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DRINKERS AND THE ANTI-DRINK MOVEMENT
IN SYDNEY, 1870-1930

by

QUENTIN BERESFORD

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
in the Australian National University.

July 1984
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I dedicate this thesis to the memory of my father, Rex William Beresford.
ABSTRACT

In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries the public consumption of alcohol and drunkenness excited strong passions. Between the late 1860s and the late 1920s a politically active anti-drink movement attempted to win legislative measures aimed at the abolition, or at least the curtailment, of the drink trade. This movement was inspired by evangelical Protestants but, especially after the turn of the century, the anti-drink crusade became a popular cause. It received enthusiastic support from sections of the middle class, living in the wealthier suburbs; from women's groups, particularly suffragettes; and also from 'respectable' working men.

Throughout the long campaign, anti-drink crusaders were resisted by libertarians, Catholics and by the drinking public, all of whom defended the individual's right, as one parliamentarian put it, 'to take a glass of grog if he wished'. The conflict between these groups was a central feature of social and political life until 1928. In that year the anti-drink cause suffered a massive defeat in the referendum on prohibition.

Anti-drink militants, and especially evangelical leaders, regarded themselves as social reformers. They linked society's major social problems, poverty, deserted children and prostitution - with the drinking habits of the working classes in particular. The drinking habits of these people, however, cannot be separated from their often deprived living environment which, according to progressive-minded contemporaries, showed that drinking was as much an outcome of poverty as a cause of it.
Habits of drinking and patronage of public houses were not limited to the working classes. In late nineteenth century society there were, broadly, three categories of drinkers. Both the inner-city working man and his wealthier, suburban neighbour shared a fondness for the entertainments and conviviality of public houses. There were, however, important differences in the customs of drinking between these two groups. Working class drinkers drank cheap, inferior liquor in less salubrious surroundings than was the case with the wealthier patrons. Working men were also much more likely to be arrested and gaol for drunkenness. The 'down and out' alcoholics were a separate category of drinkers whose plight helped fuel temperance agitation but who received little material help from either crusaders or government.

Anti-drink crusaders' ignorance of the 'culture' of drinking and the medical treatment of chronic drinkers fostered their single-minded faith in drastic legislative remedies. Campaigners functioned as a disciplined political pressure group and in this way forced parliament to agree to enact restrictive measures.

The effect of these measures, however, was not to bring about the hoped-for social reformation, but to criminalise the drink trade. Publicans commonly broke the restrictive laws and committed perjury in self-defence, and sly-grog selling attracted many entrepreneurs. Although the anti-drink campaign was not successful in abolishing the liquor traffic, it served a useful role in awakening public attention to the use and abuse of intoxicants.
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INTRODUCTION

In August 1982 two 'interesting and historically significant' organizations - the New South Wales Temperance Alliance and the Woman's Christian Temperance Union - celebrated their centenary. To mark the occasion both societies arranged for a number of special events - lectures, displays of non-alcoholic wines and a thanksgiving service at St. Andrew's Cathedral. The public and the press took scarcely any notice of these proceedings. This lack of interest represents a major change in social attitudes about drinking for, during the second half of the nineteenth century, and especially in the early decades of the twentieth century, the Alliance and the W.C.T.U. were powerful bodies; leaders in a movement to abolish the liquor traffic. It is not easy to understand today the vehemence of their opposition to drinking and to the drink trade. That question is, however, central to this thesis, in which I attempt to trace the rise of the political anti-drink movement; to account for its successes; and to explain its ultimate decline.

The 'drink problem' was universal in advanced Western societies during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The use and abuse of alcoholic beverages still remains a central feature, and a problem, of these societies. But drinking was regarded as a particularly important issue in English speaking countries during a time of rapid industrialization and urbanization when social change was seen as being related to, or exacerbated by, the universality of drinking in Western cultures.

1 S.M.H., 17 August 1982.
The question of solving the 'drink problem' assumed particular importance in Australia. This was reflected in the range of anti-drink legislation passed here. All the colonial, and later state governments restricted the trade by legislation. These measures included provisions for district plebiscites on prohibition, and the closure of public houses on Sundays and at six pm. In some cases these restrictions have persisted until very recently and have been marked by some distinctive characteristics, particularly the six o'clock swill and widespread sly-grog selling.

New South Wales provides an especially good case study of the handling of the 'drink problem'. The anti-drink crusade persisted longer here than in other states: in New South Wales the question of legislating to abolish the liquor traffic remained a lively political issue until the late 1920s. Moreover, the body of anti-drink legislation put on the New South Wales statute book was more drastic than that of any of the other colonies. The New South Wales parliament, for example, was the only colonial legislature to pass measures setting up local option (prohibition) polls every three years. New South Wales was also the only Australian state in the early twentieth century to hold a referendum on prohibition. For examining detailed aspects of the drink question the sources are, fortunately, very rich. Between 1850-1900 the Legislative Assembly initiated six major inquiries into drinking and anti-drink legislation. No other colony equalled this investigative activity.

A number of works already map out the broad contours of the anti-drink movement in New South Wales between 1870 and 1930, the principal years covered in this study. Because of its overwhelming Protestant character this movement is briefly discussed in three studies which centre on the history of Protestant involvement in social and
political issues: Walter Phillips, *Defending "A Christian Country"*; J.D. Bollen, *Protestantism and Social Reform 1890-1910*, and Richard Broome, *Treasure In Earthen Vessels*. Each of these authors shows that temperance was an issue of very great importance for the Protestant churches. However, they differ in explaining why Protestants were so anxious about the drink question. Bollen sees their disquiet as an aspect of their commitment to social improvement although he does not examine what connections Protestants made between liquor and social ills. Phillips draws upon the statements of contemporary churchmen to suggest that the campaign for temperance was primarily a campaign against 'unnecessary poverty'. Broome, on the other hand, argues that the Protestant crusade against drink stemmed from a desire less for general social reform than for moral regeneration.

These writers of course do not set out to construct comprehensive histories of the anti-drink movement: that subject is for them but an aspect of their wider interest in the workings of Protestantism. Nor are they overly interested in such concern about the drink problem as developed outside the churches. Therefore they do not examine the process which brought about considerable anti-drink legislation. This can only be achieved by adopting a broad perspective of the anti-drink movement, tracing it from its foundation through its various efforts to build popular support and political influence.

In addition to these works on Protestantism, the six o'clock closing

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campaign in 1916 is examined by two authors. Dan Coward has a chapter on this issue in his thesis on World War One and Walter Phillips has written an article on the subject. I cover similar ground to these authors, especially in examining the political background to the introduction of six o'clock closing.

However, in keeping with the themes which form the basis of my study, my emphases also differ from Coward and Phillips. In particular, I show how the anti-drink movement functioned as a political pressure group in 1916 which Coward and Phillips are not concerned to do in any detail. Moreover, I am able to bring into sharper focus the importance of the anti-drink movement's social ideology in 1916 as I have traced its strength and development in the preceding decades.

There is a considerable body of secondary source literature dealing with the Woman's Christian Temperance Union both in Australia and overseas. As I do not set out to construct a detailed history of any one particular anti-drink organization the WCTU does not have the prominence in my study that it might deserve if examined in its own right.

I do not discuss the wider 'social purity' activities of the WCTU as Anthea Hyslop and Judith Smart have so ably done in respect of the Victorian organization. The all-encompassing commitment of the WCTU to social and moral reform led to members' involvement in many areas of social work including mothercraft, child care, education, domestic science and

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W. Phillips, 'Six O'Clock Swill': the Introduction of Early Closing of Hotel Bars In Australia', *Historical Studies*, vol. 19, no. 75 October 1980.


