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# THE CHURCHMAN

A Monthly Magazine

*CONDUCTED BY CLERGYMEN AND LAYMEN  
OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND*

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ART. I.—INTEMPERANCE AND THE CHURCH OF  
ENGLAND.

IT is indisputable, that in whatever country intoxicants have been used, intemperance or excessive use of such intoxicants has followed. No matter what social conditions have prevailed—of plenty or poverty, of knowledge or ignorance, of barbarism or refinement, of religion or irreligion—the use of intoxicating liquors has increased, with consequences lamentable to individuals and dangerous to the well-being of the community at large.

The passion for alcoholic stimulants once engendered, never ceases, but is for ever enlarging itself with the supply. And even where the beverage has been of the mildest stimulating kind, its use has become an easy and a natural stepping-stone to the employment and consumption of stronger and more potent agents of inebriation. Universal history attests this fact. It does not record a single example, amidst the manifold and complex conditions of social life, where after the introduction of intoxicants there has been use without abuse, or where their use has remained stationary at some well-defined point which could be safely called a general standard of moderation.

The learned Egyptian, the divinely chosen Israelite, the cultured Greek, the disciplined Roman, as well as the Pagan and untutored races, have alike experienced and verified this truth, which is evidenced again now in the Christianized Anglo-Saxons of to-day. And though, under special influences operating on different classes, such as the Nazarites and Rechabitos amongst the people of Israel, the followers of Mahomet, and the modern Total Abstiners from strong drink, wo

see exceptions to the rule, yet they are cases where individuals have withdrawn themselves from the operation of the law of stimulants, and but prove the rule.

It is not difficult for physiologists to show how this use of alcoholic drinks tends to such result—a result we speak of as “Intemperance,” *i.e.*, want of moderation or restraint; a term gradually limited in its application to that form of non-restraint shown in habitual indulgence in drinking spirituous liquors, with or without intoxication. Intemperance has its beginning solely in the abnormal action of these liquors themselves upon the organic structure of the nerves and brain. Physiology thus explains the nature of that habitual craving for strong liquors which, being gratified, ends in intoxication. Intoxication is an abnormal state of the nerves and brain, engendered by the persistent use of the stimulant of alcohol. While the original quantity by repetition loses its power to reproduce its first pleasing effect, it is found to leave a craving void behind. Thus, the sensual nature demands an increase of the stimulant, both in time and measure, while at the same time the moral-resisting power is either partially weakened or altogether destroyed. The love of pleasure and the aversion to pain coalesce in forging the fetters of an ever-craving desire around the misguided votary of Bacchus, and he imperceptibly becomes the helpless victim of this disgraceful vice.

Seeing then, that the nature and quality of strong drink proximately explain the phenomena of drunkenness as a subjective state, it may be pertinently asked, Why do men drink intoxicants? Why, in the face of history, which in this matter teaches ever the same sad tale, in the accumulated wisdom and experience enjoyed in the later ages, the risk is run which the use of intoxicating beverages is sure to bring? We can find two or three answers to the question.

Men drink because they believe in the traditional virtues of the drinks themselves. Tradition, inherited opinion, to a large extent governs practice, especially in pleasant things; and though few would be sufficiently candid to confess they take strong drink because they like it, the majority who use it would doubtless admit that the pleasure they derive in using it is one of the elements of their faith that it is wholesome and good. And so long as the popular opinion as to the excellency of alcoholic beverages prevails, the community at large may be expected to continue drinking, and there will of necessity follow the sad consequences which have been ever wont to attend the practice. The habit can only be overcome, the consequences can only be prevented, by the diffusion of sound physiological teaching on the matter, by the educator, the professor, and the Temperance reformer. This teaching becomes

more easy year by year, for it is no longer a matter of theory or conjecture, but of ascertained fact from scientific data, that abstainers from strong drink, as compared with drinkers, possess remarkable immunity from sickness; and the statistics of assurance societies and benefit clubs demonstrate that abstainers are only subject to one half the disease, and for less than half the time, than even careful drinkers are, and *ceteris paribus* live at least one-fifth or one-sixth longer.

