed them to have assets of over £1.5m<sup>(8)</sup>

7. Hall, in Solly, op.cit., pp.176-77.

8. CIU, Annual Report, No.50, (1912), p.63, Table IV.

The Union had also opened two convalescent homes. The first, which had opened in 1894 at Pegwell Bay, was established following a generous donation from Passmore Edwards. The second had opened at Saltburn in 1909. By the time of the Jubilee both were self-supporting, being financed by the clubs which sent members to recuperate, from regular benefit nights held by numerous clubs, and from a regular income which derived from profits on the sale of the CIJ which by 1912 had attained a circulation of over 20,000 copies a month.<sup>(9)</sup>

But Hall and Dent did not want the movement to progress solely in terms of the numbers of clubs affiliated. Like the original founders the new generation of club leaders were still stressing the importance of "tone" in the clubs, although men such as Hall wanted to give this idea practical expression rather than appeal to some elusive, undefineable quality said to be present in well-conducted clubs. As Hall came to articulate the aims of the movement he emphasised the central role of the clubs and the Union in developing "in the moral equipment of democracy the twin virtues of manliness and independence, without which the workman must ever remain an inferior in the social democracy."<sup>(10)</sup> The anxiety of Hall and others was that the entertainment functions of the clubs would so come to dominate club life that all other activities and objectives

9. Tremlett, op.cit., Chapter 9, passim.

10. Hall, Fifty Years, p.234



would be diminished if not extinguished. This would not only lower the ends of clubbability but drive many of the best men from the movement.<sup>(11)</sup> It was not thought that this had happened but it was an ever-present danger which those who cared for the good name of the club movement had to guard against. Seen in this way the publishing of tables showing club men who held local office was not only indicative of the progress made by the movement but also served as a talisman to ward off those who would seek out club membership in order to assure themselves a supply of cheap entertainments. Hall and Dent were insistent that the clubs inculcated in their members a wish to serve others which was realised both in standing for one of the many club committees and in seeking public office. The idea that clubs made a vital contribution to training for democracy became the dominant motif of the movement's ideology. Clubs brought the working men who joined them into a deeper understanding and appreciation of the rights and duties attached to citizenship. The true club member was one who realised that social service was the end of clubbability. It was the especial duty of those successful in obtaining office in their clubs to represent in the demeanour and in various practical ways the meaning and importance of this idea to the ordinary members. Leading men of the clubs, it was argued, had a responsibility to show themselves "by self-restraint, perfect conduct, slowness to anger, and by disapproval of noise or rowdiness in any form" to be true gentlemen.<sup>(12)</sup>

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11. Club World, 12 October 1898

12. Club Life, 5 May 1900

Democratic conduct and gentlemanly behaviour appropriate to a real man were seen as the consequences of club membership.

The talk of "tone" did much to assuage the worries of friends of the movement who were troubled by its "class character", that is it was a movement directed at a particular class and which took its name from its claim to represent the needs of a sectional group. To men such as Pratt this expression of class loyalty, though understandable, was saddening. England could only go forward, he maintained, when talk of class difference and class conflict had been abandoned, and when all recognised that they shared jointly in the welfare of the nation. A class movement, like the working men's club movement, demonstrated that old suspicions and hostilities had not been extinguished. The same point was also stressed by Barnett who believed that such movements drew strength from the isolation which existed between classes. Therefore, it was the duty of the reformer to find ways in which the bitterness which fed off such separation could be overcome.<sup>(13)</sup> But the worries of a Pratt or a Barnett were to some extent misplaced, for although the club movement was a form of class expression that expression did not necessarily imply class conflict or class struggle. The language of class articulated by ideologues of the club movement stressed class pride, a sense of what had been achieved in difficult circumstances by men of very limited means. Like its Pall Mall counterpart the working man's club drew its strength

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13. See Barnett's comments in his Introduction to Peppin, op.cit., and S. Barnett, "The Duties of the Rich to the Poor," in H. Jones (Ed), Some Urgent Social Questions in Christian Lights, (1889)

from its claim to embody the values of a particular class. In a country where even in free-time activities class position was crucial it was not surprising that leisure institutions should come to feature as an integral feature of the class structure. Unlike its upper-class counterpart, however, there is little evidence that the working man's club became obsessed with that pursuit of exclusivity which was the hallmark of the nineteenth century gentlemen's club. That is not to say that the working men's club admitted all who sought membership. There must have been many who found their entry into a particular club blocked, although the associate card scheme meant that being barred from formal entry did not completely prohibit admission to some CIU clubs. Moreover, there were probably many men who recognised that if they sought admission to a particular club they would invite rebuff and ridicule. Such hidden faces of power undoubtedly existed although they rarely leave evidence for the historian to find. Few clubs, however, seemed to guard admission to their ranks in the jealous manner of a White's or a Boodle's. In these latter bodies a policy of indiscriminate admission would not only bring ridicule upon the institution but would threaten the foundations of the club idea which was based upon the policy of membership only as a guarantee of entry to privileged status. To dilute that practice would diminish the cohesiveness of a powerful section of the upper class. No such troubles appeared to disturb the deliberations of the working class committeeman. Furthermore, the financial burdens entailed by membership

in a working man's club would also prevent some men, who might otherwise be excluded for social reasons, from seeking membership. But the working men's club did develop policies which rendered them exclusive to certain groups. Firstly, most clubs by the end of the period under discussion had some minimum age limit for membership. In the majority of clubs no man below the age of 18 would be admitted. Clubs where a youth could join at 16 were in the minority. There were even a few clubs where full membership was only granted to those over 21, although a young man could join as a probationer at 18. Clubs thus responded to the growing differentiation by generation which was a feature of the late nineteenth century. The working men's club movement was very much the preserve of adult working men. Younger men had their resorts, such as the youths' institute where they could pass their free-time, and for boys, both "rough" and respectable, there were a growing number of boys' clubs besides various uniformed organisations to claim their loyalties. Males of different ages, however, did not mix. To be admitted to a club therefore was now part of the rites of passage for some young working class men signifying their full entry into the privileged and independent world of the adult. Clubs do not seem to have acted as an independent variable in such generational segregation. Rather they enhanced the processes of separation already at work in the working class. Secondly, except in very rare instances, women could not become members of clubs. In most clubs they were admitted to certain events, such as entertainment evenings but only if they were related to or a friend of

an existing member. They were not admitted on their own. Even when women were admitted clubs remained the preserve of the men. Indeed clubs had become identified with a certain style of male sociability found also in other working class institutions such as the pub or the lodge. Women, thus, were at best tolerated in the clubs and there were many club men who would have preferred their total exclusion. Again clubs do not seem to have been a causal factor. They responded to the sexual segregation already present in the community. But their closed character meant they strengthened the purchase of those divisions. Clubs were very much clubs for working men not embryonic family clubs or people's institutes.

One particular task which Hall wanted the members to take up now that the movement had consolidated itself was to make the clubs more attractive and comfortable. He had begun to address London clubmen on this theme at the end of the previous century. Having discovered that in the main provincial clubs were better appointed than their metropolitan counterparts the Secretary was anxious that the good work being done in the provinces should be imitated in London. There was the Sheerness Club, for example, which had spent nearly £1,000 on improvements including the building of baths for members.<sup>(14)</sup> Or the new smoking room at the Kettering Club which had "pleasant soft seats...small tables, fine oil paintings adorn the walls and a handsome fireplace and mantelpiece give dignity

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14. CIJ, 3 February 1894

to the room."<sup>(15)</sup> This was work which could be furthered by the ordinary membership giving up some of their free-time to fit out their clubs in pleasing ways. In many cases a good clean would be sufficient to register an improvement for it was observed that associate visitors to some London clubs were "repelled by their dinginess."<sup>(16)</sup> Hall was keen to stress that clean and well-decorated clubs would exert an uplifting effect upon the membership:

A club with dirty rooms, torn wallpaper and cheap and nasty fittings is committing an offence against every one of its members. It is contributing to make them careless of personal cleanliness, personal appearance and all that tends to elevate man. (17)

A further area of internal improvement suggested by Hall was the provision of good food at reasonable prices to the membership. This would mark a substantial advance over the "cheap pickles and penny sandwiches" said to be the staple fare offered at many clubs.<sup>(18)</sup> Improved decoration and tasteful furnishings had an important contribution to make to the "tone" of the movement.

One source of finance for such refinements in building and appointments would come from the takings of the bar. Drink had been a great boon to the club movement. It had supplied it with the much needed material base for expansion and assured the progress of the clubs' cause on an independent basis. Without the drink it is doubtful if the club movement would have survived. Certainly it would

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15. CIJ, September 1900

16. Ibid.

17. CIJ, January 1897. See also his comments to the Annual Meeting of the Manchester Branch, in Manchester Association Annual Report, No.28, (1905), p.26. There are further comments on club comforts in Club World, 11 January 1896 and 1 January 1898.

18. Club Life, 7 January 1899

not have grown to the same extent for without the independence, financial and ideological, realised by the sale of excisables, the movement would probably have remained an adjunct to charitable work to "civilise" the working man. The decision to admit intoxicants marked the first breach in the ideology of paternalism which characterised the movement until the early 80's. If the clubs had remained "dry" they would have probably come to resemble the teetotal pubs and coffee-taverns also founded by the counter-attractionists. The institutions enjoyed little real support with working men. Their beverages were often held to taste little better than the adulterated beer or spirits found at the pub. These bodies were kept solvent largely by virtue of donations from local gentry. For the clubs, on the other hand, drink generated income which entailed security. There were, to be sure, penalties, which the club movement paid for taking this bold step. The most obvious and menacing was the concerted attempts to obtain legislation to place the clubs under restrictions similar to or more harsh than those which controlled the licensing of public houses. Combatting this campaign had given the CIU a new confidence and energy when it was being challenged by its own affiliates. The attack thus helped to rekindle interest in the Union when other forces and pressures were questioning its values and the importance of a central organisation. For this reason the Union was always ready to stress how successful it had been in preserving the clubs from legislative control. It became something of a boast that no legislation

which touched upon the interests of clubs would pass without the imprimatur of the Union. Some limited legislation did meet with the full approval of club organisations. Registration under the Friendly Societies Act was welcomed because it guaranteed the bona-fides of the respectable club and because it gave assurances to the members of the financial probity of the body. Should it prove necessary to seek legal redress against club officials then registration, by making the clubs corporate entities recognised at law, permitted members to sue. The 1902 Licensing Act was also welcomed by the Union as codifying the distinction between the members' club and a proprietary venture. It was hoped that as a consequence the reputable working man's club would no longer be troubled by being lumped together with the unregistered "drinking den." However, there was an unacceptable face of the drink-selling right. Although there was little evidence to suggest that members of bona-fide working men's clubs abused the facilities for the supply of intoxicants this did not dissuade the critics from their opinion that the club was no ally to the cause of true temperance. For sections of the temperance movement clubs were thought to be little better than the public-house. To the publicans, clubs were a form of unfair competition and represented a further sorry example of the burdens which a respectable trade had to endure. Sterling public relations work by Union officials and friends of the movement at various public inquiries failed to dislodge the unfavourable image of the club



broadcast by temperance critic and disgusted publican alike. This loss of the war of ideas the Union had had to accept, although it recognised that it would have to remain vigilant if new coalitions, always being proposed to deal with the clubs, did not prosper. The 1902 Act failed to confound or silence the enemies of the movement. Beyond giving its approval to registration legislation the Union was opposed to further interference with the club movement. At the end of 1905 it had been suggested by the St. James and Soho delegate to Council that the CIU re-examine the idea of sponsoring an M.P. One of his major duties would be to monitor any legislation which might come before the House touching upon club matters and to speak for the Union in the chamber. Having examined the proposal the Executive rejected the idea on two grounds. First, they thought the scheme to be too expensive. Second, and more important, they argued that it ought to be a fixed point of Union policy to argue that "clubs as such lie, like private houses, practically beyond the need of parliamentary control or consideration, and that our aim should be to keep the club question out of Parliament for ever, if possible."<sup>(19)</sup> In taking this position the Union was re-affirming its belief, already recognised at law, that

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19. CIU, Annual Report, No.44, (1906), pp.12-13. The CIU's resistance to state investigation surfaced recently during the Rothschild inquiry into gambling. Despite repeated letters and orders the Secretary of the Union failed to come forward to supply evidence concerning the payments given by one-armed bandits. The Commission took the unprecedented step of making public its abortive attempts to obtain information from the Union, see R.C. on Gambling, Final Report, Vol.II, (Cmd 7200), 1978, pp. 363-65.

clubs were private associations not public or semi-public institutions requiring state surveillance and regulation. For this reason alone they resisted the idea of police supervision of the clubs. No one who was not a member had right of entry and the club men saw no reason why a state official should be granted unregulated access to a private assembly. For the overwhelming majority of temperate clubmen drink was seen as having brought major benefits to the movement. It might be irritating that its presence caused the movement to lose esteem among certain groups. But such critics failed to recognise and appreciate the self-control exercised by the membership over the use of intoxicants. But the very ease with which the supply of excisables resolved many problems of club finance meant that little consideration was given to alternative schemes of fundraising. One worry was that the clubs would become too reliant on drink in order to pay their bills. There is little evidence that this fear was realised. Recourse to the brewer for loans to finance extensions and fittings, however, was more common and, as some clubs learnt to their cost, brought severe difficulties if re-payment could not be made. Except for some desultory discussions in the mid-80's the exploration of further sources of finance other than that from commercial interests, for example through inter-club co-operation, was never considered. Had the plans of Dent and Pratt for making each club a centre of co-operative practice and enlightenment been more successful, some co-operative ventures might have

survived and the ties of the clubs with the world of business remained much looser. Drink in this respect was an ambiguous benefit to the movement.

Talk of extending club comforts and concern with the level of funding produced by the bar indicated that clubs were no longer simply friendly assemblies of working men established to pass away the hours after work. They had also taken on the characteristics of commercial undertakings. The need to place men in charge of clubs who possessed shrewd financial sense had been recognised in the early 90's. When considering who to vote for in club elections, members were cautioned to chose men "with a large amount of commercial knowledge. Clubs may be established for pleasure, but there is a very great deal of serious business associated with them."<sup>(20)</sup> The importance of good business practice was seen in many departments of club life. In clubs which took the compulsory programme or made some other charge for admission to entertainments the profits realised at the door had to be used wisely. There were the artists to be paid. Even if the club used only a few professional singers or comedians there was a vast army of semi-professional talent which required small payments as expenses for appearance on the club stages. Halls and stages had to be kept in good decorative order and the best acts put on in order to attract full houses for the variety or dramatic evenings. The Annual Reports and the journals of the club movement gave an indication

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20. Club World, 8 July 1893

of the degree of commercialism creeping into the clubs with their adverts for receipt books, special stamp pads, bar impedimenta, ticket machines, and equipment for the games room. Some club also retained paid officials such as stewards, doormen and bar men rather than rely on voluntary labour from the membership. This penetration by and the growth of links with the world of business, especially the groups of entrepreneurs linked to the burgeoning entertainments industry such as brewers and agents, was not unique to the clubs. It was a feature (and a problem) of many voluntary associations which made provision for the leisure hours of their members.<sup>(21)</sup> To many club men this no doubt appeared a "natural process", a product of the growing scale and financial complexity of the movement. But to others it represented the pursuit of some paths of development to the exclusion of others. It entailed giving prominence to some features of club life, entertainments for instance, while others languished.