J. Smart 'The Panacea of Prohibition The Reaction of The Woman's Temperance Union of Victoria to The Great War', ibid.
venereal disease. Ian Tyrrell's article on the American impact of the WCTU is useful in placing the activities of the Australian organization in an international framework. He shows that the American founder of the womens' crusade, Frances E. Willard, aspired to 'saving both the United States and the rest of the world in one inter-related battle against the forces of evil.'

These students of the WCTU in Australia have provided a wider perspective with which to view the organization in New South Wales. There is general agreement that members of the WCTU were ardent Christians and feminists. The organization was certainly dedicated to obtaining the vote for women and involving them in public campaigns. Ian Tyrrell has pointed out that these activities were important in fostering female identity. Yet the feminism held to by members 'was mingled' with a highly moral view of womanhood and of life in general.

The WCTU functioned as a political pressure group in similar ways to other Protestant anti-drink organizations. But it was never an especially powerful organization in Australia. It certainly did not reach the heights of influence that its counterpart in America achieved, as Ian Tyrrell points out and briefly examines. Therefore I do not examine this aspect of the organization in the detail that Judith Smart has done, and her work provides a wider framework for understanding the political techniques adopted by the organization.

The issues I examine are substantially different from the existing Australian secondary source literature. In this study I seek to examine the

8 Ibid., p. 297.
9 A. Hyslop, op. cit., p. 56.
10 I. Tyrrell, op. cit., pp. 301-304.
anti-drink campaign as a subject in its own right, attempting to analyse it as a popular reform movement, putting it into a broader social context and relating it to changing patterns of drinking. Though no studies of this kind exist in the Australian field, I have found three recent British works particularly stimulating for my thinking: Brian Harrison's *Drink and the Victorians*, A.E. Dingle's *The Campaign for Prohibition in Victorian England*; and Paul McHugh's *Prostitution and Victorian Social Reform*. Harrison's study of the temperance movement between 1815-1872 has been particularly valuable, especially his focus on the ideology of anti-drink campaigners and the role of drink and public houses in society. Dingle's book follows on from Harrison's study. It examines the efforts of the United Kingdom Alliance to secure local option legislation. Large sections of the book deal with the structure of the Alliance machine and the campaign tactics used by organizers. McHugh examines the movement headed by Josephine Butler for the repeal of the Contagious Diseases Acts. He too looks closely at the organization, strategies and support base of that movement.

Study of the anti-drink crusade as a popular reform movement raises a number of the issues which the last mentioned group of writers discuss in different contexts. The first of them is the ideology of the campaign. Evangelical Protestantism generated the agitation against drink. Reformist advocates defined their case against the liquor traffic as being one of social reform. They maintained that drinking was at the root of most social problems, particularly those affecting the working classes. Hence, evangelicals argued that social improvement could only be achieved by the curtailment, or better still, the abolition of the liquor trade. Central to their outlook was the belief that people's behaviour could be changed by legislation to punish infringements of the desired code. One important aim of this thesis is to examine this belief, and its persistence in the face of the development of differing constructions of social reality.
Protestant anti-drink crusaders presented their campaign as a popular, or people's, cause; one which they believed represented the interests of the entire population. Over time its leaders did attract a number of diverse groups to its cause. The anti-drink campaign furthermore achieved notable legislative successes and in seeking to understand how such gains were made, the changing organizational structure and political tactics used by its leaders also require study.

Examining the anti-drink crusade as a popular reform movement has inevitably involved an attempt to examine the place of drink in society. Such a study is required to appreciate the concerns of the anti-drink activists and the reasons for the limited impact of their restrictive measures. There are few secondary sources which examine habits of drinking in late 19th and early 20th centuries. Michael Cannon has some brief and impressionistic accounts of drinking among the urban middle-class and among bush workers. 11 A.E. Dingle has made 'general and frankly speculative' observations on 19th century drinking patterns, 12 although most of his discussion focuses on convict times where he noted that 'it appears that much drinking was motivated by a desire to escape.' 13 Of the post-gold rush period Dingle wonders whether the functions of the public house underpinned habits of drinking, but he acknowledges the lack of research in this area. 14 These authors have not set out to discover the 'culture' of public house life, or the effects of restrictive legislation on patterns of drinking.


13 Ibid. p. 237.

14 Ibid. p. 240.
Fortunately there is very rich evidence for constructing a detailed picture of the role of drink and public houses in contemporary society, which the above mentioned authors do not examine. A variety of newspaper references together with the valuable information contained in parliamentary inquiries, especially the 1886-87 Royal Commission into Intoxicating Drinks, allows us to assess drinking both as a social pastime and as a form of drug addiction.

In considering the different drinking patterns evident over the period I have had to try to distinguish between different types of drinkers, at least as they were contemporaneously perceived. This was unavoidable not only for analytical clarity but also because an essential element in the shaping of reformers' policies and tactics was clearly their perception of who the drinkers were and how their actions were to be explained: in other words with what construction of social reality they worked. The empirical evidence, including the reformers' propaganda, suggests the utility of using a simple model which defines three broad categories of drinkers and has obvious class overtones.

Firstly, the 'down and outs' or 'social outcasts' refers to the category of chronic drinkers who lived mainly in the streets and who constituted one of the poorest sections of the community.

Working class drinkers constitute a second, distinct category. I have tried to identify this group by their occupational backgrounds. There appears to have been considerable uniformity in drinking habits among unskilled and semi-skilled workers, but much less commonality within the skilled working class. Many of these workers were active teetotallers and in one section of the thesis I discuss their life-style. However, large numbers of working class people drank regularly in city, and inner-city public houses, where they also often played games and gambled. It was this class of public house which most
worried anti-drink activists. Rev. Dr. F.B. Boyce, a leader of the anti-drink crusade, explained to the 1886-87 Royal Commission into Intoxicating Drinks that although the lower [class of public] houses are a danger to the working classes, and the better houses are dangerous to the upper classes ... [on the] whole, the lower houses are the most dangerous, because the working man has not as good or attractive a home as his richer neighbour, and therefore he necessarily goes off to the public house.

The third category of drinkers belonged to the 'respectable' classes. I have also tried, whenever possible, to identify this group by their occupational background. 'Respectability' describes their education and their office or professional callings. They also drank in city hotels but secluded from the mass of drinkers.

In distinguishing between these categories of drinkers and their patterns of drink consumption, statistics are of little help. Indeed, there is no satisfactory way to quantify either consumption of alcohol or arrests for drunkenness. Customs returns permit an overall picture of per-capita drink consumption, but such figures are not very useful in this study for they give no insight into which social groups drank most heavily. Moreover, changing fiscal policy makes it difficult to construct changing patterns of consumption with any accuracy. Police figures on arrests for drunkenness are unsatisfactory for determining changing patterns of drunkenness and the social groups involved. Because the law itself, and its enforcement, changed at different times, the figures are unreliable indicators.

There are a number of areas, related to the topics of drinking and temperance, that I either do not cover in the thesis or deal with only in passing. It is not my intention to present an institutional history of

16 See A.E. Dingle, op. cit.
any of the temperance societies. Their importance to my study is not as separate entities, but as part of a popular campaign. Moreover, I do not examine the structure or economy of the beer or wine industries, except where it helps to explain the quality of liquor sold to the public.

The thesis follows a chronological structure. Parliamentary events provide the focus for all the chapters except that one which deals with patterns of drinking in late nineteenth century. Its place in the thesis was determined by the evidence of the 1886-87 Royal Commission. Chapters dealing with anti-drink legislation examine such issues as the ideology of the campaign, the tactics used to win legislation, the provisions of the Acts, and the effects of restrictive measures on the drink trade and on the character of drinking.