The highest teachers of physiological science now agree in removing alcoholics from their too long usurped place in the list of food substances, and in placing them where they only ought ever to have been, viz., in the category of *medical stimulants* for exceptional use under proper medical prescription and care. The nearer to absolute disuse of alcohol we come in our normal condition of health, the more perfect that health will be; for even moderate use may unconsciously land us in the commission of what Dr. Andrew Clarke, at a recent meeting of the Church of England Temperance Society, at Lambeth Palace Library, called a physiological sin. It thus becomes a matter of serious import to introduce and commonly use alcohol in the family circle, and can scarcely be done on any sound principle of moral philosophy.

A second answer to the question, Why do men drink, or why do they indulge in more than temperate drinking? is found in a more powerful cause, viz., our national customs. It is vain to inculcate moral theories so long as the practical atmosphere of social life is antagonistic. Ideas, theories and instruction are powerless against institutions, temptations, and interests. Half a century of earnest temperance effort, put forth with a view to roll back the tide of intemperance, has served but to show that it is useless to proclaim the valueless character or the harmfulness of liquor; the danger of drinking; the evil example set to the young, the unwary, or the weak; the positive snare put in the path of the rescued inebriate, and to declare the excellence of total abstinence, so long as fashion decrees that we must drink, and interest provides temptations to men to do so. All that is taught dietetically, sanitarily, or ethically, will avail nothing unless our social institutions and our daily customs and surroundings are in harmony therewith. It is in this truth we perceive the philosophy of Temperance pledges and organizations, which furnish needful aids to the isolated virtue of individual examples, and give a collective sanction to a novel or neglected protest that shall neutralize the tyranny of custom. That which is found to be impossible when attempted alone is very easily achieved in association. It has never been found that any people could rise above their circumstances by a sudden impulse: nor can it be ex-

pected they should do so; it therefore becomes the duty and business of the social philosopher, with whom the theory is an actual potency, to inaugurate new conditions of a more harmonious and genial kind, out of which the germ of an improved social life may spring up into fruitful development.

A confirmation of the foregoing statement, and a further answer to the question, Why do men drink? is found in the abounding temptations put in the way of the multitude by the numerous public-houses and other establishments licensed for the sale of intoxicants. Crime is so directly traceable to the perversion of drinking and the temptations and accessories afforded by the public-houses and beer-shops, that Her Majesty's Judges continually declare that were the lowest class of these licensed houses done away with and intemperance prevented, but a very small proportion of the crime which now exists would continue, and but little would be left for criminal judges to do.

It is intensely interesting to the political economist to observe the efforts that have been put forth from time to time in our own land, for the purpose of restraining the evils of intemperance. The legal enactments of our country afford ample proof of this.

In Anglo-Saxon times Ædgar (959-75) is said, acting under the advice of the renowned Dunstan, to have adopted two measures for minimising the evils connected with drinking. He limited each village to one ale-house only, and he prescribed that drinking-cups or tankards should have pegs inserted in them at regular intervals, and directed that no man should drink more liquor than was found between two of these pegs. Little good was effected by this ingenious contrivance, which seems to have become a stimulus and an encouragement to drinking and drunkenness rather than a hindrance, for we find in the Canons of St. Anselm (1102) directions and monitions to the clergy not to attend drinking bouts nor *drink to pegs*.