As a consequence on this dual stress upon commercial success and internal comfort it was thought that some small clubs would be forced to close up. Only a club with a large and expanding membership was thought to be able to offer that range of facilities and amenities necessary to retain its membership. Members would not tolerate the rudimentary nature of the facilities offered in the small clubs. Associate cards would be used to gain admission

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21. See the important discussion in S.Yeo, Religion and Voluntary Organisations in Crisis, (1976), Chapters 7 and 11.

to larger clubs, or men would seek to join the larger clubs in the first place.<sup>(22)</sup> While it was conceded that enlargement of membership size was necessary if clubs were to expand the comforts offered to members it was also noted that large clubs lacked the intimacy and friendliness which was the mark of the small club, where all the members could be known to each other and where all shared in and contributed to the well-being of the collective. To restore some of the familiarity of the smaller clubs from the turn of the century various "sub-clubs" were started up in the London clubs to bring together members with similar interests and hobbies. These bodies represented the attempts of the plebeian clubmen to return to those notions of "clubbability" which had been lost in the larger and more impersonal clubs then coming into their own.<sup>(23)</sup>

One aspect of club life discussed in detail in this thesis was the provision made for the education of members. It has been the argument of this study that educational work in the clubs was far more extensive and more enduring than has been suggested by previous studies. Club education, especially in its informal varieties, was a far from negligible enterprise. Formal education, in particular class work, had not enjoyed much long term success. There were a few members in most clubs who would attend regularly or would make use of the classes organised by the CIU in conjunction with others bodies such as the Working Men's

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22. See Club World, 27 November 1897

23. See Ashplant, op.cit., pp.10-11.

College or the University Extension Societies. But such men remained very much in the minority. Other less severe forms of learning did achieve a fair degree of popularity. Lectures, discussion classes, and exhibition work, for example, were warmly taken up by clubmen and the Union was energetic in fostering the development of such methods of instruction. Educational work has brought the Union into closer contact with other working class organisations. The CIU urged its members to take advantage of the facilities offered by the W.E.A and a number of clubs became local centres for Association work. The Union also co-operated closely with the authorities at Ruskin College. Scholarships were endowed by the Union, representatives of the Union sat on the governing body, and the Union contributed to the extension of the buildings just prior to the world war. It was a very creditable achievement and one of which the Union was rightly proud. There were disappointments and setbacks in sustaining such work. Some clubs were distinguished for the educational labours they undertook, while in others the books in the library gathered dust for lack of use. But the work of the Union compared favourably with other popular organisations. To some critics of the clubs it was not the amount but the content of education which was at issue. Club education was above all education for citizenship, an education designed to make members aware of the nature of liberal democracy and the political duties incumbent upon every individual who made up the political

nation. It was not an education which stressed the importance of militancy or class consciousness. Those opposed to the educational ideology of Ruskin or the W.E.A. were equally antagonistic to the values espoused by club education. However, the critics overlooked the important training in democracy and organisation given by the act of membership itself. Clubs were important training grounds for the men who would seek office in their communities and other organisations. This function, which clubs shared in common with friendly societies, co-ops and trades unions, made an under-rated contribution to the advance of the working class.

Facilities for the entertainment of members were quite diverse, although two forms, variety and drama, had come to predominate in the formal provision for members' amusement. Besides these activities there were a number of other leisure pursuits available to the club man. Like the drink issue the anxiety of club ideologues was not the amount of provision but its quality. Too much of the wrong sort of amusements would debase the tone of the movement. If the clog dancer or the comedian came to represent the highest ambitions of the club movement then its important social purposes would have been defeated. The fear was that entertainments, especially of the variety type, would by their popularity, come to dominate the work and interests of the clubs. Other endeavours, such as education or local political campaigning, would simply be abandoned. The club movement would thus draw into member-

ship not the improving working man desirous of helping his brother workmen to advance the cause of labour, but a class of undesirables who would join solely for the chance of seeing music hall acts at low prices with the added bonus of being able to obtain alcohol when local public houses were closed. This fear troubled Dent and Prafft, and to a lesser extent Hall and Gaston. They all wanted the clubs to develop and refine the sensibilities of members by programmes of first class music and stirring drama. Such entertainments would instruct as well as amuse and could help to awaken discontent with present conditions by arousing noble sentiments and passions. Therefore entertainments were not just to lighten the members' evening but were to be part of the general programme of advancement which it was hoped would accompany membership.

These remarks indicate that if the objective advance registered by the club movement in terms of the number of clubs affiliated to the Union, the size of membership, and the prosperity of the constituent clubs was clear, the interpretation given to that progress was more equivocal. On balance most clubmen saw their first fifty years as years of triumph, of the victory of self-help and independence, often in conditions of adversity, and of self-sacrifice for the good of a cause by numerous obscure men. There were a few who thought that if progress was to be maintained then greater efforts had to be made by clubmen in the coming fifty years.



Clubs thus took their place alongside those other working class organisations which attained their maturity in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The consolidation of such institutions has been taken as a defining feature of the "separatist" period of working class development.<sup>(24)</sup> This period has sometimes been discussed in a way which portrays the subordinate class as a passive object upon which impersonal and largely uncontrollable external social forces impressed their character.<sup>(25)</sup> But this interpretation is misleading. Institutions such as clubs, or friendly societies or trade unions to cite two further examples were the creation of active, shrewd and thoughtful working men, many of whom laboured anonymously for the advancement of the cause to which they were committed. Clubs became part of that working class culture which subsequent observers have designated "traditional" and whose institutions have exercised a deep and abiding influence over the behaviour and outlook of numerous working men and women. In the sense that these bodies contributed to a common and shared proletarian style they can be usefully characterised as a social basis for labourism, that ideology of the role of labour which came to dominate political and industrial practice.<sup>(26)</sup> In some respects this ideology assisted the accommodation of labour to the ruling order, in other instances its bold assertion of the dignity and rights of labour provided a radical challenge

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24. E.Hobsbawm, "The Formation of the Industrial Working Class Some Problems," Proceedings, Third International Conference of Economic History, (The Hague, 1968), pp.179-80.

25. See, as a recent example, S.Meacham, A Life Apart, (1977)

26. J.Saville, "The Ideology of Labourism," in R.Benewick et al. Knowledge and Belief in Politics, (1975)

to the reproduction of that order. Alongside the trade union branch, the friendly society, the convivial lodge, the sports club, the pub, the chapel, the co-op, temperance halls, and various political organisations, the working man's club must be considered a key institution in the elaboration and articulation of this culture. It was, in many instances, an intensely local culture, bounded by known streets and familiar landmarks. A man belonged to a certain club in the way he worshipped at a particular chapel or supported the local football team. But through the agency of the central club organisations, and especially the CIU, individual clubs were welded into a social movement of national importance. Some of the social networks based upon these institutions drew upon overlapping memberships and allegiances. In other localities the pattern of social and cultural development was such as to make these institutions represent alternative even antagonistic networks, for example membership of the chapel and socialist hall as against the club and convivial lodge. The difference and alliances between these institutions remains to be investigated. All exemplified the solidity and political presence of the working class and all had been shaped by a variety of class structures and relations. None of these bodies had been made autonomously. They bore the imprints of the social forces which had brought them into existence. Clubs, for example, owed much in inception and inspiration to the tenets of Christian Socialism, and in their pursuit of active citizenship they shared much in common with a range of middle class as well as working class organisations. All, whatever their particular origins, contributed to the rich complex of associational life which characterised the world of respectable labour.

The nature of the world of the working class in late Victorian and Edwardian Britain is still being charted. This study has offered a detailed examination of the development, objective and subjective, of one important institution which helped to shape and was itself shaped by that world. There remain, to be sure, further areas for inquiry. More needs to be uncovered, for instance, of the progress of club life in the provinces and there is still much to explore in the area of clubs and political action. To offer definitive conclusions on the club movement at this stage would be misleading as well as presumptuous. However, a useful provisional summing up of the work of the movement can be taken from the most sensitive and lucid of the portraits of the clubs, that of T.S.Peppin:

Those who are interested in the development of the working class have here the opportunity of scrutinising an interesting little phase in that development. They have the opportunity of watching the proceedings of thousands of working men who are attempting to solve a problem in their own way. They have taken a certain matter into their own hands, and are quietly doing their best to arrange it. They are not looking for more encouragement or advice from outside, because they know that in many quarters their proceedings are discountenanced. Nevertheless they are going on in their own way. They know the difficulties which encompass them, because they know it's a delicate thing to improve a man's leisure without spoiling it. They know that the inherent difficulties in such an attempt will frequently give occasion to the enemy to blaspheme. (27)

\*\*\*\*\*

APPENDICES.

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APPENDIX A: Structure and Personnel of the Union,  
1862, 1885, and 1912.

TABLE A: Structure and Personnel of the Union, 1862.President:

Lord Brougham \*

Vice-Presidents:

Earl Fortescue \*

Earl Spencer

Lord Lyttelton \*

Dean of Carlisle

Dean of Chichester

Dean of Ely

R. Alexander

S. Bowly

Rev. W. Brock

J. Briscoe

F. Crossley

Rev. H. Gibson

R. Gurney

Dr. Guthrie \*

Rev. Newman Hall

G. Hastings \*

J. Heywood \*

M. Davenport Hill

T. Hughes

Canon Jenkyn

A. Layard

Rev. W. Lyttelton

Serjeant Manning

W. Neill

Rev. W. Poushon

T.Rathbone

Canon Robinson

A.Scott

J.Abel-Smith

Council:

H.Solly (Organising Secretary)

E.Clarke (Honorary Secretary)

J.Bainbridge

Captain Bayly

Mrs Bayly

John Bebbington

Miss J.Chambers.

Miss A Cooper

Miss Isa Craig

Rev. A.D'Orsey

Mrs W.Fison

W.Franks

R.Litchfield

Mrs S.Manning

H.Owen

Rev.J.Rylance

R.Scott

T.Shorter

Miss Anna Swanwick

Rev.D.Thomas

Miss E.Twining

Corresponding Members:

Rev.F.Bishop (Chesterfield)

B.Blake (Yorkshire)



Rev.E.Clarke (Derby).  
 J.Cotterell (Bath)  
 E.Dawson (Lancaster)  
 J.Edwards (Manchester)  
 Dr.R.Elliott (Carlisle)  
 Rev.S.Eardley (Streatham)  
 The Mayor of Faversham  
 E.Howard (Stockport)  
 Rev.J.Hyde (Derby)  
 J.Jones (Staffordshire)  
 J.Langford (Birmingham)  
 J.Langley (Wolverhampton)  
 Rev.W.Marsh (St.Leonards-on-sea)  
 Dr.Martin (Warrington)  
 Rev.W.Holesworth (Rochdale)  
 Rev.E.Monro (Leeds)  
 A.Ryland (Birmingham)\*  
 P.Rathbone (Liverpool)\*  
 W.Sims (Ipswich)  
 F.Thompson (Bridgewater)  
 S.Thompson (Liverpool)  
 Rev.C.Wilson (Southampton)

\* indicates a Council Member of the National Association  
for the Promotion of Social Science.

e.

SOURCE: The Inquirer, 29 November 1862.

TABLE B: Structure and Personnel, 1835.Secretary: John James Dent.Representatives:

|                |                         |
|----------------|-------------------------|
| J. Ager        | United Radical          |
| J. Austin      | Northampton             |
| H. Barnard     | Hackney Radical         |
| J. Battershell | Hackney Radical         |
| H. Baker       | St. Pancras             |
| W. Bennett     | Eleusis                 |
| W. Bennett     | North London            |
| W. Browning    | Tower Hamlets Radical   |
| L. Cain        | Nelson                  |
| C. Clifton     | Camden and Kentish Town |
| T. Collett     | Bryanston               |
| W. Cox         | Caledonian              |
| E. Dicks       | Cobden                  |
| J. Dorrell     | Gladstone               |
| Rev. Du Boulay | Heddington              |
| H. Dribbell    | Netherlands             |
| W. Edwards     | Queens Park             |
| H. Fuller      | Patriotic               |
| F. Foreman     | Park Town               |
| S. Franklin    | United Radical          |
| R. Gaston      | Boro! of Hackney        |
| L. Gay         | Hackney Wick            |
| W. Gellard     | Eleusis                 |
| J. Gibson      | United Radical          |
| C. Grossmith   | John Bright             |
| C. Hall        | Kilburn Liberal         |

|                  |                       |
|------------------|-----------------------|
| D.Hart           | Carlyle               |
| D.Heath          | Devonshire            |
| A.Hennessy       | Carlyle               |
| J.Heasman        | Enterprise            |
| J.Hill           | Hatcham Liberal       |
| C.Hopes          | John Bright           |
| J.Houtman        | Netherlands           |
| L.Issaacs        | Jewish                |
| W.Kilbey         | Commonwealth          |
| G.Linton         | Kingland              |
| R.Malster        | Hatcham Liberal       |
| B.Mayston        | St.Georges            |
| G.Meech          | Bryanston             |
| J.Melton         | Shaftesbury Park      |
| W.Morgan         | St.James and Soho     |
| W.Munn           | Tower Hamlets Radical |
| J.O'Callaghan    | Hammersmith           |
| C.Parker         | Barnes Artisans'      |
| F.Pape           | Commonwealth          |
| H.Putt           | Kingsland             |
| J.Rogers         | Loughborough          |
| A.Sampson        | Park Town             |
| J.Smith          | Kingston              |
| Rev.J.Stephenson | Hampshire Union       |
| J.Tongue         | Boro' of Hackney      |
| R.Watts          | St.James and Soho     |
| H.Weeks          | Hampshire Union       |
| R.Woods          | North London          |
| A.Woods          | Cobden                |
| W.Woodfield      | East London           |
| W.Wright         | Morley.               |

Representatives elected at Annual Meeting:

E.Blatchley  
Rev.E.Doyle

R.Edgcumbe  
T.Fishbourne  
A.Heward  
T.Hobson  
Canon Scott Holland  
M.Judge  
W.Minet  
T.Nash  
A.Preston  
Mrs. Paterson  
T.Pagliardini  
W.Sands  
A.Spencer  
R.Simpson  
S.Tayler  
Captain Verney  
F.Verney  
H.Van Laun  
D.Walker  
E.Wood  
W.Waller.

SOURCE: CIU, Annual Report, No.23, (1885).

TABLE C: Structure and Personnel of the Union, 1912.President:

J.J.Dent

Vice-President:

J.Argyle

Treasurer:

Sir H.Praed

Secretary:

B.T.Hall

Executive Committee:

| <u>Name:</u> | <u>District:</u>                | <u>Club:</u>                   |
|--------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| E.Garrity    | Metropolitan &<br>Home Counties | Central Fins-<br>bury Radical. |
| A.Holden     | Metropolitan &<br>Home Counties | Plumstead<br>Engineers         |
| J.Matthews   | Metropolitan &<br>Home Counties | Penge & Beck-<br>enham Liberal |
| J.Kayell     | Metropolitan &<br>Home Counties | Walthamstow<br>Liberal         |
| W.Pendrill   | Metropolitan &<br>Home Counties | Deerfields                     |
| J.Tozer      | Metropolitan &<br>Home Counties | St.John's<br>Wood              |
| H.Richards   | South-Western                   | Ferndale<br>Band               |
| F.Swinerton  | South-Western                   | Coventry                       |
| T.Jenks      | Southern                        | Swindon                        |
| J.Hill       | Eastern & East<br>Midlands      | Northampton<br>Trades          |
| J.Kobbs      | Eastern & East<br>Midlands      | Kettering Rif-<br>le Band.     |

|                |                          |                           |
|----------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| A. Bridge      | Lancashire &<br>Cheshire | Failsworth<br>Liberal     |
| J. Stevens     | Lancashire &<br>Cheshire | Mossley                   |
| J. Bagshaw     | Yorkshire                | Wath & West<br>Melton     |
| W. Finnigan    | Yorkshire                | Wakefield<br>Trades       |
| A. Gledhill    | Yorkshire                | Ravensthorp               |
| A. Wright      | Yorkshire                | Kingston Un<br>ity, Leeds |
| R. Richardson  | Northern                 | Ryhope                    |
| J. Thompson    | Northern                 | Darlington                |
| M. Weatherburn | Northern                 | Newcastle                 |

SOURCE: CIU, Annual Report, No. 50, 1912.