The anti-drink campaign occupied an important place in the public and political life of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. A study of its rise and decline, in all its social and political dimensions, can tell us a considerable amount about the nature of society. In particular it allows us to see the hopes many held for a better world along with some of the customs and habits central to the lives of its citizens.
CHAPTER ONE

EVANGELICALISM AND THE EVILS OF DRINK

1832-1869

Organizations devoted to restricting the use of liquor first appeared in the northern United States at the beginning of the nineteenth century. They accompanied the spread of revivalism in religion and the concern among evangelicals with the welfare of the souls of their fellow men.¹ From America the temperance crusade spread to Ireland where a charismatic Catholic priest, Theobald Mathew, captured the nation's attention with his campaign against the evils of alcohol in the 1840s. The temperance message found welcoming support in England where evangelicalism was also an important force in its development.²

This first wave of the temperance movement reached Australia in 1832 with the visit of two English Quaker missionaries, James Backhouse and George Washington Walker. They founded a society in 1832 and devotees formed the New South Wales Temperance Society two years later. The early years of temperance in the colony form an important background to understanding the nature of anti-drink activity from the late 1860s onwards. The character of this later, political phase differed in some important respects from the movement that originated when the colony was primarily a dumping ground for convicts. The developments that occurred in temperance thought in the three decades after its establishment show a gradual realization of the need for legislative action to contain the liquor traffic. This realization replaced the belief that temperate habits would result from 'reformation' of the individual.


In the 1830s two rival societies campaigned against liquor in New South Wales. One was the already mentioned New South Wales Temperance Society and the second, the Total Abstinence Society, was formed in 1838. The organizations professed to have distinct characters. The Temperance Society advocated moderation in the use of liquor while, as its name implies, the Total Abstinence Society believed in teetotalism. In reality similarities between the two bodies outweighed their differences. The leadership of both was dominated by Protestant clergy whose evangelical fervour inspired a concern about the damaging effects of drinking habits on the moral condition of the individual. The view was commonly expressed that it was the duty of mankind to live in accordance with the word of the Gospel; 'the grand moral remedy for the world'.

'S Christianity', activists in the New South Wales Temperance Society often declared, 'holds all vice in abhorrence'. The Bible was quoted for its warning against the immoderate use of liquor especially the passage in which

Paul, while recommending wine to Timothy medically, declares it is good neither to eat flesh nor to drink wine, nor anything whereby thy brother stumbleth or is offended or made weak.

Total Abstinence Society members also declared that the 'Author of Existence' had called for drunkenness to be banished 'from among the vices of mankind'.

Michael Roe has shown that the crusaders of the 1830s and early 1840s believed temperance to be essential to the moral regeneration of society. The prominent teetotaller, Rev. M.T. Adam, clearly expressed

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3 Australian Temperance Magazine, vol 1, no 12, 1 June 1838.
4 Ibid., vol 1, no.4, 1 October 1837.
5 Ibid. 6 S.H., 30 June 1840.
7 M. Roe, Quest For Authority in Eastern Australia 1835-1851, Melbourne, 1965, p.168.
this objective when he warned that the 'habit of intemperance' led to the 'neglect of mental and moral cultivation'. 8 The Australian Temperance Magazine also maintained that drinking was the greatest obstacle to 'moral enlightenment' because alcohol incapacitated the mind for the consideration of deep and abstruse enquiries, and occasioning a spirit of apathy and indifference in the cultivation of moral and religious subjects. 9

The call for men to moderate or renounce their habits of drinking held out the promise of social advancement through individual regeneration. Intemperate drinkers who had 'sunk below the beasts', could be elevated to 'temperate, thinking and intellectual beings' 10 who would prize 'useful knowledge', 'intellectual enjoyment' and 'moral and religious' subjects. 11

The early temperance movement thus conceptualised the evils of drink in moral terms. But avoidance of this particular vice was envisaged as part of a larger vision for an improved society. A more refined state of civilization in New South Wales would be attainable once the 'baleful' influences of drink had disappeared. But the new moral world was not to be created by legislation. The notion of state intervention to regulate social affairs had not gained currency. The spirit behind evangelicalism fostered the view that the cause of people's indulgence in liquor lay not in socio-economic conditions but in the individual weaknesses of men. It was this reasoning which lay behind the moral suasion methods used by campaigners to dissuade drinkers from temptation.

Both the New South Wales Temperance Society and the Total Abstinence Society placed great faith in the use of the 'pledge'. The Temperance

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8 Temperance Advocate, vol.1, no.47, 25 August 1841.
9 Australian Temperance Magazine, vol.1, no.1, 1 July 1837.
10 Temperance Advocate, vol.1, no.1., 7 October 1840.
11 Australian Temperance Magazine, vol.1, no.1, 1 July 1837.
Society required participants to sign a pledge of moderation. Members believed that this was 'the substantial point on which the Society rests'. The Total Abstinence Society maintained that pledge-signing was an act of will sufficient to prevent even the most hardened drinker from renewing his habit. It amounted, one society member felt, to being 'raised by ...[a] re-generating lever'. Thus, pledge-signers imitated the process of conversion and gained admission to the company of the saved. The Total Abstinence Society, which carried its crusade among the working population, held regular meetings to help abstainers keep faithful to the pledge. At a typical meeting in 1840, Mr Marsh was one such speaker. Described as a 'practical gardener', he came forward to give his testimony as to the benefits he had received from making the experiment of being a tee-totaler; he saved cash by it, and he had got his health improved.

In spite of the zealous efforts of its early advocates, this first phase of the temperance movement, closely linked to evangelical religion and its accompanying methods of moral suasion faded away in the early 1840's. The loss of enthusiasm among members of temperance and teetotal societies appears to have resulted, in part, from financial problems which forced both organizations to cease publication of their journals. The Australian Temperance Magazine and the Temperance Advocate had publicised crusaders' views on the moral and physical injury inflicted by liquor. Moreover, by the early 1840s prominent anti-drink crusaders had realized that methods of moral suasion were inadequate to achieve the social reform they desired.

Brian Harrison, in his study of the British temperance movement of this period, concluded that pledge-signers frequently abandoned their commitment.

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12 Temperance Advocate, vol.1, no.15, 13 January 1841.
13 Ibid., vol.1, no.44, 4 August 1841. 14 S.H., 28 November 1840.
because 'a mere pledge-signing did not modify the social conditions which had fostered the drinking'. Prominent anti-drink crusaders recognized that the pledge had failed to modify the drinking habits of many hardened drinkers although they did not always appreciate why this was so. Rev. W.B. Boyce, an English-born Wesleyan, believed that the temperance societies had not fulfilled their expectations. Their chief effects, he believed, was simply to prevent 'temperate persons from becoming drunkards, and occasionally a few drunkards are reformed.' The majority of temperance supporters, Boyce continued, 'are generally persons not likely to be intemperate' and thus they did not offer an effective 'cure of intemperance already rife'.

Rev. A. Stephens observed that many of the drinkers whom he had encouraged to sign the pledge did not stand by their commitment. He remarked that pledges were

very often faithfully kept for a time...I have never been able to induce anybody to take it for the remainder of their lives; they will it for six, nine, or twelve months, but at the end of that time, I think they break out worse than ever in the generality of cases.

Dr Francis Campbell was well placed to comment on the efficiency of the pledge. He was Superindendent of the Tarban creek Lunatic Asylum which annually recieved a number of chronic drinkers. He had encountered numerous drinkers who had not kept their pledge. 'I know an old man', he said, 'who has pledged himself numberless times, and returned again and again to the habit.' Thus, conversion to teetotalism through pledge-signing was not a process for the many, and was confined only to those with strong wills.