The drinking habits of the nobles and people during the Middle Ages are now and then made known to us; with accounts of the occasional suppression of the worst of the ale-houses in times of exceptional disorder, as a warning to the remainder that excesses, unchecked, would be also visited on them. Under Edward I. all inns were closed at the tolling of the curfew bell. To such an extent had the number of ale-houses grown during the Wars of the Roses, that in an Act directed against beggars and wanderers (2 Henry VII., c. 2, 1495) power was given to two Justices in Petty Sessions to abate the evil by preventing an increase of inns, and by taking surety from ale-sellers for good behaviour. Still under this system of free common sale the evils of, and disorders caused

by, intemperance grew, until it became necessary to establish a more stringent restriction, and the Act of Parliament 5 and 6 Edward VI., 1551-52, made it necessary to obtain a "LICENSE" for the sale of ale from two Justices of the Peace. The year following, an Act (7 Edward VI., c. 5) to avoid excess of wine, limited the number of inns in the various large towns of the kingdom. The Long Parliament, on May 16th, 1643, agreed to the first excise duties being levied on intoxicating liquors. By Act 12 Charles II., c. 25, wine was forbidden to be sold without a license, except under the privileges granted to the vintners of London and St. Albans; 10 William III., c. 4, required all spirit-sellers to be licensed in the same way as the keepers of ale-houses were; but 1 Anne, c. 2, s. 4, permitted distillers and all other persons who carried on other trades as their principal business to sell spirits without a license, if they did not permit tippling on their premises.

Sundry other Acts were passed between the last-mentioned statute (1702) and 1828, when the licensing system was revised and consolidated in an Act, 9 George IV., c. 61, "To regulate the granting of licenses to keepers of inns, ale-houses, and victualling-houses in England." Its preamble declares its object to be, "To reduce into one Act the laws relating to the licensing, by Justices of the Peace, of persons keeping, or being about to keep, inns, ale-houses, and victualling-houses to sell excisable liquors by retail to be drunk or consumed on the premises." Some of the provisions of this Act were repealed by the Act of 1872 (35 and 36 Vict., c. 94), but it remains in the main the basis of our present licensing system.

In consequence of the introduction of Bills by Lord Brougham in 1822-24, for the sale of beer for consumption off the premises, a Parliamentary Committee was formed for the purpose of inquiring into the subject. The Act of George IV. was considered to work unsatisfactorily, and so much intemperance prevailed that the Committee suggested a course which in its operations proved more unsatisfactory and more disastrous still. The Beerhouse Act of 1830 empowered the excise to grant licenses for the sale of beer only, without the licensee being under the necessity of having recourse to the Justices, it being hoped that the introduction of facilities for obtaining a milder beverage would lessen the consumption of spirits. These hopes were doomed to disappointment, and in 1839 Lord Brougham, at the instigation of the Episcopal Bench, brought in a Bill for the repeal of the Beer Act, which, though adopted by the Lords, was ultimately lost. Lord Brougham stated, in the course of the debate, that "With respect to the effects of beer-shops upon the morals of the people, he was in possession of some of the most grievous and

distressing facts;" the Duke of Richmond said, "Beer-shops made the public-houses worse than they would otherwise be;" and Lord Ducie declared "It had been his misfortune to see a boundless increase of drunkenness, debauchery and immorality springing from beer-houses." These licenses continued to be issued by the excise on the principle of free trade until 1869, when by 32 and 33 Vict., c. 27, it became necessary to obtain a certificate from the Justices, as per 9 Geo. IV., c. 61.

In 1860 Mr. Gladstone obtained the passing of his Act, 23 Vict., c. 27, "For granting to Her Majesty certain duties on wine licenses and refreshment-houses, and for regulating the licensing of refreshment houses and the granting of wine licenses;" and in the following year a similar Act, empowering the sale of spirits through the same medium, viz. grocers, confectioners, and other shopkeepers, in not less than a reputed quart bottle.

The following figures show the extent of the licensing system on the 31st March last :

Public-house Licenses, granted by magistrates under 9 Geo. IV.,			
1828	-	-	96,110
Beer-house Licenses, under Acts 1830 and 1869			
	-	-	38,352
	"Off"	1882	18,931
Grocers' Licenses, etc., under Acts 1860 and 1861			
	-	-	13,370
Total			
	-	-	166,763

It will thus be seen that from the earliest period of Parliamentary records, Parliament has had to discuss, in some shape or other, the troublesome question of public-houses; and there is a growing feeling that a comprehensive measure ought to be passed for the progressive diminution of the existing facilities and means of intemperance which is the chief cause of almost every other vice.