**APPENDIX B: Statistics and Tables relating  
to the Growth and Development of  
the Club Movement.**

TABLE A: CLUBS ESTABLISHED PRIOR TO THE CLUB AND INSTITUTE UNION.

| NAME OF CLUB:        | ESTABLISHED. |
|----------------------|--------------|
| South Shields        | 1850         |
| Soho                 | 1851         |
| Brierly Hill         | 1852         |
| Clare Market         | 1852         |
| Notting Hill         | 1853         |
| Iffley               | 1853         |
| Blandford            | 1854         |
| Dorchester           | 1854         |
| Charlton Marshall    | 1855         |
| Cheshunt             | 1856         |
| Derby                | 1856         |
| Brighton             | 1857         |
| Bassingbourne        | 1858         |
| Salford              | 1858         |
| Petworth             | 1859         |
| Staplehurst          | 1859         |
| Duck Lane            | 1860         |
| Kensington Potteries | 1861         |

SOURCE: "Working Men's Clubs," British Almanack and Companion, 1865, pp.88-89.



TABLE B : CLUBS AFFILIATED OR KNOWN TO THE CLUB AND  
INSTITUTE UNION, JUNE 1863.

(a) Clubs established by the CIU and affiliated.

Wandsworth W.M.C.  
 Kentish Town WMC & I.  
 Bradford WMI  
 West Bromwich WMC  
 Scarborough WMC  
 Wednesbury WMC  
 Soho WMC  
 Farringdon WMC  
 Chichester WMC & Reading Room  
 Halifax WMC  
 Alton Working Men's Hall.

(b) Clubs established prior to the CIU and now  
affiliated.

St. Matthias WMC  
 Dudley Mechanics' Institute  
 Ramsgate WMC  
 Southampton Working Men's Halls  
 Brighton WMC  
 West Cliff, Brighton, WMC  
 South Shields WMC  
 Hounslow WMC  
 Cheshunt WMI  
 Kingham Reading & Recreation Club  
 Sedgley Working Men's Hall.

## (c) Clubs in the process of formation.

Bethnal Green Working Men's Club

Pimlico WMC & I

Forest Hill WMC

Somers Town WMC

St.Pancras WMC & Reading Room

Holloway WMC & I

Birmingham WMC

Bristol WMC

Wolverhampton WMC

Lincoln WMC

Kingston WMC.

SOURCE: Solly Collection, Vol.XVI, Section  
13(b) Item 1.

TABLE C : First Balance Sheet of the CIU, 1863.

| <u>RECEIPTS</u>    |          | <u>PAYMENTS</u>                   |          |
|--------------------|----------|-----------------------------------|----------|
|                    | £. s. d. |                                   | £. s. d. |
| From subscriptions | 102 17 6 | By printing & stationary          | 72 8 8   |
| donations          | 613 19 6 | salaries                          | 193 6 0  |
| affiliation fees   | 7 19 6   | office furniture                  | 22 19 6  |
| expenses re-paid   | 3 13 7   | advertisements                    | 15 8 0   |
| publications sold  | 2 0 2    | postage and carriage              | 59 2 1   |
|                    |          | rent                              | 26 15 0  |
|                    |          | hire of rooms for public meetings | 4 4 0    |
|                    |          | Expenses of Hanover Square rooms  | 15 15 0  |
|                    |          | refreshments at conversazione     | 22 12 6  |
|                    |          | books and newspapers              | 4 5 4    |
|                    |          | travelling expenses               | 26 6 6   |
|                    |          | loan to Soho club                 | 7 0 0    |
|                    |          | bill posting                      | 1 0 0    |
|                    |          | coals, candles etc.               | 3 3 9    |
|                    |          | sundries                          | 12 7 2   |
|                    |          | balance in bank                   | 243 16 9 |
|                    | 730 10 3 |                                   | 730 10 3 |

Signed: Henry Solly, Secretary and Vincent Griffiths, Auditor.

Source: MSS. sheet, CIU headquarters.

TABLE D : Clubs in the Hyde Union, ca.1878.

|  |
|--|
| Albert Edward Working Men's Club, Denton, Lancashire |
| Back Lane Working Men's Club, Hyde                   |
| Gerrards Club, Hyde                                  |
| Gibraltar Reading Room, near Manchester              |
| Godley Working Men's Club                            |
| Kingston Working Men's Club                          |
| Mottram Road Working Men's Club, Hyde                |
| Newton Green Working Men's Club, Newton Moor         |
| Victoria Working Men's Club                          |
| Dukinfield Working Men's Club.                       |

SOURCE: Solly Collection, Vol.XVII, Section 6a. (n.d. but c.1878)

TABLE E : Clubs in the Shropshire Union, ca. 1878.

|  |
|--|
| Bridgnorth Literary Institute                  |
| Cwestry Institute                              |
| Cleobury Mortimer Working Men's Club           |
| Austice Memorial Working Men's Club            |
| Millington Working Men's Club                  |
| Shrewsbury Abbey Working Men's Club            |
| Shrewsbury British Working Men's Club          |
| Shrewsbury Frantwell Street Working Men's Club |
| Working Men's Reading Society, Wenlock.        |
| Wenlock Reading Society.                       |
| Frantwell Reading Room.                        |
| Whitchurch Working Men's Club                  |

SOURCE: Solly Collection Vol.XVII, Section 6(a), (n.d. but ca. 1878)

TABLE F : Clubs in the South East District Union, 1876.

St. Alphege Club, Southwark

Christchurch Club, Blackfriars

Lower Bermondsey and Rotherhithe Club

All Hallows Club

South London Institute

St. Mary's Club, Newington

Southwark Radical

SOURCE: Solly Collection, Vol. XV, Item 28.

TABLE G : Clubs in the Manchester Association, ca. 1878.

|   |
|---|
| Brickeroft Working Men's Club, Rochdale       |
| British Working Men's Club, Hulme             |
| Copley Mills Working Men's Club, Stalybridge  |
| Dewsbury Working Men's Club                   |
| Didsbury Working Men's Club                   |
| Dukinfield Central Working Men's Club         |
| Irlams Working Men's Club                     |
| Lady Barn Working Men's Club, near Manchester |
| Ordsal Hall, Salford                          |
| Pendleton Working Men's Club, Salford         |
| Reddish Institute and Library                 |
| Royton Institute and Social Club              |
| Rusholme Working Men's Club                   |
| Houldsworth Working Men's Club                |

Solly Collection, Vol. XVII, Section 6(a), (n.d. but ca. 1878)

TABLE H : Clubs in the Manchester Association, ca. 1878.

|   |
|---|
| Brickcroft Working Men's Club, Rochdale       |
| British Working Men's Club, Hulme             |
| Copley Mills Working Men's Club, Stalybridge  |
| Dewsbury Working Men's Club                   |
| Didsbury Working Men's Club                   |
| Dukinfield Central Working Men's Club         |
| Irlams Working Men's Club                     |
| Lady Barn Working Men's Club, near Manchester |
| Ordsal Hall, Salford                          |
| Pendleton Working Men's Club, Salford         |
| Reddish Institute and Library                 |
| Royton Institute and Social Club              |
| Rusholme Working Men's Club                   |
| Houldsworth Working Men's Club                |

Solly Collection, Vol. XVII, Section 6(a), (n.d. but ca. 1878)



TABLE J : The Federation of Working Men's Social Clubs, 1887.

| Club               | Address.                    |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|
| All Saints         | North Place, Mile End       |
| All Souls'         | Overbury Street, Clapton    |
| St. Andrews        | Mape Street, Bethnal Green  |
| Albany             | Philpot Street, Stepney     |
| St. Andrews        | Willesden                   |
| Amethyst Institute | Stoke Newington             |
| Braby & Co         | Ida Wharf, Deptford         |
| St. Bartholomew's  | Brady Street, Bethnal Green |
| Battersea Foundry  | Battersea, S.W.             |
| Christ Church      | Booth Street, Spitalfields  |
| Christ Church      | East India Dock Road        |
| Eton Mission       | Hackney Wick                |
| Gordon Institute   | Mansfield Road, N.W.        |
| South Hampstead    | Fleet Road                  |
| Harrow Mission     | Wood Street, Latimer Road   |
| St. Johns          | Peel Grove, Bethnal Green   |
| St. Lukes          | Old Street                  |
| St. Leonards       | Wellfield Road, Streatham   |
| St. Marys          | Caroline Street, Pimlico    |
| St. Marys          | Willesden                   |
| Oxford House       | Bethnal Green               |
| Ratcliff           | Narrow Street, Ratcliff     |
| Thames Iron Works  | Orchard Yard, Blackwall     |
| University Club    | Bethnal Green               |
| Wellington Mission | East Street, Walworth       |

SOURCE; Federation of Working Men's Social Clubs, Annual Report, No. 1, (1887).

TABLE K : The Committee to examine the reform of the Union, 1883.

| NAME      | CLUB OR POST                    |
|-----------|---------------------------------|
| Hatt      | Progressive Club                |
| Handover  | Cobden Club                     |
| Judge     | Member of Council               |
| Pape      | Commonwealth Club               |
| Pfoundes  | Vauxhall Bridge Club            |
| Davis     | United Radical                  |
| Callow    | Patriotic Club                  |
| Harris    | New Clifden Club                |
| Taylor    | Chairman of Council             |
| Nash      | Member of Council               |
| Solly     | Croydon Club                    |
| Cubbin    | Southwark Radical               |
| Morgan    | St. James & Soho                |
| Clayton   | Boro' of Hackney                |
| Blackford | Caledonian Club                 |
| Minet     | Bryanston Club                  |
| Owen      | British Working Men's Club      |
| Sands     | Honorary Secretary of the Union |
| Dent      | Secretary of the Union          |

SOURCE: CIJ, 16 November 1883.

TABLE I:

Distribution of affiliated clubs, 1873, 1880, and 1893.

|                 | 1874 <sup>(a)</sup> | 1880 <sup>(b)</sup> | 1893 <sup>(c)</sup> |
|-----------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| BEDFORDSHIRE    | 6                   | 6                   | 2                   |
| BERKSHIRE       | 2                   | 13                  | 2                   |
| BUCKINGHAMSHIRE | 3                   | 7                   | 1                   |
| CAMBRIDGESHIRE  | 6                   | 11                  | 1                   |
| CHESHIRE        | 6                   | 18                  | 10                  |
| CORNWALL        | 10                  | 13                  | 2                   |
| CUMBERLAND      | -                   | 2                   | -                   |
| DERBYSHIRE      | 4                   | 6                   | 4                   |
| DEVONSHIRE      | 7                   | 11                  | 3                   |
| DORSETSHIRE     | 6                   | 8                   | -                   |
| DURHAM          | 1                   | 1                   | -                   |
| ESSEX           | 11                  | 12                  | 4                   |
| GLOUCESTERSHIRE | 2                   | 5                   | 2                   |
| HAMPSHIRE       | 20                  | 15                  | 2                   |
| HEREFORDSHIRE   | -                   | 1                   | -                   |
| HERTFORDSHIRE   | 5                   | 15                  | 5                   |
| HUNTINGDONSHIRE | 1                   | 1                   | 2                   |
| KENT            | 12                  | 22                  | 16                  |
| LANCASHIRE      | 6                   | 30                  | 74                  |
| LEICESTERSHIRE  | 3                   | 4                   | 9                   |
| LINCOLNSHIRE    | 1                   | 5                   | 3                   |
| LONDON          | 37                  | 84                  | 177                 |
| MIDDLESEX       | -                   | 4                   | 1                   |
| MONMOUTHSHIRE   | -                   | 3                   | -                   |
| NORFOLK         | 2                   | 5                   | 1                   |

|                  | 1874 | 1880 | 1893 |
|------------------|------|------|------|
| NORTHAMPTONSHIRE | 3    | 8    | 9    |
| NORTHUMBERLAND   | 1    | 3    | -    |
| NOTTINGHAMSHIRE  | 2    | 5    | 3    |
| OXFORDSHIRE      | 2    | 6    | 2    |
| RUTLAND          | -    | -    | -    |
| SHROPSHIRE       | 4    | 5    | -    |
| SOMERSET         | 4    | 7    | 3    |
| STAFFORDSHIRE    | 6    | 9    | 1    |
| SUFFOLK          | 2    | 6    | 3    |
| SURREY           | 27   | 12   | 13   |
| SUSSEX           | 4    | 13   | 6    |
| WARWICKSHIRE     | 4    | 7    | 2    |
| WESTMORELAND     | -    | 1    | 2    |
| WILTSHIRE        | -    | 3    | 1    |
| WORCESTERSHIRE   | 5    | 20   | -    |
| YORKSHIRE        | 12   | 21   | 30   |
| TOTAL            | 227  | 428  | 396  |

SOURCES:

- (a) Labour News Almanack, 1874.
- (b) Solly Collection, Vol.XVII, Item 5e.
- (c) Solly Collection, Vol.XVII, Item 5g.

**TABLE M :** Number, Type and Membership of Working Men's Clubs affiliated to the CIU, 1904 and 1912, given by district.

| DISTRICT               | 1904         |        |              |        |              |        | 1912         |        |              |        |              |        |
|------------------------|--------------|--------|--------------|--------|--------------|--------|--------------|--------|--------------|--------|--------------|--------|
|                        | Polit.       |        | Social       |        | Total        |        | Polit.       |        | Social       |        | Total        |        |
|                        | No. of Clubs | M'ship | No. of Clubs | M'ship | No. of Clubs | M'ship | No. of Clubs | M'ship | No. of Clubs | M'ship | No. of Clubs | M'ship |
| Metropolis             | 68           | 23489  | 85           | 29433  | 153          | 52922  | 70           | 22704  | 109          | 34271  | 179          | 56975  |
| Home Counties          | 11           | 1850   | 62           | 14487  | 73           | 16337  | 16           | 2558   | 74           | 15888  | 90           | 18446  |
| Southern Counties      | 28           | 9679   | 58           | 14190  | 86           | 23869  | 40           | 10117  | 55           | 12715  | 95           | 22832  |
| South-western counties | 7            | 1564   | 14           | 1841   | 21           | 3405   | 6            | 1627   | 13           | 1704   | 19           | 3331   |
| Eastern counties       | 8            | 3279   | 4            | 1626   | 12           | 4905   | 10           | 4765   | 10           | 4283   | 20           | 9048   |
| East Midlands          | 11           | 2260   | 73           | 19727  | 84           | 21987  | 17           | 3436   | 82           | 23054  | 99           | 26490  |
| West Midlands          | 11           | 2540   | 44           | 9571   | 55           | 12111  | 12           | 2750   | 85           | 19936  | 97           | 22686  |
| Lancashire & Cheshire  | 29           | 4030   | 140          | 32761  | 169          | 36791  | 40           | 5828   | 192          | 43489  | 232          | 49317  |
| Yorkshire              | 12           | 1766   | 210          | 61393  | 222          | 63159  | 29           | 6642   | 371          | 131402 | 400          | 138044 |
| Northern Counties      | 2            | 619    | 81           | 32555  | 83           | 33174  | 3            | 690    | 219          | 98830  | 222          | 99520  |
| Welsh Counties         | 9            | 3042   | 11           | 2284   | 20           | 5326   | 19           | 5617   | 39           | 10484  | 58           | 16101  |
| TOTALS:                | 196          | 54118  | 782          | 219868 | 978          | 273986 | 262          | 66734  | 1249         | 396056 | 1511         | 462790 |

SOURCES: CIU, Annual Report, No.42, (1904), Table II  
 CIU, Annual Report, No.50, (1912), Table II.