15 B. Harrison, op.cit., p. 356.
17 Ibid., p.39. 18 Ibid., p.16.
Temperance work remained in decline until the later 1850s. In the aftermath of the gold rushes the fear of social destabilisation, together with an accompanying curiosity about social issues, brought on drinking and drunkenness as a public issue. In 1854 the Legislative Council established the first parliamentary inquiry into drinking. The Select Committee into Intemperance was one of a spate of inquiries into a surprisingly wide range of social issues instigated by liberals in the Council. In less than two years these inquiries covered, in addition to intemperance, matters including juvenile vagrancy and desitution, adulteration of food, pawnbroking, public health, city administration, immigration, Asiatic labour and education. These committees were established during the time the colony was awaiting self-government and, it was almost as if members...sensed they were 'marking time' and were content to let the curious have their heads. The investigations might do some good and could do no immediate harm, given tacit agreement on the Council's incompetence to legislate.19

The Committee into Intemperance was chaired by Charles Cowper, the leader of the liberals in the Council, and included other prominent Council members. Notable among them was Henry Parkes, 'an eager reformer and a new Member anxious to make his mark.' 20 Witnesses to the Committee were drawn from Sydney's most 'reliable' classes with police officers and clergymen well represented among them. Committee members and witnesses were content to express their disquiet over the incidence of drunkenness without recommending measures of reform. Nevertheless, the inquiry was significant for the picture it constructed of the social locality of problem drinking. The views expressed by the committee about the groups most prone to intemperate habits echoed the judgment - or,


20 Ibid., pp.344-45.
perhaps more accurately - the prejudices of temperance workers in this and later periods. James Dowling, Police Magistrate for Sydney, informed the Committee that the people most prone to drunkenness were

The lowest of the low - women of the town, barrowmen, and men with no fixed abodes or habitations, who get their livings casually.21 Others agreed with this assessment. Rev. W.B. Boyce, for example, declared that drunkenness had spread mainly among 'the very lowest class'.22 Some witnesses expanded their definition of the 'drinking classes' to include skilled artisans and small tradesmen. But evidence on the location of public houses confirmed in the minds of committeemen that drunkenness was essentially a lower-class phenomenon. Inspector Henry Garvin told the Committee:

cases of drunkenness are chiefly seen near public houses of the lower order, in such places as the back lanes in Kent-street, Sussex-street and Durand's alley.23

In the decade after the mid-1850s temperance crusaders saw their role as being to force the working classes to be more temperate. In spite of this changing emphasis evangelicalism continued to be a source of inspiration for members of the various societies which now emerged. Supporters of the Band of Hope, which was formed in 1856, were motivated by the 'great aim to promote the inestimable blessing of true morality and evangelical religion'.24 The New South Wales Alliance for the Suppression of Intemperance was established by Rev. Joseph Beazley, a Congregational minister, at a public meeting in February 1857. It was similarly concerned about the destructive impact of drinking habits on religious observance. 'Our present drinking patterns', Rev. James Fullerton, a Presbyterian minister, told an early meeting of the

21 Select Committee on Intemperance, op.cit., p.1.
22 Ibid., p.46. 23 Ibid., p.81.
Alliance, 'enslave men, and counteract the gospel at home'. Lesser known temperance organizations such as the Sydney Bethel Union Total Abstinence Society and the Christian Temperance Aid Society were, as their names indicate, likewise founded on Christian, sectarian principles. Each of these temperance societies remained convinced that the Scriptures were a 'power in advancing the cause'.

In the late 1850s temperance work was also shaped by the prevailing belief in social progress which was frequently discussed in the press. As an ideal it was seen as an accompaniment to industrial progress by which the benefits of material wealth would naturally extend to a 'general advance in the comfort and prosperity of all classes' and a heightened interest in cultural and intellectual affairs. This belief encouraged the view, again widely extolled in the press, that the working man would gradually assimilate the values of 'respectability'. He would come to appreciate orderly behaviour and social responsibility and would prize material comfort and intellectual interests. With these 'elevated' aspirations working people would no longer abuse liquor. The Herald commented that 'sound education', and 'rational and humanizing recreations' would gradually weaken the working man's temptation to visit 'the beer shop or gin palace'. The paper maintained that intemperance was not within reach of direct legislation but that sound education can do much, the supply of manly and intellectual recreations much... The schoolmaster is the best temperance lecturer - the cricket field, museum and reading room the most successful rivals to the dram-shop.

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25 S.M.H., 16 May 1857.
27 S.M.H., 20 June 1857.
28 Empire, 11 January 1855.
29 S.M.H., 18 October 1859.
The optimism that lay behind a belief in social progress led to support for the reduction in working hours which began in the mid-1850s and for the spread of mechanics' institutes, libraries and sports. These developments would, as the Empire believed, have a 'refreshing and elevating' influence on working people, and would provide valuable counter-attractions to the 'pestilential atmosphere of the public-house'.

Mechanics' institutes were particularly highly prized for these reasons. Institutes for working people originated in Britain in the late 1820s to provide adult education and technical skills. The same purpose lay behind the formation, in 1833, of a Mechanics' Institute in Sydney. It was designed for 'the diffusion of Scientific and Other Useful Knowledge among the Mechanics of New South Wales'. However membership and interest in the institutes were slow to develop until the 1850s. Thereafter their social role was widely acclaimed. The Empire wrote that mechanics' institutes provided the means to acquire 'useful knowledge' and to participate in 'rational' recreations:

Step and figure dancing and quadrille classes, in which both sexes take a part, [and which] are supposed not only to furnish an agreeable relaxation to the toiling poor, but to cultivate among them a taste for poetry and motion.

Mechanics' institutes were welcomed for their potential as an alternative place of recreation to the public house. The Herald maintained that public houses owed their attractions to both a social and physical need. In what was an unusually perceptive social comment for the time the journalist asserted that men did not visit the tavern 'merely to tickle their palates'; they went 'to have a chatty smoke, and

30 Empire, 11 November 1862.  31 Bell's Life, 1 August 1857.
33 Empire, 29 August 1860.
with the craving for a pleasant evening'. In a later chapter I will examine the social role of drink and public houses before the turn of the century. The scattered information available to help explain their appeal at mid-century supports the Herald's comments. Charles MacAlister described the entertainment and fellowship in the hotel he most frequented in the late 1840s - the Blackboy - on the corner of George and King streets, Sydney where:

A kind of theatre or people's music-hall was kept in connection with this hotel, where the leading comedians and singers were Jim Brown and 'Micky' Drew; but as the platform of the Blackboy 'Theatre' was somewhat free and easy, sometimes a strong sailorman... would favour us with 'Nancy Lee' or some other jolly sea-song; or an ambitious carrier or drover would 'rouse the 'possum' by giving some long-winded ditty of the time.

Advertisements placed in the daily press by hotel proprietors also illustrate the significant role played by their establishments in the social life of communities where working people lived. In the later 1850s publicans attracted customers by offering a diverse range of entertainments - evenings of comic song and music, facilities for playing cards and billiards and sometimes venues for challenge boxing matches and pigeon races. This recreational role mirrored that of the English metropolitan public house, which Brian Harrison has so well described.

In their approval of mechanics' institutes journalists were confident that the convivial atmosphere which made the hotel so popular could be transferred to working men's institutes. The sitting room of a working men's club, wrote the Herald, could be made as appealing as a tavern

34 S.M.H., 23 May 1865.
parlour with all the facilities for 'a friendly chat' while they kept 'sensual temptation at bay'. The evidence indicates that the lofty ideals of the promoters of mechanics' institutes were never realized. The working people for whom they were intended were not drawn to the institutes in significant numbers.