That the spread of education of itself will not cure intemperance we have abundant proofs, both from philosophy and experience. Knowledge is a directing power, not a motive force. Now vice has its source in the *active powers* and *susceptibilities of man*, and not in the mere element of knowledge or ignorance. There can, therefore, be but two methods of reaching and modifying it, viz.: either by the introduction of an inner force, intensifying the action of those higher feelings which balance or control the lower impulses, or the removal of those outer conditions which unduly excite the *passional and personal activities of men*. So far as education teaches men to drink intoxicants less, or less often, so far it will modify or check intemperance, just as recreation and reading, by keeping men out of the temptations of the social circle or the public-house, will prove efficient. In either of



these conditions there will be a gain to temperance and a loss to the opposing vice. But beyond the extent to which education and knowledge limit by their attractions the consumption of intoxicating drink, they will have no effect. As before stated, wherever drinking has prevailed, even among the educated classes, intemperance has prevailed also. The physical action of alcohol is invariable, and as the rule of use must always be what each fancies good or safe for him, the subtle influence of the liquor has prevailed against the clearest and cleverest intellects ; and we therefore find that generals, statesmen, patriarchs, princes, historians, poets, lawyers, doctors, priests, and people, have alike fallen. We need mention no other name to show that education of itself is useless than that of the "classical and ever-thirsty Porson."

It is a subject of deepest interest to Churchmen that the Church of England is addressing itself vigorously to both of the remedial efforts : by its direct spiritual effort seeking to win souls to Christ, and thus to drive out lower passions by "the expulsive power of a new affection ;" and by its promotion of counteractive agencies, and its endeavour to obtain an amendment in the Licensing Laws so as to lessen, and ultimately to remove, the abounding temptations.

The corporate action of the Church of England may be said to have commenced by the publication of the Reports on Intemperance presented to the Convocations.

On February 25th, 1869, a report was presented to the Lower House of the Convocation of Canterbury, by the Committee appointed "to consider and report on the prevalence of intemperance, the evils which result therefrom, and the remedies which may be applied." In that Report the Committee state, "that as it appears to them the subject of this inquiry intimately and vitally affects the social condition and spiritual life of our people, they have sought to deal with it in a manner and on a scale commensurate with its importance." They therefore communicated with the parochial clergy, governors and chaplains of prisons, the heads of the constabulary forces throughout Great Britain, the superintendents of lunatic asylums in England and Wales, the judges, recorders, coroners, and masters of workhouses throughout England.

A similar Committee of the Convocation of York was appointed in March, 1871, "To inquire and report upon the effects of Intemperance in Sunday-schools, on the observance of the Lord's Day and the two principal holy days of Good Friday and Christmas Day ; on the attendance or otherwise of the working classes on public worship ; on National Education, and of drinking habits on society in general. Also to suggest such remedies as may be deemed suitable and efficient."

Like the Committee of the Southern Province, that of York stated their Report to be not the mere expression of their own private observation and conviction, but founded upon the direct testimony of numerous witnesses moving in various ranks of life, filling various public and important offices, and all of them for one reason or other peculiarly fitted to pronounce an opinion upon this very important subject.

Various remedies, moral and legislative, were proposed in the two reports. Thus, under the head of

*Moral*: Education and special Temperance teaching; removal of benefit clubs from public-houses; non-payment of wages in public-houses; establishment of tea, coffee, and cocoa-houses, and British Workman public-houses; public parks for summer recreation and public clubs for winter; improved dwellings and the formation of Bands of Hope and Temperance Societies.