TABLE N:

TOTAL NUMBER OF CLUBS AFFILIATED TO THE CIU, 1895, 1899 & 1909.

| DISTRICT.             | 1895 | 1899 | 1909  |
|-----------------------|------|------|-------|
| Metropolis            | 152  | 150  | 159   |
| Home Counties         | 51   | 60   | 89    |
| Southern Counties     | 37   | 74   | 74    |
| South-west.           | 15   | 17   | 18    |
| Eastern counties      | 13   | 15   | 14    |
| East Midlands         | 40   | 76   | 112   |
| West Midlands         | 17   | 31   | 34    |
| Lancashire & Cheshire | 81   | 121  | 211   |
| Northern Counties     | -    | 4    | 171   |
| Yorkshire             | 51   | 96   | 341   |
| Total                 | 457  | 644  | 1273. |

SOURCE: CIU, Annual Report, No. 48, (1910)

TABLE O : METROPOLITAN WORKING MEN'S CLUBS, 1898.  
SHOWN BY POLICE DIVISION.

| DIVISION. | TOTAL<br>NO. | TOTAL<br>M'SHIP | DRINK<br>SELL. | M'SHIP | TEST. | M'SHIP. |
|-----------|--------------|-----------------|----------------|--------|-------|---------|
| A         | 2            | 550             | 2              | 550    | -     | -       |
| B         | 6            | 1920            | 6              | 1920   | -     | -       |
| C         | 25           | 4743            | 25             | 4743   | -     | -       |
| D         | 21           | 4430            | 19             | 4205   | 2     | 225     |
| E         | 5            | 1427            | 2              | 1427   | -     | -       |
| F         | 2            | 630             | 2              | 630    | -     | -       |
| G         | 28           | 5403            | 28             | 5403   | -     | -       |
| H         | 27           | 7489            | 22             | 6453   | 5     | 1006    |
| J         | 27           | 8533            | 26             | 8273   | 1     | 260     |
| K         | 30           | 5660            | 25             | 4870   | 5     | 790     |
| L         | 16           | 3957            | 15             | 3457   | 1     | 100     |
| M         | 14           | 4350            | 9              | 3900   | 5     | 450     |
| N         | 27           | 6572            | 24             | 5805   | 3     | 767     |
| P         | 24           | 4849            | 24             | 4849   | -     | -       |
| R         | 39           | 23990           | 35             | 23069  | 4     | 321     |
| S         | 20           | 3000            | 20             | 3000   | -     | -       |
| T         | 30           | 5086            | 30             | 5086   | -     | -       |
| V         | 34           | 4814            | 32             | 4558   | 2     | 256     |
| W         | 27           | 4719            | 27             | 4719   | -     | -       |
| X         | 30           | 4824            | 30             | 4824   | -     | -       |
| Y         | 17           | 2608            | 17             | 2608   | -     | -       |
| CITY      | 9            | 1450            | 9              | 1450   | -     | -       |
| TOTAL:    | 460          | 110404          | 432            | 106229 | 28    | 4175    |

SOURCE: Calculated from returns given in R.C. on Liquor Licensing  
Laws, Appendix: "Return of Clubs."  
P.P. 1898 XXXVI

KEY TO POLICE DISTRICTS:

|                   |                |
|-------------------|----------------|
| A: Whitehall      | M: Southwark   |
| B: Chelsea        | N: Islington   |
| C: St. James      | P: Camberwell  |
| D: St. Marylebone | Q: Finsbury    |
| E: Holborn        | R: Hampstead   |
| F: Paddington     | T: Hammersmith |
| G: Finsbury       | V: Wandsworth  |
| H: Whitechapel    | W: Clapham     |
| J: Bethnal Green  | X: Kilburn     |
| K: Bow            | Y: Highgate.   |
| L: Lambeth        |                |

TABLE P : TOTAL NUMBER, MEMBERSHIP AND TYPES OF WORKING MEN'S CLUBS IN SELECTED ENGLISH CITIES, 1898.

| CITY          | TOTAL NO. | M'SHIP | DRINK-SELLING | M'SHIP | TEST. | M'SHIP |
|---------------|-----------|--------|---------------|--------|-------|--------|
| Accrington    | 5         | 998    | 5             | 998    | -     | -      |
| Bacup         | 11        | 2400   | 9             | 1910   | 2     | 490    |
| Barrow        | 5         | 1682   | 5             | 1682   | -     | -      |
| Birkenhead    | 8         | 2244   | 7             | 1988   | 1     | 256    |
| Birmingham    | 13        | 7334   | 13            | 7334   | -     | -      |
| Blackburn     | 17        | 3585   | 17            | 3585   | -     | -      |
| Blackpool     | 2         | 600    | 1             | 400    | 1     | 200    |
| Bolton        | 29        | 4761   | 19            | 3856   | 10    | 905    |
| Bradford      | 69        | 21500  | 69            | 21500  | -     | -      |
| Bristol       | 5         | 1800   | 1             | 1800   | -     | -      |
| Burnley       | 28        | 6935   | 20            | 5685   | 8     | 1250   |
| Cambridge     | 9         | 2937   | 8             | 2737   | 1     | 200    |
| Clitheroe     | 2         | 340    | -             | -      | 2     | 340    |
| Coventry      | 3         | 3180   | 3             | 3180   | -     | -      |
| Derby         | 4         | 617    | 4             | 617    | -     | -      |
| Doncaster     | 3         | 676    | 3             | 676    | -     | -      |
| Halkeston     | 2         | 276    | 2             | 276    | -     | -      |
| Gateshead     | 1         | 70     | 1             | 70     | -     | -      |
| Glossop       | 13        | 1912   | 13            | 1912   | -     | -      |
| Grimsby       | 6         | 2190   | 6             | 2190   | -     | -      |
| Halifax       | 40        | 5089   | 24            | 3574   | 16    | 1515   |
| Huddersfield  | 54        | 11737  | 34            | 9852   | 20    | 1885   |
| Ipswich       | 7         | 3260   | 7             | 3260   | -     | -      |
| Kidderminster | 3         | 376    | 2             | 286    | 1     | 90     |
| Lancaster     | 5         | 739    | 5             | 739    | -     | -      |
| Leamington    | 2         | 950    | 2             | 950    | -     | -      |
| Leeds         | 52        | 11462  | 42            | 10178  | 10    | 1284   |
| Leicester     | 20        | 7166   | 20            | 7166   | -     | -      |
| Lincoln       | 2         | 1700   | 2             | 1700   | -     | -      |
| Liverpool     | 49        | 8296   | 27            | 6234   | 22    | 2062   |
| Manchester    | 74        | 11497  | 60            | 9618   | 14    | 1883   |
| Mid.lesboro'  | 6         | 1038   | 6             | 1038   | -     | -      |
| Newcastle     | 7         | 1604   | 7             | 1604   | -     | -      |
| Northampton   | 9         | 4054   | 9             | 4054   | -     | -      |
| Nottingham    | 13        | 4010   | 10            | 3680   | 3     | 330    |
| Oldham        | 62        | 13088  | 62            | 13088  | -     | -      |
| Portsmouth    | 14        | 5614   | 14            | 5614   | -     | -      |
| Preston       | 5         | 2365   | 5             | 2365   | -     | -      |
| Rochdale      | 20        | 4061   | 13            | 2843   | 7     | 1218   |
| Salford       | 21        | 2719   | 21            | 2719   | -     | -      |
| Scarboro'     | 1         | 2000   | -             | -      | 1     | 2000   |
| Sheffield     | 28        | 4753   | 28            | 4753   | -     | -      |
| Stalybridge   | 21        | 4568   | 21            | 4568   | -     | -      |
| Stockport     | 30        | 3512   | 30            | 3512   | -     | -      |
| Tynemouth     | 3         | 1050   | 1             | 600    | 2     | 450    |
| Walsall       | 2         | 1030   | 2             | 1030   | -     | -      |
| Wigan         | 1         | 130    | 1             | 130    | -     | -      |
| Wolverhampton | 11        | 4590   | 11            | 4590   | -     | -      |
| Worcester     | 1         | 250    | 1             | 250    | -     | -      |
| York          | 4         | 517    | 4             | 517    | -     | -      |
| TOTAL:        | 789       | 188884 | 668           | 172526 | 121   | 16358  |

SOURCE: Calculated from figures given in E.C. on Liquor Licensing Laws, Appendix, "Return of Clubs," P.P. 1898 XXVI



TABLE P : MEMBERSHIP OF REGISTERED WORKING MEN'S CLUBS,  
1880, 1892, 1900, and 1911.

|                 | 1880 <sup>(1)</sup> | 1892 <sup>(2)</sup> | 1900 <sup>(3)</sup> | 1911 |
|-----------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|------|
| BEDFORDSHIRE    | -                   | 84                  | 218                 | 12   |
| BERKSHIRE       | -                   | 90                  | 277                 | 12   |
| BUCKINGHAMSHIRE | -                   | -                   | 1746                | 40   |
| CAMBRIDGESHIRE  | 1247                | 54                  | 1507                | 65   |
| CHESHIRE        | 180                 | 81                  | 2441                | 47   |
| CORNWALL        | -                   | 106                 | 478                 | 7    |
| CUMBERLAND      | 232                 | -                   | -                   | 4    |
| DERBYSHIRE      | -                   | 198                 | 358                 | 56   |
| DEVONSHIRE      | -                   | -                   | 128                 | 8    |
| DORSETSHIRE     | -                   | -                   | 303                 | 5    |
| DURHAM          | -                   | 494                 | 3982                | 672  |
| ESSEX           | 113                 | 347                 | 3911                | 101  |
| GLOUCESTERSHIRE | 32                  | 198                 | 1257                | 13   |
| HAMPSHIRE       | 312                 | 208                 | 2885                | 63   |
| HEREFORDSHIRE   | -                   | -                   | -                   | -    |
| HERTFORDSHIRE   | -                   | 314                 | 962                 | 13   |
| HUNTINGDONSHIRE | -                   | 53                  | -                   | 1    |
| KENT            | 1354                | 4310                | 9446                | 134  |
| LANCASHIRE      | 2603                | 5624                | 19826               | 333  |
| LEICESTERSHIRE  | -                   | 1234                | 5915                | 100  |
| LINCOLNSHIRE    | 112                 | 611                 | 2037                | 50   |
| LONDON          | -                   | -                   | 33191               | 362  |
| MIDDLESEX       | 942                 | 11281               | 3521                | 88   |
| MONMOUTHSHIRE   | -                   | -                   | 3861                | 106  |
| NORFOLK         | -                   | -                   | 300                 | 7    |

|                  |             |              |               |              |
|------------------|-------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|
|                  | 714         |              |               |              |
| NORTHAMPTONSHIRE | -           | 1034         | 14536         | 1546         |
| NORTHUMBERLAND   | 585         | 460          | 1996          | 2640         |
| NOTTINGHAMSHIRE  | -           | 45           | 1324          | 329          |
| OXFORDSHIRE      | -           | -            | -             | 46           |
| RUTLAND          | -           | -            | 115           |              |
| SHROPSHIRE       | -           | 105          | 1149          | 127          |
| SOMERSET         | -           | 70           | 798           | 228          |
| STAFFORDSHIRE    | -           | -            | 8665          | 1085         |
| SUFFOLK          | -           | 464          | 484           | 158          |
| SURREY           | 147         | 6895         | 3524          | 488          |
| SUSSEX           | -           | -            | 350           | 114          |
| WARWICKSHIRE     | 166         | 3380         | 4487          | 938          |
| WESTMORELAND     | -           | -            | -             |              |
| WILTSHIRE        | -           | 2108         | 15229         | 1405         |
| WORCESTERSHIRE   | 371         | 321          | 852           | 251          |
| YORKSHIRE        | 1014        | 13096        | 37362         | 11416        |
| <b>TOTALS:</b>   | <b>9410</b> | <b>53265</b> | <b>189421</b> | <b>43871</b> |

SOURCES: Annual Reports, Chief Registrar of Friendly Societies,

(1) P.P. 1883 lxxviii

(2) P.P. 1893-94 lxxxvi

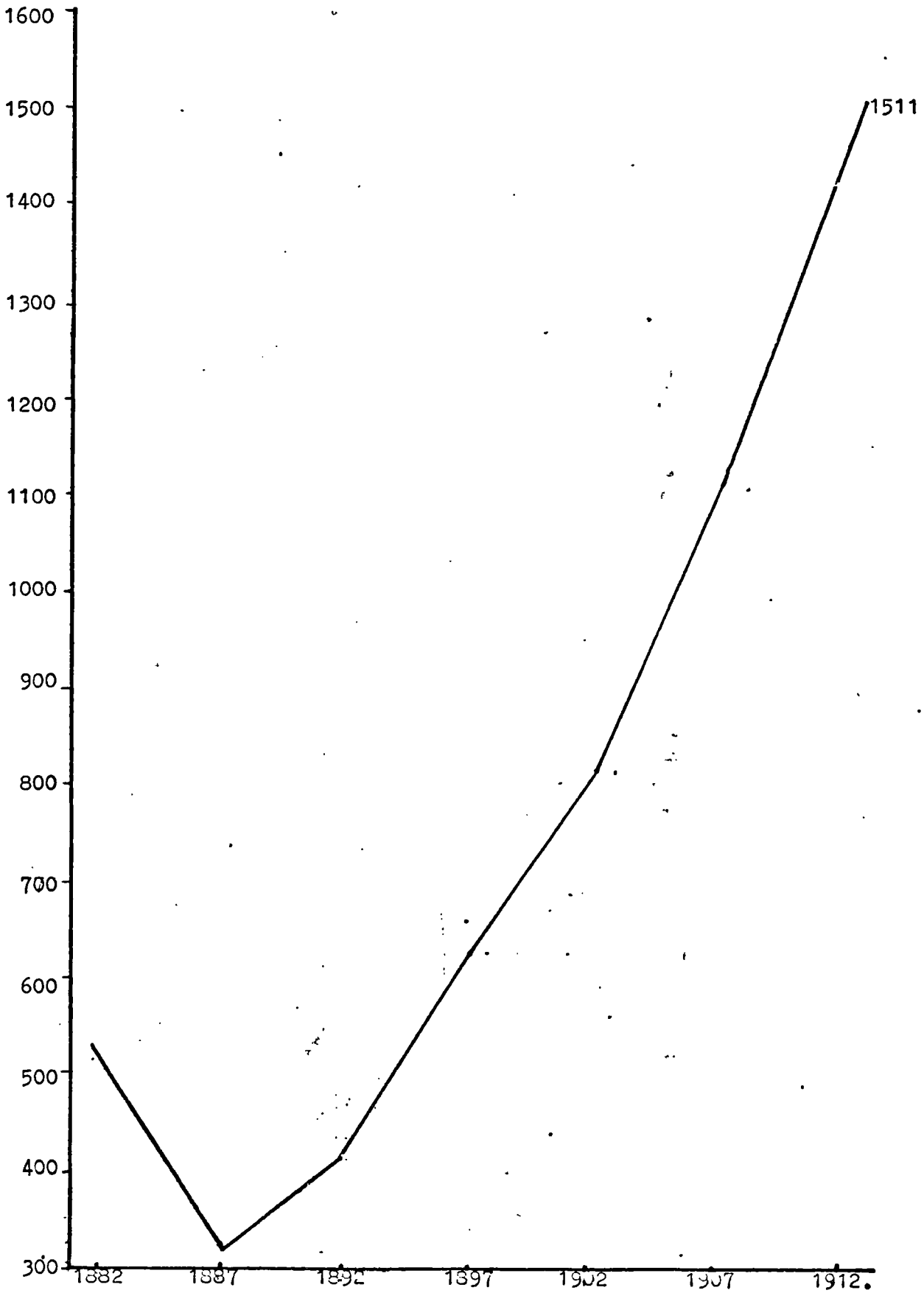
(3) P.P. 1901 lxxii

(4) P.P. 1912-13 lxxxix

Columns 3 & 4 combine membership of clubs registered under the Friendly Societies Act with those registered under the Industrial and Provident Societies Act.

GRAPH 1: Number of Clubs in England and Wales affiliated to the Club and Institute Union, 1882-1912.

Source: CIU, Annual Report, No. 50, (1912), p.50.



GRAPH 2: THE DATE OF ESTABLISHMENT OF CLUBS MAKING RETURNS IN 1899

SOURCE: Annual Returns of the Registrar General of Friendly Societies, 1899.  
 P.P. 1900  
 Taken from information given in Appendix (K).