Nevertheless, the new temperance societies of the 1850s and early 1860s reflected these ideals of social progress. Thus, they changed the emphasis earlier temperance advocates had placed on both the efficiency of the pledge and the use of moral exhortation. During these years the various societies worked to increase their membership. They also acted as vehicles for raising public awareness about the extent and evils of drink and the remedies that could alleviate its blight. The journal of the Band of Hope was the principal means of dissemination of temperance ideas. It repeatedly advocated the necessity of counteracting intemperance through the provision of 'rational' amusements. It praised, for example, the role of sports. Any activity which developed 'courage and manliness' was a powerful help to those struggling to counteract drinking customs. The editor called upon teetotallers 'to patronize all innocent and invigorating out-door games'. In expressing support for these methods the Band of Hope asserted that earlier temperance workers had been misguided. They had mistakenly believed that 'the great masses of mankind' could be transformed at once 'by the enunciation of mere abstract truth'. Past crusaders had not sufficiently employed the 'improving influences' of study and song or fought the 'grog-shop' with

37 S.M.H., 23 May 1865; see also Empire, 2 June 1855; Illustrated Sydney News, 16 October 1866.
38 D.I. McDonald, op.cit., p.191; M. Roe, op.cit., p.186.
the reading room and the music hall. When Sir Alfred Stephen, a prominent supporter of the organization, addressed a meeting in May 1857 he stated that part of the organization's objectives should be to provide 'useful instructions' to the people; to arrange concerts and other 'agreeable' entertainments which would 'attract the masses... and to deter them as much as possible from frequenting public houses'.

Practical steps were taken to attain these ideals. In 1859 temperance supporters raised sufficient funds to build their own hall which they erected in Pitt street. Part of the reason for the construction of premises was the recurrent costs societies incurred in renting meeting rooms. Members were also keen to have their own venue where they could provide chosen 'amusements' and 'instructions' for working people.

The Band of Hope was actively engaged in this style of educative work. It was modelled on the English Band of Hope which was formed in Leeds in 1847 and which later spread to many centres in England. The Band was conceived as a temperance organization principally for children. Sponsors of the organization believed that this would prove a more effective way to combat intemperance than the already well-tried attempts to alter established adult drinking habits. The Band hoped that by working with children in the fields of recreation and education they could achieve 'a complete reformation in the patterns of behaviour of the lower classes'.

The New South Wales Band had similar objectives. It was their stated

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41 S.M.H., 2 May 1857. 42 Ibid.
44 Ibid., p.49
intention to 'educate' the rising youth in awareness of the 'mischief' of intemperance.\textsuperscript{45} Their journal - The Australian Band of Hope Review (which underwent several changes in name) - was designed to be a 'medium of interest and instruction' to children, and at the same time, 'a source of pleasure and profit to their seniors'.\textsuperscript{46} Band members believed that through their organized activities they would

draw young persons out of the way of temptation: preventing them from attending theatres, casinos, bowling saloons, and even worse places. Such amusements ... have a great tendency to evil.\textsuperscript{47}

Novel means were used in an effort to achieve this objective. A meeting of a 'very large number of boys and girls' belonging to the Band was reported in the \textit{Herald} in 1857. They were to hear a lecture on electricity and electromagnetism, but in the 'usual manner', the children began by singing a temperance rhyme. The lecturer then

succeeded in rivetting the attention of his juvenile audience ... by the exhibition of some amusing experiments. At its conclusion Mr Druery [the lecturer] invited the youngsters to 'take a shock' to which they very readily assented.\textsuperscript{48}

Within a decade the commitment of the temperance movement to the ideals of gradual social progress through education had waned. During the later 1850s the movement hardened its attitude towards reform of intemperance. In 1866 a new organization, the New South Wales Political Association for the Suppression of Intemperance, was formed. I discuss the social significance of the foundation and membership of this organization in the next chapter; here we simply note its place in the broader story of the temperance movement. The Association was founded at a public meeting held in the Temperance Hall on 11 December 1866 by

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{45} Australian Band of Hope Review, vol.1, no.1, January 1856.
\item \textsuperscript{46} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{47} Ibid., vol.1, no.19, 13 September 1856.
\item \textsuperscript{48} S.M.H., 16 April 1857.
\end{itemize}
prominent Protestant clergy who were convinced that 'society needs protection against the demon of intemperance'. The protection which the ministers envisaged required action by government:

'It is high time that something be done to decrease the number of public-houses, to exercise greater caution in granting licenses, and greater vigilance in inspecting public-houses by the police, and in putting a power into the hands of the people to prevent public-houses altogether.'\(^49\)

The founding of the Political Association marked a new and decisive phase in the temperance cause. No longer were the efforts of campaigners focused on ways of 'elevating' the working man in the hope that he could be tempted from liquor. Rather, crusaders launched themselves into a campaign to win legislative measures against the liquor traffic. This change in the policy of the temperance movement reflected wider public anxiety about the state of society, and especially the extent of poverty and the role drink was perceived to play in its spread.

In 1866 the coalition government of Henry Parkes and James Martin was required to develop 'reforming' policies to deal with current problems. Mild economic stagnation 'had tarnished the glitter of progress bringing visible unemployment and destitution'.\(^50\) The government appointed an enquiry into unemployment which concluded that distress existed to an extent never before experienced in Sydney. Although some of the government's reforming measures, particularly those relating to education, vagrant children and prisons, were enlightened for the times, the government dealt with poverty and drunkenness in a draconian way. The Workhouse and Drunkards' Punishment Bills were read on 22 August. The second reading debate of the former bill revealed the government's

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\(^49\) S.M.H., 12 December 1866.

belief that the English workhouse system was required to deal with those who were continually brought before the courts for vagrancy and drunkenness. The bill proposed that any person apprehended who had no lawful means of support, or anyone convicted on three separate occasions for drunkenness, could be summoned before two justices of the peace who were empowered to sentence the persons for a term in the proposed workhouse. The bill also provided for the position of superintendent. He could punish inmates in a number of ways including solitary confinement. The bill did not become law. In fact it was rejected by the House after a brief debate. Several members who spoke in opposition to its passage protested that the measure amounted to treating poverty as a crime and that the proposed workhouse was really a penal establishment. 51 In spite of the bill's rejection by the house its introduction illustrated a hardening of attitude towards those who abused liquor.

The Drunkards' Punishment Bill was indicative of the same trend. Unlike the Workhouse Bill, this measure, which was steered through parliament by the Premier, was enacted. The government originally intended to empower magistrates to sentence persons found drunk, whether disorderly or not, to seven days gaol. However, members of the Assembly forced the ministry to compromise. In its final form the Act provided a fine, not exceeding 20s., for persons found drunk, and a gaol sentence, not exceeding seven days, for those unable to pay their fines immediately. 52 The intention of these measures, which reflected the concerns of philanthropists and the press, was to clamp down on public

51 P.D., S.M.H., 23 August 1866.
52 30° Vic. no.5, N.S.W. Public Statutes, 1862-1874, pp.3739-40.
drunkenness associated with the city and inner-city districts - the
haunts of the lower classes.