And, secondly,

*Legislative*: Repeal of Beer Act of 1830 and total suppression of beer-houses; closing of public-houses on Sundays and shortening hours of sale on other days; reduction in the number of public-houses; placing the whole licensing system under one authority; abolition of occasional licenses at fairs, wakes, etc.; no music or dancing license to be held with liquor license; public-houses not to be held as election committee-rooms; appointment of special inspectors of public-houses; rigid enforcement of penalties on drunkards and publicans and stringent legislation against adulteration; penalties for sale of drink to young children; and the ratepayers to have a voice in deciding whether any or what number of licenses should be issued.

The Canterbury Report has in its concluding paragraph the following words:

Your Committee are of opinion that as the ancient and avowed object of licensing the sale of intoxicating liquors is to supply a supposed public want, without detriment to the public welfare, a legal power of restraining the issue or renewal of licenses should be placed in the hands of the persons most deeply interested and affected, viz., the inhabitants themselves, who are entitled to protection from the injurious consequences of the present system.

It would have remained a standing disgrace to the Church of England had the labours of these Committees been followed by no action. Providentially an agency was at hand which became at once the official mouthpiece of the Church and Convocation. Some years before, as the result of consultation taken together personally, or by letter, as to the best means of consolidating Total Abstinence work in the Church of England, a conference was held in London, May 2nd, 1863, under the presidency of Dean Close. The result of that conference was the formation of a Church of England Total Abstinence Association, which afterwards became the Church of England (and Ireland) Temperance Reformation Society. With the increased

knowledge of the whole subject which the work amongst the intemperate gave, came the conviction that the ramifications of the evil were extending far more deeply than was generally supposed, and that it was necessary, without relinquishing any of the ground which the Total Abstinence movement had gained, to find some wider and common basis upon which all Churchmen, abstainers or non-abstainers, could unite in combating the sin. The Reports of the Convocation Committees on Intemperance emphasised this conviction and opened the way. Conferences between representatives of the Church Temperance Society and the Manchester, Chester, and Ripon Associations were held, and with the full approbation of the Convocation Committee of Canterbury, the Church of England Temperance Society started on its important work, announcing its objects to be, (1) The Promotion of habits of Temperance; (2) The Reformation of the Intemperate; (3) The Removal of the Causes which lead to Intemperance, mainly in accordance with the recommendations contained in the Reports of the Committees on Intemperance, presented to the Convocations of Canterbury and York.

It will be for ever considered a memorable day in the history of the Church of England when on February 18th, 1873, under the presidency of Dr. Tait, the late Archbishop of Canterbury, the inaugural meeting of the Church Temperance Society was held in Lambeth Palace Library. For, perhaps, the *first* time in her history, the Church of England in her corporate capacity put her hand, for the glory of God and the good of the people, to a work of social reform. That she was right in so doing, the Divine blessing which has been so abundantly given to her Temperance work, and the warmth of acceptance with which the work has been greeted, even by those who have left her fold, most assuredly prove. As the National Church she was realizing her responsibility and duty in placing herself in direct opposition to the national sin, and God has manifested His blessing.

It must be always remembered that the Church of England Temperance Society is essentially a religious one, and in that important point it differs from all previously existing organizations. Other societies sought individual improvement and social reformation by moral suasion or political action only; but the Church of England Temperance Society sought to win souls to Christ by special mission effort, sanctified by prayer, directed to those sinning through strong drink. The terrible effects upon our social life engendered by intemperance were felt by philanthropists and mourned by patriots; but the dishonour done to God and the loss of precious souls, arising from this prevailing sin of drunkenness, pressed most heavily on

Christian hearts, and made it obligatory on Christian workers to enter into special conflict with the gigantic evil.

For a long time the Executive of the Society confined their attention to the religious and social aspects of the question. This, partly because it was necessary to arouse the Church's conscience to a sense of the magnitude of the evil, and to the necessity of grappling with it for the honour of her Lord and the salvation of His people, and partly because the legislation on the subject in 1872 and 1874 had made the Legislature unwilling to deal again so soon with a matter bristling with innumerable difficulties and dangers arising from vast moneyed interests and long-indulged appetites and passions. Sir Selwin-Ibbetson's Bill of 1869, for transferring the power of licensing beer-shops from the excise to the magistrates was productive of much good in lessening the number of licenses issued. In 1872 Lord Aberdare—then Mr. Home Secretary Bruce—made an honest and earnest attempt to pass a measure of very comprehensive licensing reform, which measure, however, had to be considerably modified ere it was carried; but the demand of those interested in the liquor traffic was so emphatic that in 1874 an amended Bill was introduced to relieve the publican of some oppressive restrictions.