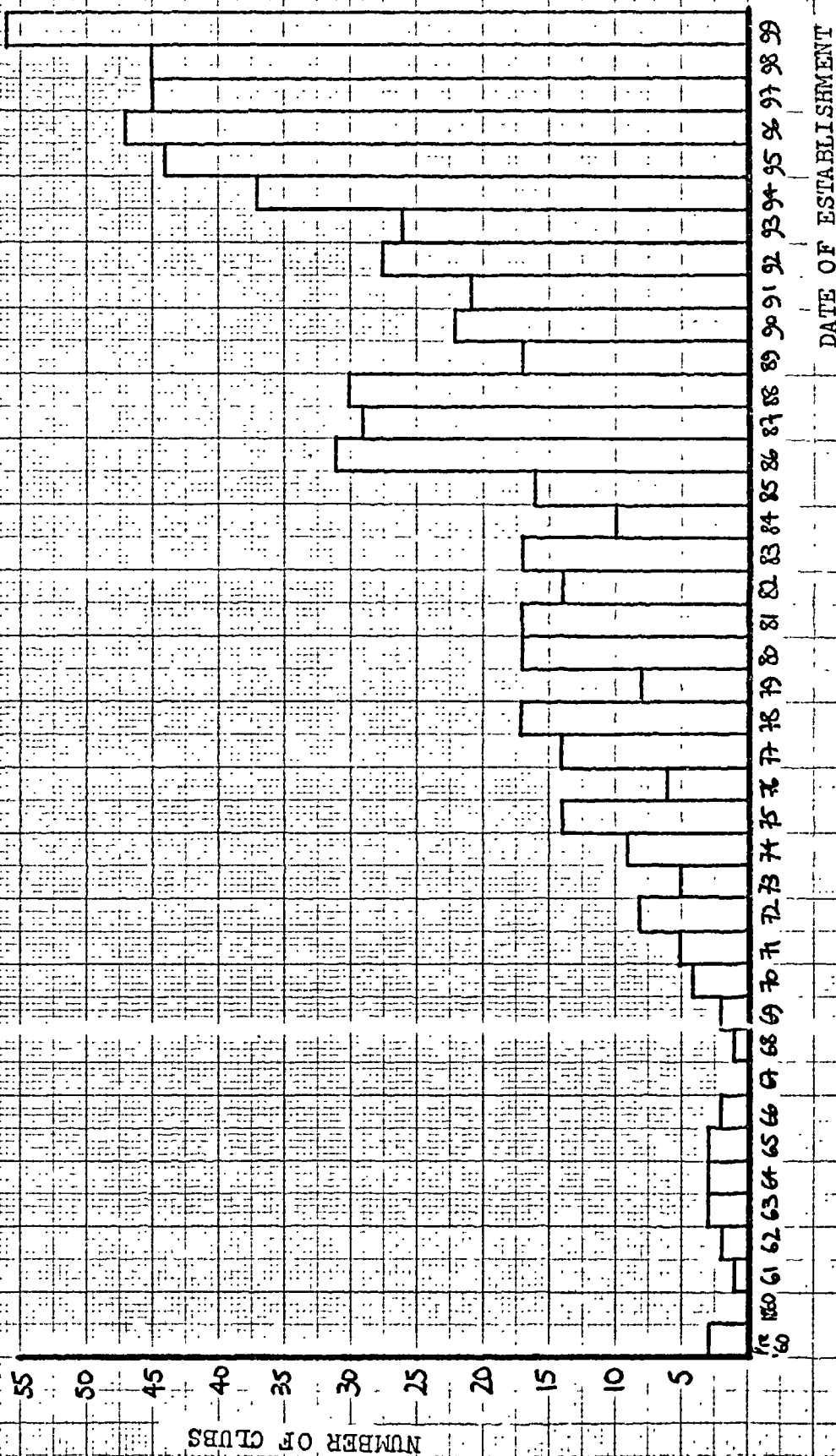


TABLE Q : METROPOLITAN WORKING MEN'S CLUBS, 1898.  
SHOWN BY POLICE DIVISION.

| DIVISION. | TOTAL<br>NO. | TOTAL<br>M <sup>s</sup> SHP | DRINK<br>SELL. | M <sup>s</sup> SHP | TEET. | M <sup>s</sup> SHIP. |
|-----------|--------------|-----------------------------|----------------|--------------------|-------|----------------------|
| A         | 2            | 550                         | 2              | 550                | -     | -                    |
| B         | 6            | 1920                        | 6              | 1920               | -     | -                    |
| C         | 25           | 4743                        | 25             | 4743               | -     | -                    |
| D         | 21           | 4430                        | 19             | 4205               | 2     | 225                  |
| E         | 5            | 1427                        | 2              | 1427               | -     | -                    |
| F         | 2            | 630                         | 2              | 630                | -     | -                    |
| G         | 28           | 5403                        | 28             | 5403               | -     | -                    |
| H         | 27           | 7489                        | 22             | 6483               | 5     | 1006                 |
| J         | 27           | 8533                        | 26             | 8273               | 1     | 260                  |
| K         | 30           | 5660                        | 25             | 4870               | 5     | 790                  |
| L         | 16           | 3957                        | 15             | 3857               | 1     | 100                  |
| M         | 14           | 4350                        | 9              | 3900               | 5     | 450                  |
| N         | 27           | 6572                        | 24             | 5805               | 3     | 767                  |
| P         | 24           | 4849                        | 24             | 4849               | -     | -                    |
| R         | 39           | 23390                       | 35             | 23069              | 4     | 321                  |
| S         | 20           | 3000                        | 20             | 3000               | -     | -                    |
| T         | 30           | 5086                        | 30             | 5086               | -     | -                    |
| V         | 34           | 4814                        | 32             | 4558               | 2     | 256                  |
| W         | 27           | 4719                        | 27             | 4719               | -     | -                    |
| X         | 30           | 4824                        | 30             | 4824               | -     | -                    |
| Y         | 17           | 2608                        | 17             | 2608               | -     | -                    |
| CITY      | 9            | 1450                        | 9              | 1450               | -     | -                    |
| TOTAL:    | 460          | 110404                      | 432            | 106229             | 28    | 4175                 |

SOURCE: Calculated from returns given in R.C. on Liquor License  
Laws, appendix: "Return of Clubs."  
P.P. 1898 XXXVI

KEY TO POLICE DISTRICTS:

|                   |                |
|-------------------|----------------|
| A: Whitehall      | H: Southwark   |
| B: Chelsea        | I: Islington   |
| C: St. James      | P: Camberwell  |
| D: St. Marylebone | G: Greenwich   |
| E: Holborn        | S: Hampstead   |
| F: Paddington     | T: Hammersmith |
| G: Finsbury       | V: Wandsworth  |
| H: Whitechapel    | W: Clapham     |
| J: Bethnal Green  | X: Kilburn     |
| K: Bow            | Y: Highgate.   |
| L: Lambeth        |                |

TABLE R : TOTAL NUMBER, MEMBERSHIP AND TYPE OF WORKING MEN'S CLUBS IN SELECTED ENGLISH CITIES, 1898.

| CITY          | TOTAL<br>NO. | M' SHIP | DRINK-<br>SELLING | M' SHIP | TEET. | M' SHIP |
|---------------|--------------|---------|-------------------|---------|-------|---------|
| Accrington    | 5            | 998     | 5                 | 998     | -     | -       |
| Bacup         | 11           | 2400    | 9                 | 1910    | 2     | 490     |
| Barrow        | 5            | 1682    | 5                 | 1682    | -     | -       |
| Birkenhead    | 8            | 2244    | 7                 | 1988    | 1     | 256     |
| Birmingham    | 13           | 7334    | 13                | 7334    | -     | -       |
| Blackburn     | 17           | 3585    | 17                | 3585    | -     | -       |
| Blackpool     | 2            | 600     | 1                 | 400     | 1     | 200     |
| Bolton        | 29           | 4761    | 19                | 3856    | 10    | 905     |
| Bradford      | 69           | 21500   | 69                | 21500   | -     | -       |
| Bristol       | 5            | 1800    | 1                 | 1800    | -     | -       |
| Burnley       | 28           | 6935    | 20                | 5685    | 8     | 1250    |
| Cambridge     | 9            | 2937    | 8                 | 2737    | 1     | 200     |
| Clitheroe     | 2            | 340     | -                 | -       | 2     | 340     |
| Coventry      | 3            | 3180    | 3                 | 3180    | -     | -       |
| Derby         | 4            | 617     | 4                 | 617     | -     | -       |
| Doncaster     | 3            | 676     | 3                 | 676     | -     | -       |
| rolkestone    | 2            | 276     | 2                 | 276     | -     | -       |
| Gateshead     | 1            | 70      | 1                 | 70      | -     | -       |
| Glossop       | 13           | 1912    | 13                | 1912    | -     | -       |
| Grimsby       | 6            | 2190    | 6                 | 2910    | -     | -       |
| halifax       | 40           | 5089    | 24                | 3574    | 16    | 1515    |
| Huddersfield  | 54           | 11737   | 34                | 9852    | 20    | 1885    |
| ipswich       | 7            | 3260    | 7                 | 3260    | -     | -       |
| Kidderminster | 3            | 376     | 2                 | 286     | 1     | 90      |
| Lancaster     | 5            | 739     | 5                 | 739     | -     | -       |
| Leamington    | 2            | 950     | 2                 | 950     | -     | -       |
| Leeds         | 52           | 11462   | 42                | 10178   | 10    | 1284    |
| Leicester     | 20           | 7166    | 20                | 7166    | -     | -       |
| Lincoln       | 2            | 1700    | 2                 | 1700    | -     | -       |
| Liverpool     | 49           | 8296    | 27                | 6234    | 22    | 2062    |
| Manchester    | 74           | 11497   | 60                | 9618    | 14    | 1883    |
| Middlesboro'  | 6            | 1038    | 6                 | 1038    | -     | -       |
| Newcastle     | 7            | 1604    | 7                 | 1604    | -     | -       |
| Northampton   | 9            | 4054    | 9                 | 4054    | -     | -       |
| Nottingham    | 13           | 4010    | 10                | 3680    | 3     | 330     |
| Oldham        | 62           | 13088   | 62                | 13088   | -     | -       |
| Portsmouth    | 14           | 5614    | 14                | 5614    | -     | -       |
| Preston       | 5            | 2365    | 5                 | 2365    | -     | -       |
| Rochdale      | 20           | 4061    | 13                | 2843    | 7     | 1218    |
| Salford       | 21           | 2719    | 21                | 2719    | -     | -       |
| Scarboro'     | 1            | 2000    | -                 | -       | 1     | 2000    |
| Sheffield     | 28           | 4753    | 28                | 4753    | -     | -       |
| stalybridge   | 21           | 4568    | 21                | 4568    | -     | -       |
| Stockport     | 30           | 3512    | 30                | 3512    | -     | -       |
| Tynemouth     | 3            | 1050    | 1                 | 600     | 2     | 450     |
| Walsall       | 2            | 1030    | 2                 | 1030    | -     | -       |
| wigan         | 1            | 130     | 1                 | 130     | -     | -       |
| Wolverhampton | 11           | 4598    | 11                | 4598    | -     | -       |
| Worcester     | 1            | 250     | 1                 | 250     | -     | -       |
| York          | 4            | 517     | 4                 | 517     | -     | -       |
| TOTAL:        | 789          | 188884  | 668               | 172526  | 121   | 16358   |

SOURCE: Calculated from figures given in R.C. on Liquor Licensing Laws, Appendix, "Return of Clubs," P.P. 1898 XXXVI

TABLE 5 : TOTAL NUMBER OF CLUBS REGISTERED UNDER THE INDUSTRIAL AND PROVIDENT SOCIETIES ACT, 1893: 1897-1906.

| COUNTY      | NUMBER OF CLUBS REGISTERED. |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
|-------------|-----------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
|             | 1897                        | 1898 | 1899 | 1900 | 1901 | 1902 | 1903 | 1904 | 1905 | 1906 |
| BUCKS       | 1                           | 1    | 1    | 1    | 1    | 1    | 1    | 1    | 1    | 1    |
| DURIAM      | -                           | 1    | 4    | 9    | 18   | 33   | 41   | 62   | 71   | 79   |
| ESSEX       | -                           | -    | -    | -    | -    | -    | -    | 1    | 1    | 3    |
| HANTS       | 1                           | 2    | 2    | 2    | 2    | 2    | 2    | 2    | 2    | 2    |
| HERTS       | 1                           | 1    | 3    | 3    | 3    | 3    | 3    | 3    | 3    | 1    |
| KENT        | 2                           | 2    | 2    | 2    | 2    | 3    | 3    | 4    | 3    | 4    |
| LANCS       | -                           | -    | -    | -    | -    | -    | 1    | 1    | 1    | 2    |
| LEICS       | 1                           | 1    | 1    | 1    | -    | -    | -    | -    | -    | 3    |
| LINCS       | 1                           | 1    | 2    | 2    | 1    | 1    | 1    | 1    | 1    | 2    |
| LONDON      | 15                          | 15   | 15   | 14   | 13   | 16   | 17   | 15   | 13   | 14   |
| MIDDX       | 4                           | 4    | 6    | 6    | 5    | 5    | 5    | 7    | 10   | 8    |
| MON         | -                           | -    | -    | -    | -    | 1    | 1    | 1    | 1    | 1    |
| NRFLK       | -                           | -    | -    | -    | -    | -    | -    | 1    | 1    | 1    |
| NORTH-HANTS | 8                           | 8    | 9    | 10   | 9    | 11   | 11   | 11   | 11   | 11   |
| NORTH-UMB   | -                           | -    | -    | -    | -    | -    | 2    | 10   | 12   | 21   |
| NOTTS       | 1                           | 1    | 1    | 1    | -    | -    | 1    | 1    | 2    | 2    |
| STAFFS      | 3                           | 3    | 4    | 4    | 3    | 5    | 9    | 8    | 8    | 8    |
| SUFLK       | 1                           | 2    | 2    | 2    | 2    | 2    | 1    | 1    | 1    | 1    |
| SURREY      | 4                           | 3    | 3    | 3    | 3    | 3    | 3    | 3    | 3    | 3    |
| WARWKS      | -                           | -    | -    | -    | -    | -    | 3    | 3    | 3    | 2    |
| YORKS.      | 8                           | 9    | 9    | 9    | 9    | 11   | 12   | 11   | 16   | 16   |
| TOTAL:      | 51                          | 54   | 64   | 69   | 71   | 86   | 117  | 147  | 164  | 185  |

SOURCE: Annual Reports of the Registrar General of Friendly Societies, 1897-1906.  
Calculated from information given in Appendix Table K.