At their respective Annual General Meetings in 1865, three charitable
organizations - the Ragged Schools' Association, the City Mission and the
Sydney Female Refuge - had each emphasised the links between drink and
poverty which were believed to permeate working-class life in Sydney.
The Bishop of Sydney, Rev. Dr. Barker, told the Ragged Schools'
Association that the 'abyss of darkness in which so many of the rising
generation lived, mocked at the progress society claimed to have
made'. 53 Rev. W. Kelynack, a Wesleyan minister, told the meeting of
the City Mission that the 'moral condition of Sydney was anything but
satisfactory' and that liquor in particular was ruining the lives of
many. 54 In the following year the Select Committee into Unemployment
added to the growing opinion that distress existed 'to an appalling
extent' in Sydney and that it was associated with drunkenness. The
Committee was told that many able-bodied men were unable to find work 'or
the means to support families': 55 but it was also informed that many of
the older unemployed were 'emaciated men lost with drink', 56 and
therefore, presumably, unemployable.

Concern about the problems of poverty and drink was also raised by
the conservative daily press. On 30 August 1867, for example, the Herald
commented on the 'dark shadows' hanging over the community. The editor
pointed to the 5,000-6,000 people (out of a total population of 400,000)
in charitable institutions and also to the 'vices' of drunkenness and

53 S.M.H., 26 July 1865. 54 Ibid., 13 June 1865.
55 Select Committee on the Unemployed, N.S.W.L.A., V.& P., 1866, vol.5,
p.3. (Report).
56 Ibid., p.17. (Minutes).
prostitution. The Empire worried about the 'dead weight' of pauperism infecting society and the role of drink in causing it. 57

Alongside these broader social concerns there is evidence of mounting public disquiet with the conduct of hotels. Public houses in Sydney had proliferated over the decades. In 1838 there were just over 200 hotels. 58 By the late 1850s this number had risen to in excess of 400 and by the end of the 1860s Sydney contained over 500 hotels. 59 A belief in free trade justified this continual increase. The magisterial bench operated on the principle that 'any man having a good character, and a house with the necessary accommodation for the law, is entitled to a license'. 60 As I shall show in a later chapter, magistrates did not always enforce these loose requirements. The consequence was that many public houses were seen to be 'low dens of iniquity'. 61

In the late 1860s public protest occasionally forced magistrates to adopt a strict licensing policy. Martin Keeshan's unsuccessful struggle to renew his music license for his Hamburg Hotel in King street, Sydney illustrates the concern among 'respectable' society over the conduct of public houses. Under the 1862 Licensing Act Keeshan was required to lodge formal application if he wanted to provide music. He applied on nine separate occasions between May 1868 and January 1869 but he was refused on each occasion.

Keeshan's frequent requests generated sharply divided reactions. He received support from several working people who regularly used a lane

57 Empire, 3 July 1869.


60 Select Committee on Police, N.S.W.L.C., V.& P., 1847, vol.2, p.50 (Minutes).

61 Freeman's Journal, 11 May 1867.
off King street next to the hotel. In a letter to the Police Magistrate they stated that at no time during the day or night had they ever had cause to complain 'of any nuisance arising from the music license granted to Mr. Keeshan's public house'. However, Keeshan had to confront some influential opponents. D.F.C. Scott, the Police Magistrate who heard the case, remarked bluntly that 'it would be beneficial to the public if all music licenses were abolished'. Scott was sympathetic to the objections against Keeshan's applications. These were organized by Henry Cole, a stationer, whose business was opposite the Hamburg Hotel. Cole outlined his reasons in several letters to the police. To Cole's mind hotels which provided music encouraged degeneracy and immorality. Cole claimed that the Hamburg Hotel had been frequented, day and night, by prostitutes 'of the lowest order' and by sailors 'of the worst character'. Drunkenness and rowdyism accompanied the hours of concert and singing and Cole protested about this and even worse behaviour:

Prostitutes, and men besotted with drink, are permitted to leave the public house by a side door in the lane-way, where nuisances of the most disgusting character are perpetrated by them ... men and women are continually exposing their persons, and committing filthy and disgusting tricks in the lane.

George Waters, the police sergeant investigating Keeshan's applications supported Cole's objections. While Keeshan held a music license, Waters reported, 'prostitutes and other disorderly characters resorted to his house in the evenings', but since its termination there had been a 'marked improvement in the street'.

63 Ibid. 64 Ibid., p.4. 65 Ibid.
It is significant, incidentally, to note that similar expressions of concern about poorly conducted hotels were heard in Victoria during the late 1860s. Public house management was scrutinised by a Royal Commission in 1867. T.H. Lyttleton, the Superintendent of Police, told the inquiry that hotels which provided dancing were useless for the purpose of providing accommodation and were a dangerous social influence. They 'make prostitutes of young girls coming into town, who are seduced there by the dancing and music'.66 F.C. Standish, the Victorian Chief Commissioner of Police, agreed. He said that many public houses in Melbourne, which had night licenses, were the 'rendezvous of thieves, prostitutes and vagabonds'.67

Concern that drinking was related to the spread of poverty and the accompaniment of social vices influenced temperance thinking during the later 1860s and was instrumental in the movement taking on a political cast. This, as mentioned, represented a significant shift in temperance work. Previously societies had laboured to reduce intemperance by attempting to reform the individual. Henceforth it was the liquor traffic which temperance activists focused their energies upon.

From the late 1860s the Political Association for the Suppression of Intemperance began calling upon government to enact a Permissive Liquor Law. The Association's interest in this measure followed from the work of the United Kingdom Alliance for the Suppression of the Traffic in all Intoxicating Liquors. The Alliance had been formed in October 1853 by 'men of influence' who wanted a 'Maine Law in England'.68 In 1851 the

67 Ibid., p.15.
American state of Maine had introduced prohibition which became a precedent in temperance work around the world. However, the Maine legislation attempted to abolish the liquor traffic by state-wide and compulsory prohibition, whereas the Alliance decided in favour of the local and permissive principle. This operated on district plebiscites and was intended to be a gradual means to limit and ultimately eradicate the retail sale of alcohol. Permissive legislation was designed to avoid the immediate dislocation of the country's commercial and fiscal system which might flow from national prohibition. A.E. Dingle has argued that the Alliance's adoption of the measure was 'a temporary compromise with political realities intended to pave the way for total prohibition'. A bill was introduced into the House of Commons in 1864 and although it was overwhelmingly defeated it was merely the first of many attempts to secure local option legislation.

The New South Wales Political Association for the Suppression of Intemperance formally adopted the Permissive Bill at a meeting in July 1868 where it was agreed to invite all clergymen and religious bodies, and all social and temperance bodies, throughout the colony, to co-operate with the New South Wales Political Association ... in promoting the progress of agitation in favour of a Permissive Liquor Bill.

Rev. J.B. Laughton warned members attending this meeting that they faced a long struggle to achieve their objective. He confessed that he 'much feared' that no present parliament was likely to pass such a bill. The task ahead of them, he continued, was to educate the public mind and eventually, in this way, to influence the legislature.

69 Ibid., p. 18.
70 S.M.H., 8 July 1868.
71 Ibid.
For several years after its foundation the Political Association concentrated on gaining the active support of Protestant clergy and prominent members of society. It managed to attract representatives from the major Protestant denominations including Rev. Dr. Robert Steel, Rev. W. Kelynack and the Dean of Sydney, William Cowper; I will discuss these, and other major organizers of the Association in the following chapter.