Under these circumstances it was the strength as well as the wisdom of the Society to earnestly work, and to patiently wait. In a conflict between the good of the commonwealth and the interests of a class, though postponed for a season, the right will prevail. When passion has subsided, reason must rule; and the Society feels it can now appeal, alike to the Legislature and the country, with a confidence that its own labours and those of the other organizations which are working side by side with it have not been in vain, but that a public opinion has been created which will demand, without reference to political party and without injustice to legitimate trade interests, that something shall be done, and done speedily, to deliver us from the fearful incubus of evil under which we suffer.

It however becomes a question in which way the object aimed at is to be obtained. For although Temperance reformers may be in general agreement as to what they desire, they do not concur in the best methods for procuring it, as is seen by the various proposals that have been submitted to the Legislature during the last few years. Sir Wilfrid Lawson, whose labours are so well known, would give to owners and occupiers of property power to prevent the common sale of intoxicating liquors within their respective parishes or districts by *plebiscite* vote. Mr. Joseph Cowen proposes an elected board in lieu of magistrates; Mr. Joseph Chamberlain would empower local authorities to acquire, on payment of fair compensation, all

existing interests in the retail sale of intoxicating drinks within their respective districts; and thereafter, if they think fit, to carry on the trade for the convenience and on behalf of the inhabitants, but so that no individual shall have any pecuniary interest in, or derive any profit from, the sale. It will be seen that "local option," or as the C.E.T.S. prefers to call it, "local control," is a principle underlying all these propositions; and it is a matter of satisfaction to Churchmen that the right of the people to a voice in the granting of licenses should have been recognised by the Committees of the two Convocations in their Reports.

Acting under pressure from various quarters to induce him to vary his proposal, Sir Wilfrid Lawson has, during recent sessions, substituted a resolution for his Prohibitory Permissive Bill; viz., the recommendation in the Report of the Committee of the Canterbury Convocation given above, adding only the words, "by some efficient measure of local option."

Unfortunately, misunderstandings have arisen as to the exact meaning of this resolution. The supporters of the Permissive Bill interpret it as covering that measure only, and the opponents of Temperance reform also represent it as meaning the same; whereas the C.E.T.S. from the first warmly supported it, because it expressed, in the language of Convocation itself, an intimation of the kind of reform the statutes affecting the drink traffic seem to need, without committing its promoters to the extreme position taken by many, viz., that the drink traffic under any form of license is immoral and ought to be destroyed.

The following will show the nature of the Church of England Temperance Society's Bill:

#### *I. Licensing Authority.*

1. The ratepayers of each locality to be associated with the existing authorities in the issue and control of Licenses.

#### *II. Licenses.*

1. *General.*—Fresh Licenses to be tendered for by public competition. The basis of tender to be an advance on the License rental as fixed by the Board.

2. *Grocers.*—Spirit Licenses to grocers and shopkeepers to be discontinued. Wine and Beer Licenses to remain as at present, but to be under the control of the Licensing Board.

#### *III. Reduction of Houses.*

1. Licenses to be absolutely forfeited on conviction after the second endorsement. The endorsement to be compulsory.

2. Licenses to be reduced by voluntary sale or compulsory purchase of existing interest, equitable compensation being made.

That exception would be taken to the proposals of the

Church Society was to be expected. A vast organization like that of the Licensed Victuallers would not be likely to have its interests threatened without manifesting earnest opposition; and many Temperance reformers amongst those who believe that the traffic in intoxicating liquors, as common beverages, is inimical to the true interests of individuals, and destructive of the order and welfare of society, and who therefore seek to procure the total and immediate suppression of the traffic, would rather the present licensing system should continue, with its anomalies and inconsistencies, than that amended legislation should, by partial improvement, make the continuance of licenses more certain.