TABLE T: MEMBERSHIP OF CLUBS REGISTERED UNDER THE INDUSTRIAL AND PROVIDENT SOCIETIES ACT, 1893

| COUNTY      | TOTAL MEMBERSHIP. |      |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |      |      |
|-------------|-------------------|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------|------|
|             | 1895              | 1896 | 1897  | 1898  | 1899  | 1900  | 1901  | 1902  | 1903  | 1904  | 1905  | 1906  | 1907 | 1908 |
| BUCKS       | 108               | 124  | 110   | 88    | 79    | 113   | 94    | 110   | 114   | 120   | 148   | 155   |      |      |
| DURHAM      | -                 | -    | -     | 402   | 1340  | 3172  | 7154  | 10642 | 15238 | 22893 | 25188 | 29980 |      |      |
| ESSEX       | -                 | -    | -     | -     | -     | -     | -     | -     | -     | -     | 638   | 1033  |      |      |
| HANTS       | 437               | 470  | 441   | 461   | 608   | 556   | 469   | 555   | 400   | 419   | 415   | 397   |      |      |
| HERTS       | 200               | 112  | 100   | 100   | 210   | 224   | 246   | 181   | 182   | 147   | 128   | 68    |      |      |
| KENT        | 704               | 823  | 229   | 350   | 390   | 405   | 439   | 591   | 683   | 1061  | 661   | 801   |      |      |
| LANCS       | -                 | -    | -     | -     | -     | -     | -     | -     | 151   | 160   | 187   | 323   |      |      |
| LEICS       | -                 | 118  | 141   | 153   | 189   | -     | -     | -     | -     | -     | -     | 796   |      |      |
| LINCS       | -                 | -    | 57    | 63    | 47    | 210   | 124   | 149   | 139   | 179   | 179   | 290   |      |      |
| LONDON      | -                 | -    | 4655  | 5200  | 5236  | 5538  | 5744  | 6641  | 7524  | 7182  | 6173  | 6469  |      |      |
| MIDDX       | 2192              | 2256 | 538   | 810   | 968   | 968   | 1379  | 1402  | 1661  | 1720  | 1720  | 1678  |      |      |
| NOY         | -                 | -    | -     | -     | -     | -     | -     | 93    | 90    | 120   | 121   | 118   |      |      |
| NORFOLK     | -                 | -    | -     | -     | -     | -     | -     | -     | -     | 261   | 217   | 201   |      |      |
| NORTH-HANTS | 808               | 1105 | 1527  | 1642  | 1692  | 2070  | 2091  | 2427  | 2387  | 2264  | 2344  | 2262  |      |      |
| NORTH-UPS   | -                 | -    | -     | -     | -     | -     | -     | -     | 270   | 3530  | 4388  | 8219  |      |      |
| NOTTS       | -                 | 93   | 167   | 123   | 186   | 200   | -     | -     | -     | 69    | 399   | 1772  |      |      |
| STAFFS      | 865               | 1171 | 1193  | 1193  | 1116  | 1452  | 1319  | 1793  | 2618  | 2140  | 2164  | 2058  |      |      |
| SUFFK       | 101               | 95   | 69    | 63    | 171   | 160   | 110   | 80    | 80    | -     | 120   | 193   |      |      |
| SURFV       | 1040              | 1035 | 502   | 533   | 364   | 430   | 423   | 343   | 413   | 413   | 439   | 489   |      |      |
| WARWKS      | -                 | -    | -     | -     | -     | -     | -     | -     | 261   | 260   | 343   | 307   |      |      |
| YORKS       | 349               | 476  | 1222  | 1502  | 1522  | 2352  | 2093  | 2303  | 2210  | 2080  | 2964  | 3421  |      |      |
| TOTAL:      | 6805              | 7833 | 10819 | 12696 | 14118 | 17850 | 21682 | 27245 | 34421 | 45018 | 49235 | 61060 |      |      |

SOURCE: Annual Reports of the Registrar General of Friendly Societies, 1896-1907.



APPENDIX B(1)Conservative Working Men's Clubs: A Note.

Although the radicals developed the most extensive network of political organisations in the years after 1867 the Conservatives also tried to broaden their political base following the passing of the Second Reform Bill. In the mid 1830's a number of "Operative Conservative Associations" had been founded particularly in the towns of industrial Lancashire, for example, Blackburn and Bolton in 1835 and Wigan, Rochdale and Preston in 1836. Most were linked to institutions of popular protestantism such as the Orange Lodges.<sup>(1)</sup> In November 1867 a National Union of Conservative and Constitutional Associations was established despite reservations and worries regarding mass organisation expressed by sections of the leadership.<sup>(2)</sup> Edward Clarke, who had helped to found the CIU, was one of the moving forces in the establishment of a Metropolitan Working Man's Club which opened in late 1867 under the direction of B.Mayer as Secretary. Ordinary subscriptions were set at 1d per month.<sup>(3)</sup> Following the Party's defeat in the 1868 election enthusiasm for these bodies diminished and the spread of such associations was checked. The movement was not revived until the late

1. R.Paul, The Rise and Progress of Operative Conservative Societies, (Leeds, 1836); R.Hill, Toryism and the People, 1832-1846, (1929), pp.56-60; Gooderson, Thesis, op.cit., pp.348-50

2. P.Smith, Disraelian Conservatism and Social Reform, (1967), pp.117-18; 128-29.

3. Metropolitan Working Men's Club Association, (1868); Clarke, Life, pp. 97-98.

1870's although in Lancashire the Conservatives continued their campaign to win the support of the protestant working man through clubs, lodges and other popular organisations. However, the Party was always careful to stress the social amenities of these societies rather than give prominence to the political functions.<sup>(4)</sup>

Further electoral defeat prompted the Tories to reconsider their lack of concern in mobilising working class support.<sup>(5)</sup> In the 1880's, therefore, there was a flurry of club formations undertaken by Tories. Clubs, for example, were founded in Boscombe, Brigg and Birmingham, while the club in Leamington, firstly established in 1872, was revived.<sup>(6)</sup> Even a stronghold of radical politics, such as east London had its Conservative Working Men's Club by the middle of the decade. Members of the Bethnal Green Constitutional Club, for instance, presented a memorial to Lord Salisbury in 1887. It opened by declaring the memorialists "abiding appreciation of the sagacity and prudence with which the Marquis of Salisbury has, during the tenure of his office, conducted the affairs of the nation."<sup>(7)</sup> Some Conservatives, however, were disappointed by the unevenness of the response to this

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4. P.Joyce, Thesis, op.cit., pp.325-27; N.Kirk, Thesis, op.cit., pp.352-69; Ostragorski, op.cit., Vol.I, pp.252-56.

5. E.Feuchtwanger, Disraeli, Democracy and the Tory Party: Conservative Leadership and Organisation after the Second Reform Bill, (Oxford, 1968), Chapter VIII

6. Craftsman, Vol.1(1), April 1881, and 1(3), July 1881; CIJ, 21 August 1886. See also H.Hanham, "Politics and Community Life in Victorian and Edwardian Britain," Folklife, No.4, 1966, pp.10-11.

7. CIJ, 15 January 1887

initiative. It was thought that unlike the "Bradlaugherites" and radicals the conservative working man was a home loving creature and thus attempts to make him "clubbable" would not always meet with success.<sup>(8)</sup> Moreover, like the Liberals, the Conservatives were sometimes disappointed that working men cared little for the political aims of the club but were drawn into membership by the social amenities it offered.<sup>(9)</sup> To give Conservative clubs cohesion and direction a "Conservative Union of Working Men's Clubs and Institutes" was founded in June 1891, but was dissolved in August 1895.<sup>(10)</sup> Thereafter Conservative Working Men's Clubs became part of the more general Association of Conservative Clubs founded in 1895 by Middleton, the principal agent for the Party.<sup>(11)</sup> Despite the political differences between their affiliates the CIU and the Association were to work closely together especially as both shared an implacable opposition to all legislation intended to curtail the clubs' right to supply intoxicants.<sup>(12)</sup> One measure of the warmth of the relationship existing between the two club organisations was the visit to Paris in early July 1904 jointly organised by the two bodies. A total of 320 clubmen from the two bodies enjoyed a four-day visit to the French capital.<sup>(13)</sup>

8. Craftsman, 3(34), February 1884

9. R.Mackenzie, British Political Parties, (1963), pp.161-64

10. CIJ, September 1895; The Conservative Union of Working Men's Clubs, (n.d., 1891?)

11. P.Marsh, The Discipline of Popular Government, (Hassocks, 1978), p.205; A.Lee, "Conservatism, Traditionalism and the British Working Class," in D.Martin and D.Rubinstein (Eds), Ideology and the Labour Movement, (1978), pp.95-96.

12. See Chapter 4, above.

13. CIU, Annual Report, No.42, (1904).

APPENDIX C: MAPS.

This appendix comprises two sets of maps illustrating the growth of the club movement. The first two maps show the distribution by county of affiliated clubs based upon printed lists in the Solly Collection. The remaining maps show the distribution of registered clubs based upon tables published by the Registrar-General of Friendly Societies.

Contents:

Map I: Affiliated Clubs, 1874.

Map II: Affiliated Clubs, 1893.

Map III: Registered Clubs, 1876.

Map IV: Registered Clubs, 1885.

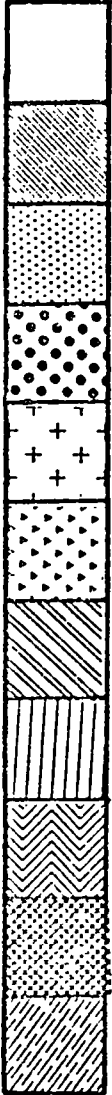
Map V: Registered Clubs, 1891.

Map VI: Registered Clubs, 1899.

Map VII: Registered Clubs, 1910.

KEY TO MAPS.

NUMBER OF CLUBS.



0.

1-5

6-10

11-20

21-30

31-50

51-75

76-100

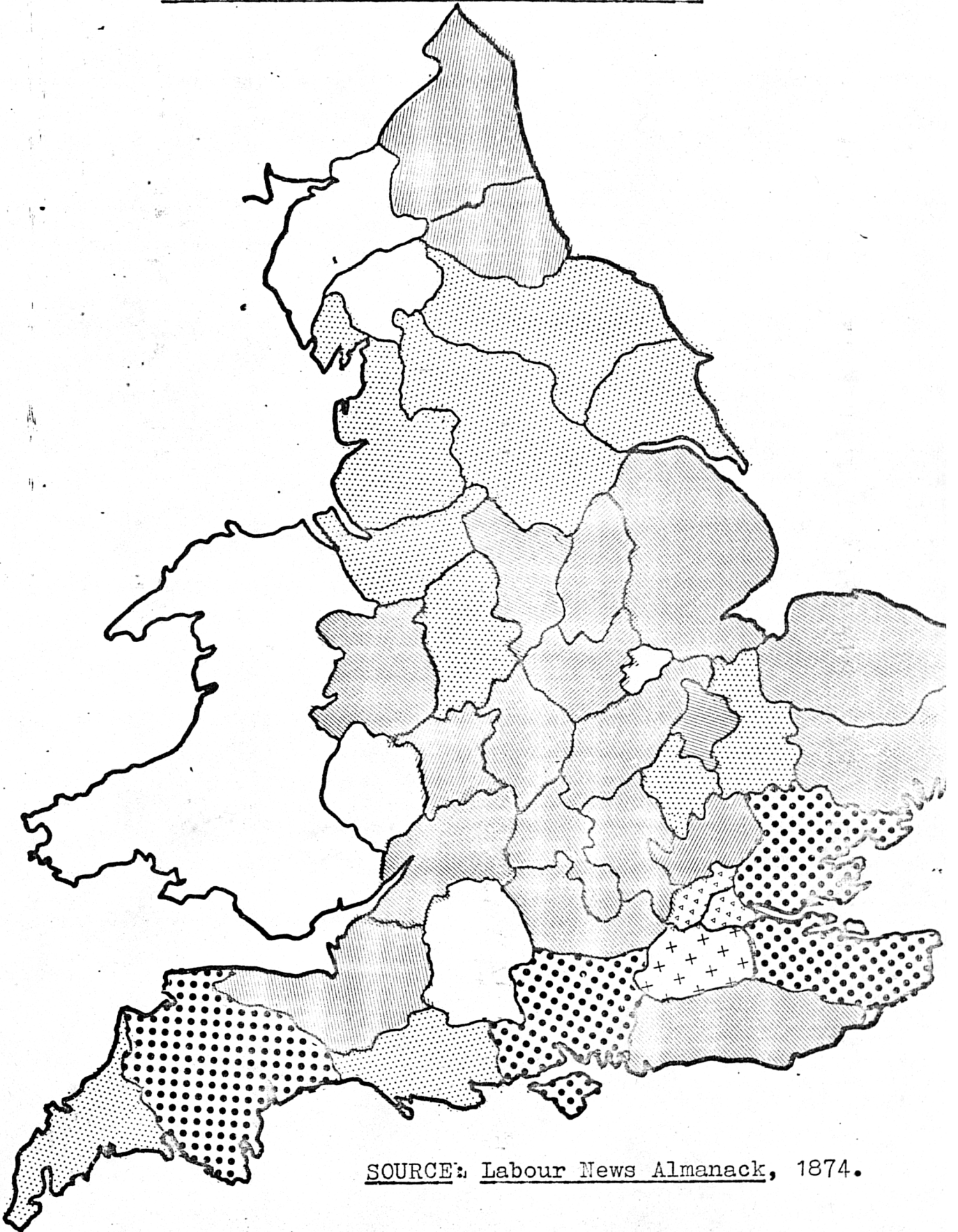
101-150

151-200

200+

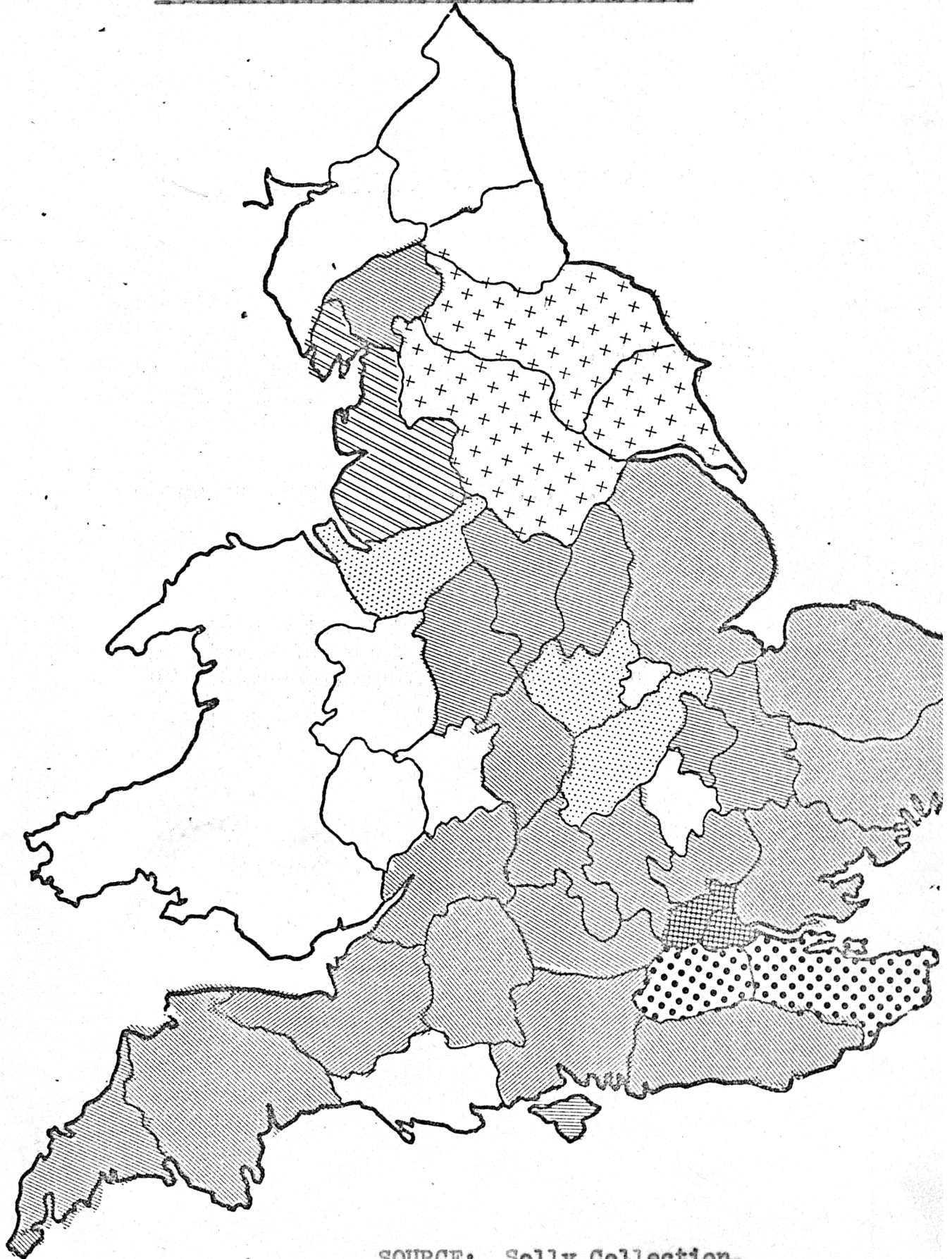
MAP I.