A turning point in the fortunes of the Association as a public protest organization came in December 1869. On the night of the 11th Sir Alfred Stephen, Chief Justice and active supporter of the Association, addressed a crowded meeting in the Masonic Hall Sydney on the subject 'Drunkenness and its Effects, some of its Causes, and the duty of applying a Remedy'. His lecture was a landmark in the cause of temperance. Sir Alfred was widely respected in the colony. His official position brought recognition and esteem and he used his influence in many areas of the community. He was a prominent Anglican layman and an active member of many philanthropic bodies including the Sydney Female Refuge, the Society for the Relief of Destitute Children, and the Home Visiting Relief Society. Sir Alfred was politically conservative but these charitable involvements reveal his strong social conscience. Ruth Bedford, in her portrayal of the Stephen family, has described the complexities of Sir Alfred's character. She writes that he was 'a severe judge' and that some of his sentences 'read very harshly'. However, Sir Alfred also possessed 'charm, kindliness' and compassion: 'the unfortunate, and those looking for work; all those were received with sympathy and given hospitality'. Sir Alfred had given evidence to the 1854-55 Select

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74 Ibid., p. 182.
Committee on Intemperance where he revealed his concern about the social injury wrought by liquor.

Sir Alfred's Masonic Hall lecture created great public interest and foreshadowed the first campaign by the Political Association to win legislative control over the liquor traffic. 'The great interest', wrote the Herald, 'of all classes of this city in the subject may be inferred from the large assembly which listened to its startling details and solemn appeals'. Sir Alfred began his lecture forcefully. There was no subject, he said, on which he felt more deeply. Drunkenness was a 'monster' and the land was studded with its victims. The sufferers from drink could be found wasting in lunatic asylums, hospitals, gaols and poor-houses. Sir Alfred concluded his long address by speaking in favour of Permissive Liquor legislation which the Political Association championed. This would be the means, he believed, to reduce the number of public houses. The opportunity the measure gave to local rate-payers to decide by vote whether they wished to have hotels in their districts would, Sir Alfred maintained, do away with the lowest class of public house. His parting words were phrased with passion. He implored the audience to take a stand between the 'living and the dead' so as to stave off 'the plague'.

From the late 1860s spokesmen for the Protestant churches had argued that it was the proper province of government to effect social reforms.

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75 S.M.H., 17 December 1869.
76 Ibid., 11 December 1869.
77 Ibid., 17 December 1869.
The Protestant Standard, for example, drew a distinction between the roles of religion and government. The purpose of religion was entirely spiritual. Its concern was with 'high, true, heavenly morality', while government was 'ordained for social order', to 'promote social morality ...among the people of its charge'. The Permissive Liquor Bill was a product of the view that government had a responsibility to regulate social affairs. Certainly attitudes to the role of the state in society were changing at this time. In 1873 the Herald listed some of the recent demands upon government: regulating the employment of women and children and the hours of labour, restricting the acquisition of land, regulating the building industry and sanitary conditions and enforcing compulsory education. All this activity accorded with contemporary political opinion that the state did have some responsibility 'towards increasing restraint on the actions of individuals'. Permissive Liquor legislation represented the first call to parliament to change patterns of personal behaviour. Protestants were confident that people could be made sober by an act of parliament.

Once the political campaign against drink commenced, campaigners no longer distinguished between the relative virtues of temperance and teetotalism. This distinction existed only while evangelicals had directed their efforts at reformation of the individual. The political campaign was accompanied by the assumption that the ultimate objective of state prohibition would impose abstinence on the population, or at least a large section of it.

78 Protestant Standard, 1 January 1870.
79 S.M.H., 22 September 1873
80 Ibid.
However the fading of the distinction made less clear the personal drinking habits of campaigners. Dedicated evangelical leaders often publicly vowed their personal dislike of liquor. But it is not possible to determine whether their example was followed by all supporters of the anti-drink cause. As mentioned in the introduction, the campaign against drink was based on the assumption that the main dangers of its use were to be found among the working classes and in their patronage of public houses.

The temperance cause had developed substantially since its modest beginnings in 1834. By the late 1860s it had defined a clear purpose, developed an organizational structure to express its demands and attracted attention to the issue of liquor reform. Evangelicalism had continuously inspired campaigners in their fight against liquor. The newly found political direction of temperance workers propelled them into a campaign against the liquor traffic which, activists maintained, was essential to the process of social reformation.
CHAPTER TWO
A PROMISE OF 'GREAT SOCIAL CHANGE'

Brian Harrison, writing on the British anti-suffragette cause, notes that reform movements 'need to elaborate a rational case as at least a preliminary to effective reform'.¹ Temperance campaigners, led by Sir Alfred Stephen, had begun this task in tentative fashion in the late 1860s. Their beliefs were clarified and widely disseminated during the early 1870s at the time the Political Association sponsored the first demand for parliament to enact Permissive Liquor legislation.

The background of the people who endorsed the organization's campaign is a crucial key to understanding their belief that legislative control of the liquor traffic was necessary. From the late 1860s the work of the Political Association was inspired and directed by Protestant clergymen and laymen with extensive involvement in the colony's charitable institutions. Clergymen were principal speakers on the platform of all meetings organized by the Association and were the dominant group in delegations to government. One such delegation which waited on the Premier, Charles Cowper, in July 1870 consisted of 38 clergymen and 25 'gentlemen'. All the major Protestant denominations were represented among the ministers of this delegation but Anglicans predominated. Their number included the Dean of Sydney, W.M. Cowper, who has been described as a committed evangelical and a 'revered and respected figure in the Church of England'.² Also representing Anglicans were Canons A.H. Stephen, R. Allwood, W. Stack and T. O'Reilly. Presbyterians included Revs. J.D. Lang and R. Steel and

Congregationalists, Revs. T. Graham and T. Gainford with Rev. S. Wilkinson representing Wesleyans. These men were also active in the colony's charitable institutions. Revs. Steel, Graham and W. Kelynack (another supporter of the Political Association) were all members of the board of the Sydney Female Refuge in the early 1870s and Rev. Lang and Canon Stephen belonged to the City Night Refuge and Soup Kitchen. The leadership of the Political Association was drawn from this clerical group. Rev. Dr. Robert Steel emerged as the chief publicist during the early 1870s. He was a distinguished evangelical preacher and ever ready 'to respond to the call for help to a church, a charitable institution, a literary society, or a temperance league'.

Non-clerical sponsors of the Association, in so far as a representative group can now be traced, were drawn from business, the public service and from politics. E.W. Cameron, a member of the July 1870 delegation, was a wealthy merchant who believed that 'affluence brought obligations'. He maintained an active interest in charitable institutions, motivated in part it seems, by a 'patriarchal attitude towards the labouring classes'. His philanthropy also derived from his commitment to the Anglican church in which he held the position of church warden of St. Mary's, Balmain. He was also a member of St. Andrew's Cathedral. William Foster, another member of the July delegation, was crown prosecutor for Sydney in 1870, and was later appointed to the Legislative Council. Foster was also a devout evangelical. During the 1870s he sat on the committees of numerous church and charitable organizations, including the City Night Refuge and Soup Kitchen. He has been described as a 'militant temperance advocate' and was

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3 S.M.H., 26, 27 July 1870.  
4 A.D.B., file.  
6 Ibid.
himself a total abstainer. G.A. Lloyd was a merchant who amassed a fortune and who sat in the Legislative Assembly. He gave generously of his time to the Congregational church and to charitable institutions. Another Congregational supporter of the Political Association, Benjamin Short, was an insurance salesman and a lay preacher. He was active in the Young Men's Christian Association and the British and Foreign Bible Society.