Some would prefer for a season even greater evils, if by their magnitude the nation could be aroused to destroy the system for ever, to the modification of a system which they contend, under any circumstances and with any body of administrators, must necessarily produce a harvest of evil.

The Society has, however, shaped its policy on broad and intelligible lines, being undeterred by the opposition of those interested in the traffic, and uninfluenced by the conscientious, yet untenable position of those who would forbid the manufacture as well as the sale of intoxicants.

Its position is this: it deplores the evil which intemperance produces; it labours to deliver the victims of this terrible sin from their wretched condition; it is anxious, in the spirit of the Lord Jesus, to seek and save the lost. Many of its members are willing to surrender their liberty for the sake of their weaker brethren; they strive not to put a stumbling-block or an occasion to fall in their brother's way, and feel it to be good neither to eat flesh nor to drink wine, nor anything whereby a brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak; but they do not make that a sin which God has not made sin, nor do they forbid that which God has not forbidden. Hence the Church Society stops short of that total prohibition which many, even of its own members, earnestly contend for.

It will thus be seen that the Church of England Temperance Society differs very decidedly from the United Kingdom Alliance. That organization has as its object the total and immediate legislative suppression of the traffic in all intoxicating liquors, because it believes that it is neither right nor politic for the State to afford legal protection and sanction to any traffic or system that tends to increase crime, to waste the national resources, to corrupt the social habits, and to destroy the health and lives of the people. With an equal hatred of intemperance, the object of the Church Society is Restriction rather than Prohibition. But it advocates greater restriction than at present, viz., that the public want, rather than the

public interest, shall regulate the number of houses which shall be privileged to retail this liquor.

And in order to obtain this restriction it suggests a change in the licensing authority, whereby the ratepayers shall be directly represented in the regulation of the traffic.

The Prohibitory Permissive Bill would enable two-thirds of the ratepayers to say there shall be no licenses at all within the district that the ratepayers cover, but it gives no power to say there shall be only one licensed house instead of five, or ten instead of fifty; nor does it propose, as we have said before, any change in the licensing system.

Many have been under the impression that Sir Wilfrid Lawson's proposal did give a power to regulate the number of licenses issued, and under this misconception they have supported his efforts in order to show their desire for a diminution in the number of public-houses, though they were not prepared to vote for entire prohibition. To them "local option" conveyed the meaning of "local control," and, as they understood it, enabled the ratepayers to say much more than "Yes," or "No," on this grave and perplexing question.

But "local control" is surely more than this; it means, according to the Church of England Temperance Society's idea, entire control locally of the renewal and issue of licenses, and the complete regulation, under Imperial enactment, of the traffic in intoxicants. It means a reorganization of the licensing system, not so as to leave it entirely at the mercy of the popular will, which might not always be wise, or wisely expressed, but so as to give the people who suffer from the present abounding temptations power to say, "These temptations must cease."

The following notes, under various heads, will fully explain the details of the scheme :

### *I. Licensing Authority.*

The proposal is the preservation of a magisterial element in conjunction with direct representatives. Such a provision is seen in the elected board of guardians with magistrates and ex officio members. It is thought the magistrates would be of great value on the licensing board; they are men of varied experience; they have acquired some measure of judicial attainments; they have the country's interest and order at heart; and the present generation of magistrates have, on the whole, shown themselves anxious to prevent an undue increase in the number of licenses. Associated as they would be, were these proposals accepted, with the elected members of the board, there might be fairly expected a statesmanlike treatment of the subject, at once progressive and moderate, effective and fair.