DISTRIBUTION OF AFFILIATED CLUBS, 1874.



SOURCE: Labour News Almanack, 1874.

DISTRIBUTION OF AFFILIATED CLUBS, 1893.

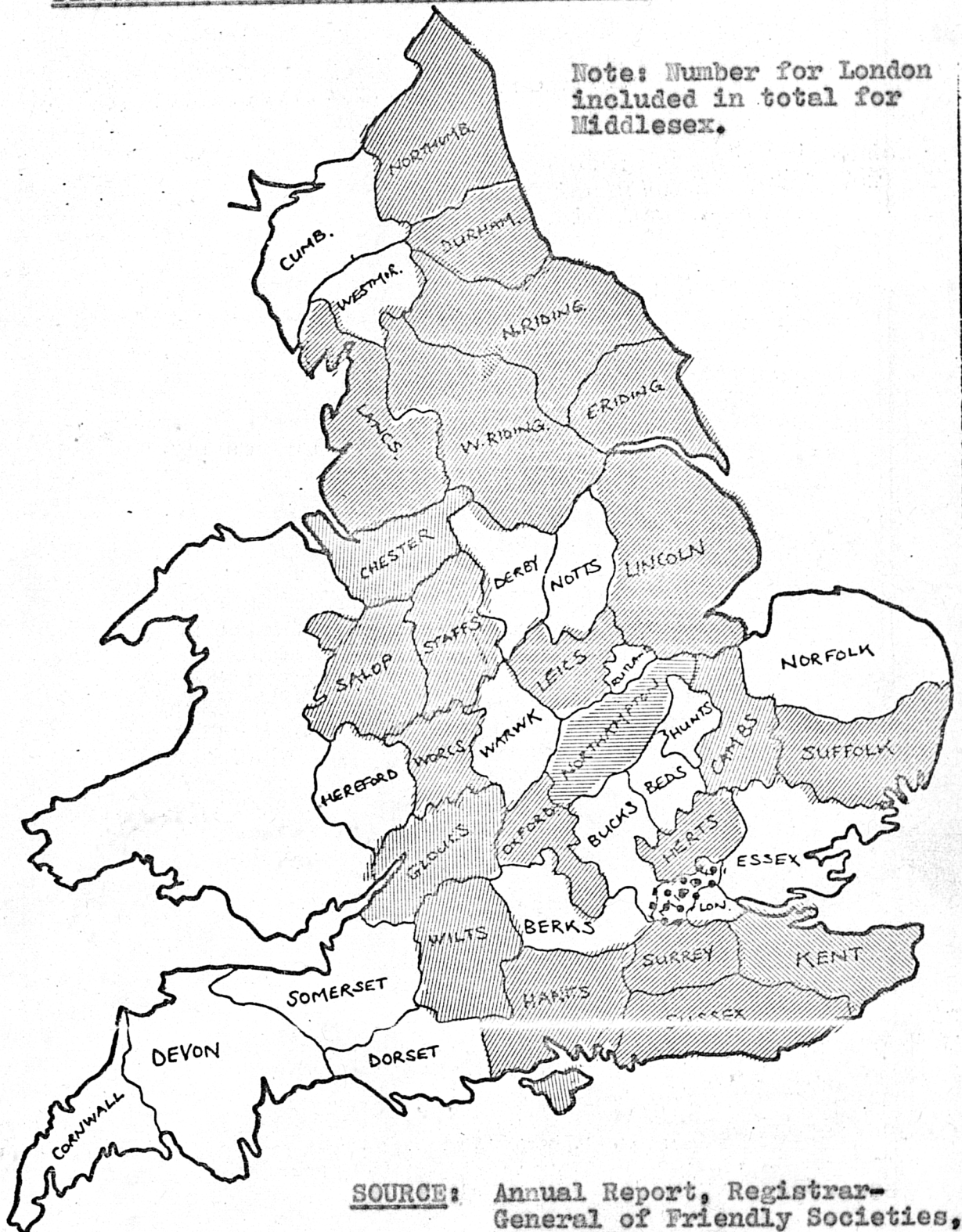


SOURCE: Solly Collection,  
Vol. XVII.

MAP III

DISTRIBUTION OF REGISTERED CLUBS, 1876.

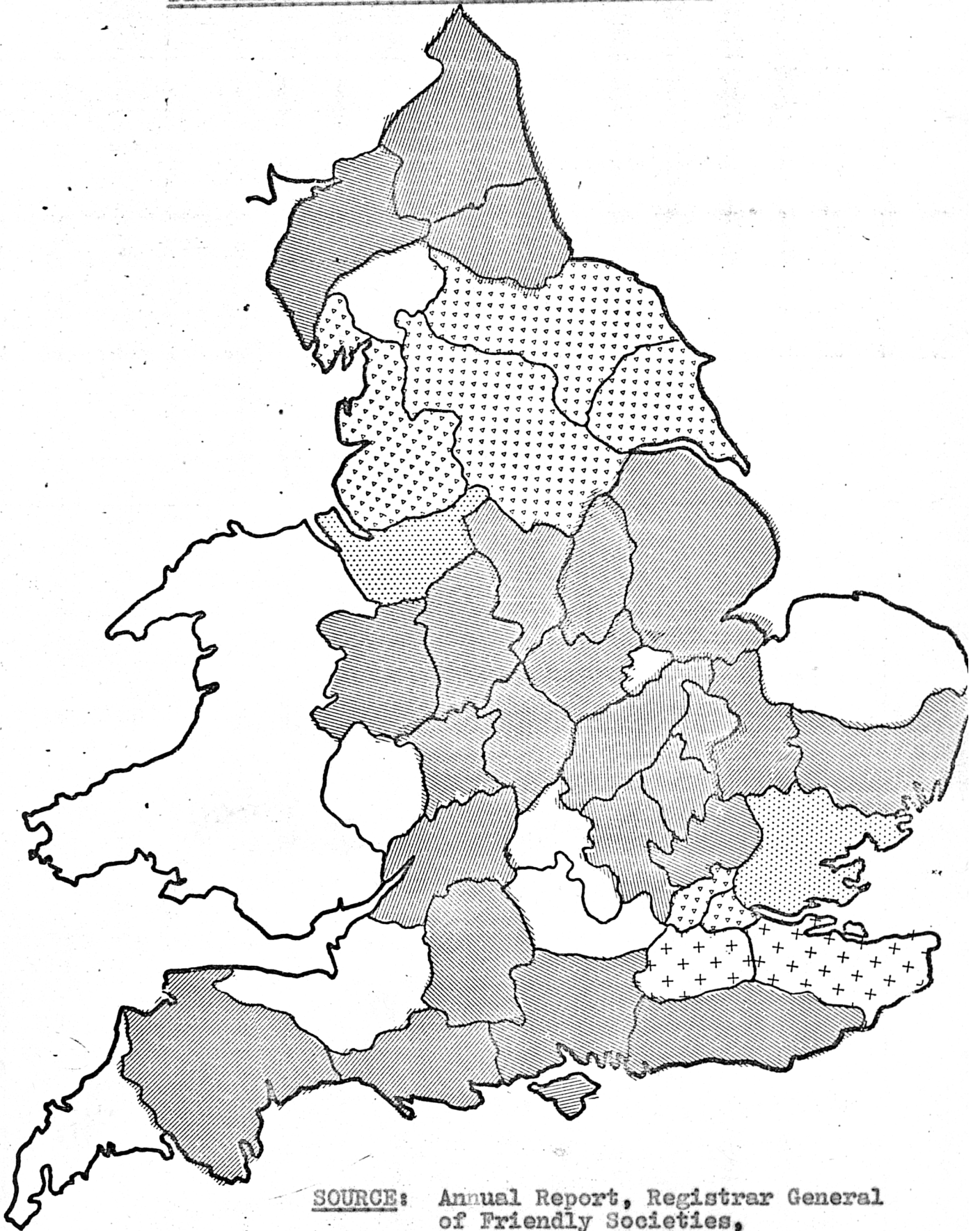
Note: Number for London included in total for Middlesex.



SOURCE: Annual Report, Registrar-General of Friendly Societies, P.P. 1877 LXXVII



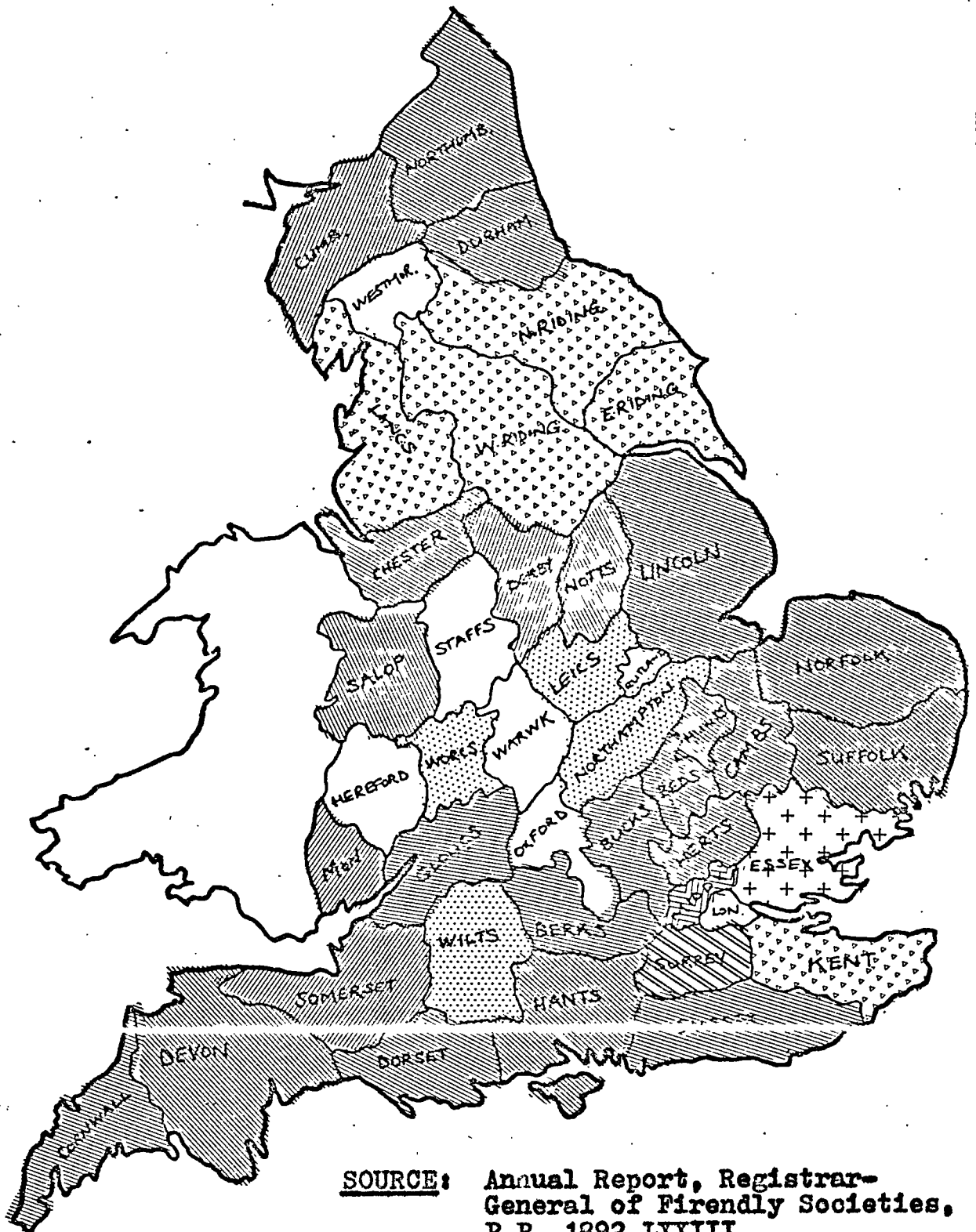
DISTRIBUTION OF REGISTERED CLUBS, 1885.



SOURCE: Annual Report, Registrar General of Friendly Societies, P.P. 1887 LXXVII

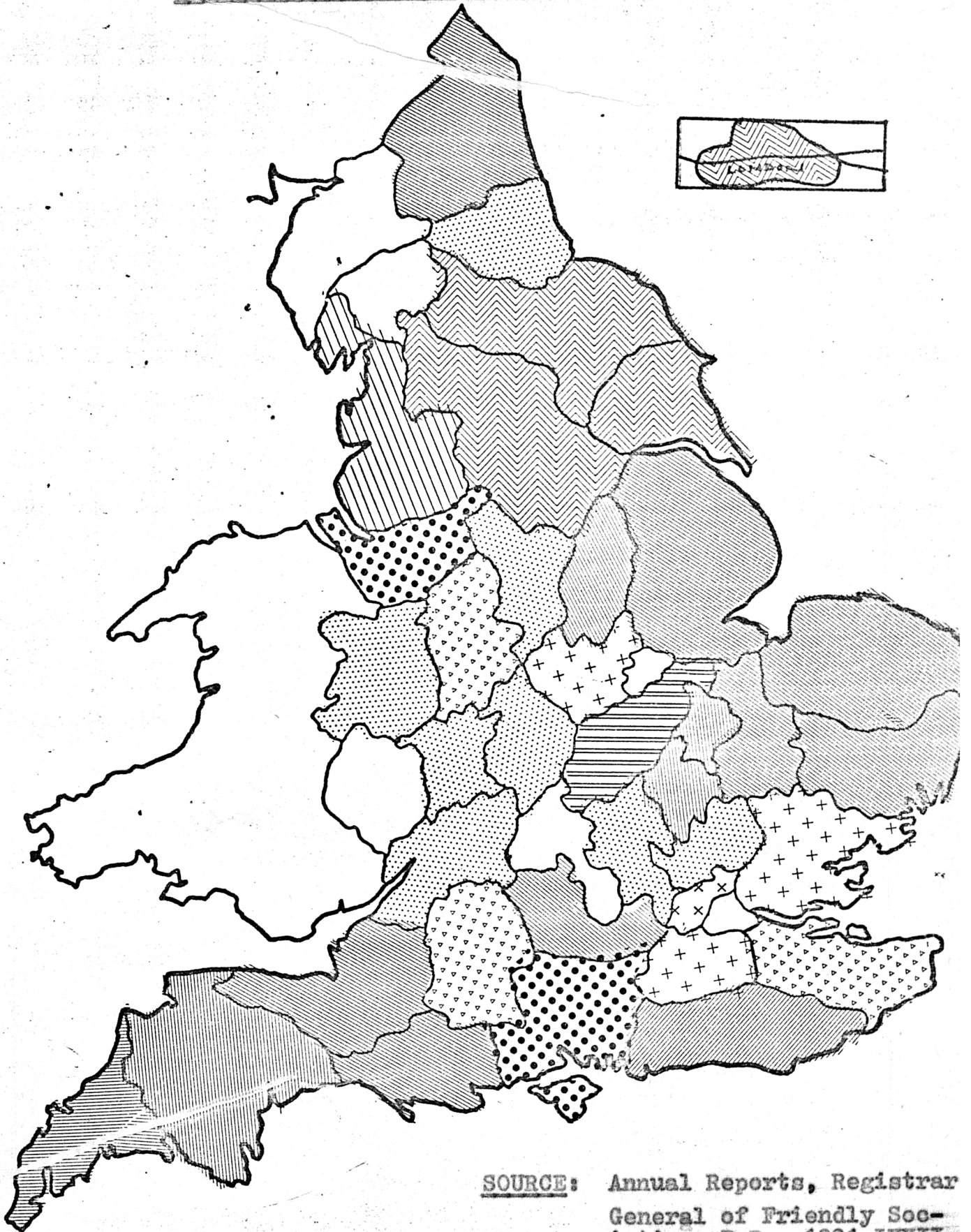
MAP V

DISTRIBUTION OF REGISTERED CLUBS, 1891.