II. *Spirit Licenses to Shopkeepers.*

It is proposed, it will have been observed, that retail spirit licenses to shop-keepers shall be discontinued. Although it may be difficult, as the Lords' Committee state in their Report, to obtain direct evidence in support of the view that much female intemperance has been caused by the facility which these licenses afford of obtaining spirits unknown to their friends, yet the evidence given before the Lords' Committee by Canon Ellison, Mr. Pease, M.P., and others, and that subsequently collected by the Women's Union Branch of the C.E.T.S., proves, beyond question, the desirability of the suppression of such licenses, being, as they are, one of the chief factors in producing what the *Times* has recently termed "a very serious social evil."

III. *Reduction of Licenses.*

(a) *Forfeiture*.—With reference to forfeiture of license, on a second conviction, few can raise an objection. The privilege of sale being great, the conditions on which the privilege is granted ought to be faithfully observed. When violations of those conditions are proved, the transgressor ought to forfeit the privilege he enjoys. The mischief which unprincipled traders in intoxicants can do to the community is incalculable; and gross carelessness endangering life, as well as gross conduct subversive of morals, ought to be punished. Loss of privilege is not undue severity after repeated transgression.

(b) *Compensation*.—With reference to compensation, there has been much difference of opinion. Many contend that the consequences of the traffic in intoxicating liquors are so terrible, and its profits so vast, that compensation should rather be exacted from those engaged in it, for the evils they produce, than any consideration be extended them should they be prohibited from carrying on a business dangerous to the well-being of the people. Here, as in other features of the Bill, justice, rather than feeling, has prevailed in the councils of the Church of England Temperance Society. Rightly or wrongly, wisely or unwisely, the nation, and Parliament, its supreme representative, have permitted interests to arise which have attained to considerable money value, and which have become negotiable in open market. Though, technically speaking, licenses have been only granted for a year, and have been renewed only year by year, yet they have been practically accepted as permanent by the magistrates, as the licensing authority, and the public, for whose convenience licenses have been supposed to exist; and when a large outlay has been made for the purpose of meeting the requirements of the law, and when a man's capital has been invested in the



purchase, etc., of a house to which a license is attached, it has been considered only consonant with justice that renewal licenses should not be objected to, or withheld, as in the cases of application for additional new ones. And therefore, whether the term be a happy one or not, or whether such growth has been wisely permitted or not, it does not affect the position or argument, that there has gradually grown up in connection with these licenses a certain "vested interest." It may be impossible at times to estimate the real extent of this interest, and it may be difficult to distinguish between the real and fictitious value of a house to which a license to sell intoxicating liquors is attached; but that there is such value, a value negotiable, none can deny. When, therefore, in the interests of the community, the licensing authority should deem it advisable not to renew a license to any particular house, the house having been conducted in strict conformity with the laws concerning its management, it seems but mere justice that the loss of this value, fictitious in part though it be, should not fall exclusively upon the holder of the license, but in some equitable manner should be compensated for from a fund specially raised for the purpose. In this way, and with such provision, reduction in the number of licensed houses could be enforced by the licensing authority without injustice to license-holders; and by the voluntary surrender of licenses by their holders, on similar terms, a large diminution in the number of public-houses would be secured.

The following, then, are the principles upon which the Bill promoted by the C. E. T. S. is based.

1. The Liquor Traffic cannot properly be prohibited.
2. It is the duty of the State to regulate and control it.
3. The license to sell, being a monopoly, should be disposed of for its fair value.
4. The sale being for the accommodation of the people, the people themselves should have a potential voice in defining the limits of the traffic.

The extensive field which the objects and operations of the C.E.T.S. cover, provides congenial work for all members of the Church of England. Every position may find its appropriate sphere of labour, every conviction its harmonious outlet; and it must be gratifying to its promoters, and especially to Canon Ellison, its founder and chairman, that, in addition to its half million of members, it has secured the hearty support of every Bishop, and the warmest expressions of approbation from leading Dissenters. May the Society's prayer be soon answered, that God will be pleased speedily to grant a Temperance Reformation in this our beloved land!

J. R. O. WEST.