SOURCE: Annual Report, Registrar-General of Friendly Societies, P.P. 1892 LXXIII

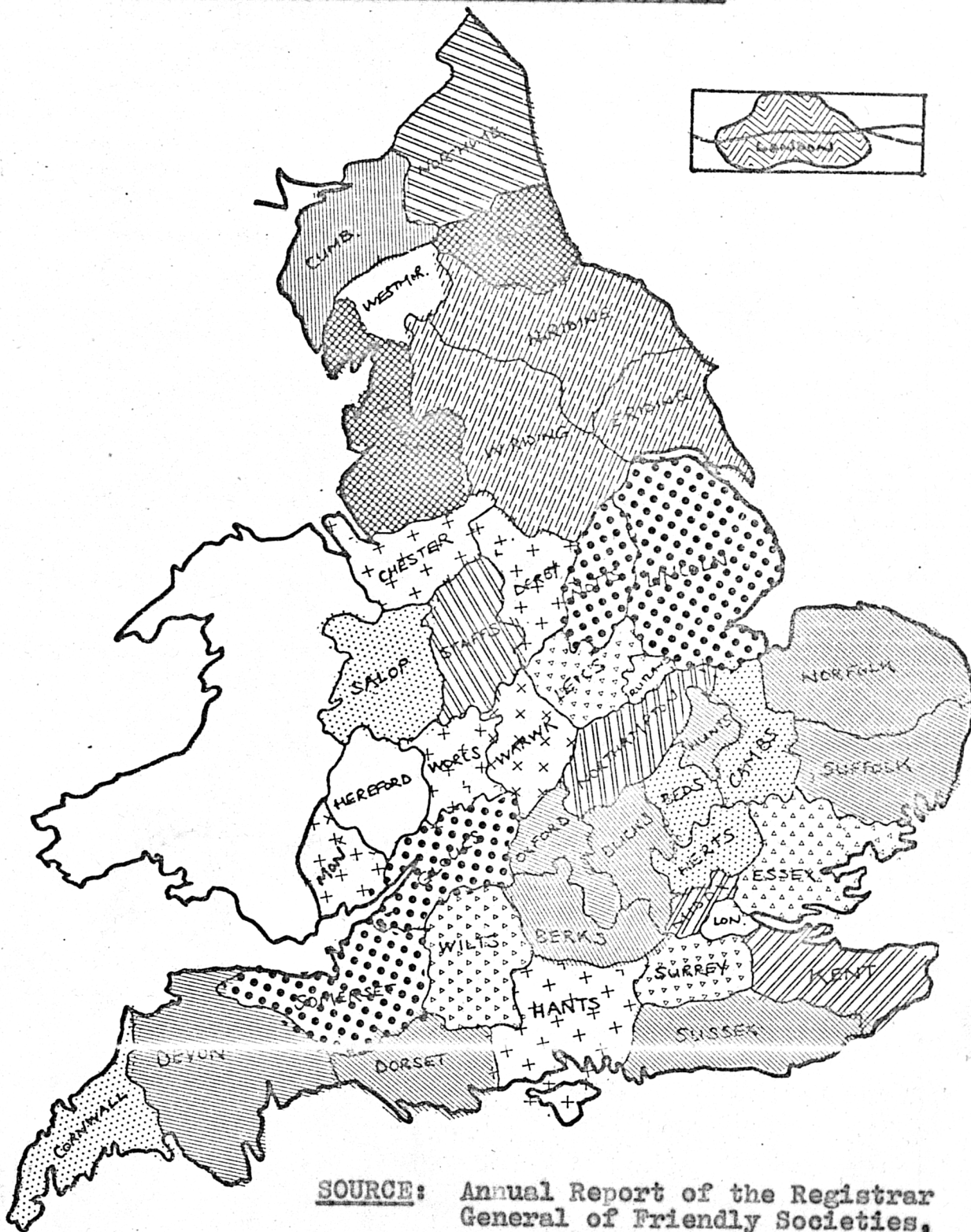
DISTRIBUTION OF REGISTERED CLUBS, 1899.



SOURCE: Annual Reports, Registrar  
General of Friendly Soc-  
ieties, P.P. 1901 LXXII

MAR VII

DISTRIBUTION OF REGISTERED CLUBS, 1910.



SOURCE: Annual Report of the Registrar  
General of Friendly Societies,  
P.P. 1912 LXXII.

**APPENDIX D: Statistics and Tables relating  
to Drink in Working Men's Clubs.**

## APPENDIX D.

Table I.Clubs in which beer is sold, 1871.

West End Club, Nottingham.  
 Maidstone Club.  
 Gainsborough Club.  
 Barrow-in-Furness Club. (n)  
 Moor Club, Sheffield.  
 Southwark Club.  
 St. James and Soho.  
 London Artizans.  
 Birmingham Secular Club.  
 St. Mary's Club, Charterhouse.  
 New Quebec.  
 Eversley Club, Hampshire. (n)  
 Wednesbury.  
 Handsworth.  
 Loughborough.  
 Hanley Castle. (n)  
 Bromsgrove.  
 Weybridge.  
 North East London Rifles, Hoxton.

Note: (n) indicates club was not affiliated to the CIU.

SOURCE: MSS List, dated 23 May 1871; Solly Collection,  
 Vol. XVI, Item 13(b), Item 1.

TABLE II

CLUBS CLOSED THROUGH OFFICIAL ACTION, 1886-1896.

| AREA.                   | No. of Clubs. | AUTHORITY.      |
|-------------------------|---------------|-----------------|
| London                  | 62            | Police.         |
| London                  | 15            | Excise.         |
| City of London          | 10            | Police.         |
| COUNTIES.               |               |                 |
| Derbyshire              | 1             | Police          |
| Dorsetshire             | 8             | Police          |
| Durham                  | 1             | Police          |
| Essex                   | 2             | Police          |
| Gloucestershire         | 1             | Police          |
| Hampshire               | 1             | Police          |
| Lancashire              | 8             | Police          |
| Lancashire              | 1             | Excise (1)      |
| Northamptonshire        | 1             | Police          |
| Nottinghamshire         | 2             | Police          |
| Shropshire              | 2             | Police          |
| Sussex                  | 1             | Police          |
| Wiltshire               | 1             | Excise          |
| Worcestershire          | 1             | Police          |
| BOROUGHES.              |               |                 |
| Bootle                  | 2             | Police          |
| Burnley                 | 1             | Police          |
| Canterbury              | 1             | Police          |
| Devonport               | 1             | Police          |
| Hanley                  | 1             | Police & Excise |
| Huddersfield            | 1             | Police          |
| Hull                    | 3             | Police          |
| Leicester               | 1             | Police          |
| Liverpool               | 10            | Police & Excise |
| Manchester              | 2             | Police          |
| Newport                 | 1             | Police          |
| Nottingham              | 1             | Police          |
| Oldham                  | 8             | Police          |
| Portsmouth              | 2             | Police          |
| Walsall                 | 2             | Police          |
| TOTAL                   | 155           |                 |
| NOTE.                   |               |                 |
| (1) Club was re-opened. |               |                 |

SOURCE: "Return of clubs," Appendix. R.C. Liquor Licensing Laws, P.P. 1898, xxxviii. p. iv.

TABLE III

## EXPENDITURE ON REFRESHMENTS IN WORKING MEN'S CLUBS, 1891.

| NAME OF CLUB.                     | MEMBERSHIP. | AVERAGE WEEKLY EXPENDITURE. (Old pence) (per member) | TOTAL ANNUAL EXPENDITURE. (£) (in club) |
|-----------------------------------|-------------|--|---|
| Acton Liberal                     | 110         | 10½d   | 250.5/-                                 |
| Bermondsey Gladstone              | 700         | 7½d  | 1137.10/-                               |
| Boro" of Bethnal Green            | 480         | 9½d  | 988.00                                  |
| Cambridge                         | 420         | 13½d   | 1228.10/-                               |
| Charlton Liberal                  | 250         | 12d  | 650.00                                  |
| Deptford Progressive              | 130         | 10d  | 281.13/-                                |
| East London                       | 300         | 20d  | 1300.00                                 |
| Eleusis                           | 491         | 13½d   | 1462.15/-                               |
| Haydan Park Radical               | 67          | 9½d  | 134.6/-                                 |
| Holborn Gladstone                 | 270         | 14½d   | 833.12/-                                |
| Lee & Lewisham                    | 600         | 2½d  | 325.00                                  |
| North Camberwell Enter-<br>prise. | 60          | 18½d   | 237.5/-                                 |
| North Camberwell Radical          | 250         | 14½d   | 798.19/-                                |
| Paddington Radical                | 280         | 15d  | 910.00                                  |
| Pimlico Radical                   | 170         | 17½d   | 635.16/-                                |
| St. Pancras                       | 115         | 20½d   | 517.4/-                                 |
| South Bermondsey                  | 925         | 5½d  | 1102.6/-                                |
| Teddington                        | 125         | 14½d   | 392.14/-                                |
| Walthamstow Social                | 90          | 23½d   | 458.5/-                                 |
| Woolwich Excelsior                | 240         | 14½d   | 754.00                                  |
| PROVINCIAL.                       |             |  |   |
| Bisham                            | 127         | ½d   | 13.15/-                                 |
| Victoria (Cheshire)               | 46          | 10½d   | 104.13/-                                |
| Bakewell                          | 109         | 3½d  | 76.15/-                                 |



TABLE III

## EXPENDITURE ON REFRESHMENTS IN WORKING MEN'S CLUBS, 1891.

| NAME OF CLUB.         | MEMBERSHIP. | AVERAGE WEEKLY EXPENDITURE. (old pence)<br>(per member) | TOTAL ANNUAL EXPENDITURE. (£)<br>(in clubs) |
|-----------------------|-------------|---|---|
| Bridport              | 160         | 1½d   | 52.00                                       |
| Maidstone.            | 316         | 8½d   | 581.18/-                                    |
| Westgate              | 101         | 18½d  | 410.6/-                                     |
| Bacup                 | 220         | 12½d  | 583.18/-                                    |
| Burnley Odd Fellows   | 1574        | 5d  | 1706.5/-                                    |
| Irish Young Men's     | 95          | 17½d  | 355.7/-                                     |
| Oldham Radical        | 300         | 9½d   | 601.5/-                                     |
| Stackstead Catholic   | 104         | 27½d  | 619.13/-                                    |
| Trafalgar             | 200         | 3½d   | 151.13/-                                    |
| South Wigston         | 200         | 16d   | 693.6/-                                     |
| Gainsborough Liberal  | 600         | 7½d   | 975.00                                      |
| Kettering             | 600         | 13½d  | 1722.10/-                                   |
| Stafford              | 150         | 13½d  | 44.17/-                                     |
| Batley.               | 400         | 7½d   | 650.00                                      |
| Todmorden Odd Fellows | 530         | 4½d   | 545.9/-                                     |

Source: taken from clubs listed in Appendix I, CIU, Annual Report, No.29.  
(1891)

TABLE IV

REFRESHMENT SALES IN WORKING MEN'S CLUBS. 1894.

| DISTRICT.             | Clubs supplying members with excisables. |                                 |
|-----------------------|--|---------------------------------|
|                       | No. of clubs.                            | Total refreshment receipts. (1) |
| Metropolis            | 141                                      | £122,899                        |
| Home Counties         | 34                                       | £16,052                         |
| S.Counties            | 23                                       | £21,558                         |
| S.W.Counties          | 5  | £1,987                          |
| E.Counties            | 7  | £5,713                          |
| E.Midlands            | 27                                       | £22,134                         |
| W.Midlands            | 6  | £3,723                          |
| Lancashire & Cheshire | 72                                       | £35,602                         |
| Yorkshire             | 42                                       | £13,899                         |
| <b>TOTAL:</b>         | <b>357</b>                               | <b>£243,563.</b>                |

Note: (1), Including sales of liquors, mineral waters, tobacco, cigars, biscuits and other refreshments.

SOURCE: Calculated from returns given by the CIU in  
Table 27, Annual Abstract of Labour Statistics,  
P.P., 1895, xcii

TABLE V : EXPENDITURE AND RECEIPTS FOR REFRESHMENTS IN  
WORKING MEN'S CLUBS IN 1905

| COUNTY:   | EXPEND.<br>£ | RECEIPTS.<br>£ | SURPLUS<br>£ | PERCENT.<br>SURPLUS. |
|-----------|--------------|----------------|--------------|----------------------|
| BEDS      | 461          | 657            | 196          | 42.5                 |
| BERKS     | 419          | 620            | 201          | 47.9                 |
| BUCKS     | 7097         | 9950           | 2853         | 40.2                 |
| CAMBS     | 347          | 491            | 144          | 41.4                 |
| CHES      | 4073         | 6351           | 2278         | 55.9                 |
| DERBY     | 2297         | 3636           | 1339         | 58.2                 |
| DEVON     | 342          | 508            | 166          | 48.5                 |
| DORSET    | 1003         | 1343           | 340          | 33.8                 |
| DURHAM    | 1440         | 2300           | 860          | 59.7                 |
| ESSEX     | 14279        | 20951          | 6672         | 46.7                 |
| GLOUS     | 1588         | 2489           | 901          | 56.7                 |
| HANTS     | 8152         | 10936          | 2784         | 34.1                 |
| HERTS     | 843          | 1228           | 385          | 45.6                 |
| HUNTS     | 190          | 241            | 51           | 26.8                 |
| KENT      | 16573        | 23758          | 7185         | 43.3                 |
| LANCS     | 50129        | 79891          | 29762        | 59.3                 |
| LEICS     | 12329        | 20679          | 8350         | 67.7                 |
| LINCS     | 3229         | 4510           | 1281         | 39.6                 |
| LOND      | 71938        | 111369         | 39431        | 54.8                 |
| MIDDY     | 9420         | 14046          | 4626         | 49.1                 |
| MONM      | 4525         | 6950           | 2425         | 53.5                 |
| NRFLK     | 509          | 767            | 258          | 50.6                 |
| NORTHANTS | 26584        | 42362          | 19778        | 74.3                 |
| NORTHUMB  | 381          | 499            | 118          | 30.9                 |
| NOTTS     | 992          | 1662           | 670          | 67.5                 |
| SALOP     | 1398         | 2415           | 1017         | 72.7                 |
| SOMERSET  | 2436         | 3522           | 1086         | 44.5                 |
| STAFFS    | 12582        | 18878          | 6296         | 50.0                 |
| SURREY    | 6957         | 9846           | 2889         | 41.5                 |
| SUSSEX    | 313          | 469            | 156          | 49.8                 |
| WARWKS    | 3413         | 5092           | 1679         | 49.1                 |
| WILTS     | 33098        | 44364          | 11266        | 34.0                 |
| WORCS     | 2122         | 3119           | 1077         | 50.7                 |
| YORKS     | 118190       | 181597         | 63407        | 53.6                 |
| TOTAL:    | 419649       | 637987         | 218338       |                      |

SOURCE: Annual report of the Registrar-General of Friendly Societies, 1906  
P.P.1907 LXXVII  
Calculated from figures given in Part A  
Appendix (N), Table VIII.

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NOTE: Unless otherwise stated place of publication  
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Echo

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Economic Review

Edinburgh Review

Eliza Cook's Journal

Elocutionist

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Free Sunday Advocate

Friendly Society Journal

Gambling House Expositor

Gentleman's Magazine

Good Words

Guardian

Herald of Health

Highway

House and Home

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Journal of the Royal Society of Arts

Justice

Labour Annual

Labour Elector

Labour Leader

Labour News

Labour Standard

Labour Yearbook

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