John Davies was among the politicians who enthusiastically endorsed the Political Association's efforts to win legislation. He was one of the most aggressively Protestant members of parliament. In the mid-1860s he had been President of the Protestant Political Association, formed when 'sectarian passions flared' after Charles O'Farrell's attempt to assassinate the Duke of Edinburgh. The Association worked to return Protestants to parliament and to the city council. However, the Political Association's principal advocate in parliament was Joseph Wearne, who introduced the Permissive Bills into parliament during the early 1870s. Wearne owned the Anchor Flour Mill in Bathurst street where he gained the reputation as a 'kind and conscientious employer'. He was a committeeman of the Benevolent Society of New South Wales and a member of the 1873 Royal Commission on Public Charities. Wearne was 'clearly

7 M. Rutledge, 'Foster, William John', ibid., vol.4, p.207.
8 G.P. Walsh, 'Lloyd, George Alfred', ibid., vol.5, p.95.
identified as a pillar of the extreme Protestant cause, being a prominent Methodist, Freemason and temperance advocate. He was also a close political friend of Henry Parkes.

Protestantism and philanthropy were thus the driving forces behind those who now pressed for anti-liquor legislation. Protestantism, as has been mentioned, had a strong evangelical element which was influential in determining the social values of anti-drink crusaders. Evangelicalism was one of the most dynamic movements of the nineteenth century. Its doctrines stressed an obligation to society, thus making evangelicals zealous reformers.

From the time Frederic Barker arrived from England to become the Bishop of New South Wales, the character of the Protestant church in the colony was 'resolutely Evangelical'. Barker had come under evangelical influences while studying at Cambridge and he came to Australia in a firm evangelical spirit. It was under his patronage that W.M. Cowper was appointed dean of the Anglican Church in Sydney.

Evangelicalism had its origins in the religious revival which occurred in Great Britain in the middle of the 18th century. The spread of its influence throughout British Protestantism and later in the Australian church rested in the doctrine of the total depravity of man. Whereas liberals saw mankind in a hopeful light the evangelical was pessimistic out of fear that man was 'eternally falling into temptation'.

Imbued with the spirit of the Gospel, committed evangelicals saw themselves as destined 'to renovate society... and make the earth like

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15 R. Broome, Treasure In Earthen Vessels. Protestant Christianity in New South Wales Society 1900-1914, St. Lucia, 1960, p. 130.
This goal involved two interacting concerns: improving the morals of people together with the condition of life of the underprivileged through the aid of philanthropic work.

With regard to the first of these objectives, Ian Bradley has written that evangelicals had 'an overwhelming desire to reform the morals of their fellow men quite independent of their wish to convert them.' Like all puritans, he continues,

they were obsessed with loose and immoral behaviour and determined to impose on others the rigorous regime of self-denial and abstinence from pleasure to which they subjected themselves. The list of undesirable pleasures included sexual promiscuity, gambling, obscenity and drunkenness. Thus, public houses became the prime concern of evangelical anti-drink campaigners for, in their minds, these establishments encouraged drunkenness, prostitution, and gambling.

The other strand to the evangelical mind fostered the involvement of its members in philanthropy. Most of the famous British humanitarian ventures of the 19th century had evangelical inspiration and leadership. Elizabeth Fry's prison work and Lord Shaftesbury's factory reform are just two better known examples.

Evangelicals involvement in philanthropic work was directed at individual regeneration and hence it did not lead them to question the underlying social or economic causes of destitution. Their work was motivated by Christ's command to clothe the naked and feed the hungry.

Renate Howe has written of the Wesleyan Church in Victoria:

Success was of God and consequently brought responsibility. 'Turn the stream of your wealth into the channel of benevolence and minister to the poor and needy'...To Walter Powell (owner of an ironmongersshop success meant 'enlarged facilities for spiritual and mental

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16 Quoted in J.D. Bollen, Protestantism and Social Reform in New South Wales 1890-1910, Melbourne, 1972, p. 43.

17 I. Bradley, op. cit., p. 94.
cultivation, the means of helping the needy and deserving.'

As I discuss later in this chapter, evangelicals in Sydney were active in the colony's main charitable works. Protestant evangelicalism thus encouraged its adherents to campaign against drink for it was perceived to be associated with immoral behaviour and to be the cause of destitution.

In 1871 the Church of England was by far the largest Protestant Church with over 220,000 members. Presbyterians followed with 49,000 and Methodists with just over 39,000 adherents. Congregationalists mustered just over 9,000 and Baptists 4,000 members. These proportions did not alter over the next few decades although by 1911 the percentage of Protestants, in relation to other religious denominations, rose from 67% to 71%.

As I remarked earlier anti-drink activists were drawn from across the Protestant denominations. However the commitment of activists outside the leadership is impossible to determine. The matter was never examined in anti-drink journals and newspaper reports of anti-drink meetings gave no indication of representation from individual denominations.

Evangelical Protestantism may have been the inspiration and main-stay of the anti-drink campaign but in becoming a popular cause it attracted diverse elements in society: women, 'respectable' members of the working class, and even radical elements in the labour movement. The attraction of these various groups to the anti-drink cause became noticeable after 1900 and is discussed in later chapters.

Nevertheless evangelicalism provided the inspiration for the anti-drink movement in the 1870s. It bred a commitment to the ideal of 'public morality'. 'By morals', the Protestant Standard commented,

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19 J.D. Bollen, op. cit., p. 183.
we mean whatever concerns the personal and social conduct of human beings in a community ... for the protection and advancement of social order and of personal propriety.

Evangelical Protestants believed mankind should strive to live in 'bodily and mental ease', in 'domestic love, truth, and propriety', in 'honest trade and industry' and under the blessing of religion.

Involvement in the colony's charitable institutions convinced Protestant anti-drink campaigners that these desired values were being undermined by social ills which had their common origin in drink. Poverty, prostitution, child desertion and crime accompanied the process of urbanization and industrialization which, as the following tables indicate, were occurring rapidly from the late 1860s.

TABLE 1

Export of Good Manufactured and Processed in New south Wales.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1866-70</th>
<th>1871-75</th>
<th>1876-80</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>£m</td>
<td>1,832</td>
<td>4,268</td>
<td>6,425</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


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20 Protestant Standard, 11 September 1869.

21 Ibid., 16 October 1869.
TABLE 2

Demographic Growth of Sydney and Suburbs, 1861-71

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Census Date</th>
<th>Sydney</th>
<th>Suburban</th>
<th>Metropolitan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Population</td>
<td>Population</td>
<td>Population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1861</td>
<td>56,840</td>
<td>39,949</td>
<td>95,789</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1871</td>
<td>74,560</td>
<td>63,210</td>
<td>137,776</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Those who maintained that liquor was the major cause of society's ills rallied around Permissive Liquor legislation as a measure for securing all-embracing social reform. It would, they believed, reduce the incidence of poverty, prostitution and the like by withdrawing from working people the temptation to drink. Moreover, the removal of public houses, where dancing and singing were common pastimes, would improve standards of personal propriety. The leaders of the campaign for the Permissive Liquor Bill stressed that they were involved in a 'social crusade ... to raise the colony to a higher social position'. Dr. Steel was certain that the measure would usher in a 'great social change'. Wearne maintained that without liquor the colony would flourish as never before. He thought that if the money at present 'wasted' on drink were to be devoted to religious and charitable projects society would have adequate church accommodation for all, free education for every child, and the means to relieve the distress suffered by every pauper. Wearne was convinced that reducing the number of public houses 'has the effect of improving the moral and social condition of the people'.

22 S.M.H., 24 July 1872. 23 Ibid., 26 September 1870. 24 P.D., ibid., 23 November 1872.
Protestant crusaders believed that anti-drink legislation would greatly relieve poverty by putting much needed money back into the pockets of the poor and destitute. Men such as Sir Alfred Stephen were shocked at the 'amount of distress and destitution [which] prevailed in Sydney'. The City Night Refuge and Soup Kitchen was one organization where Sir Alfred, together with several other prominent anti-drink activists, came to observe a steady stream of relief seekers. The Soup Kitchen was founded in 1868 to provide food and shelter for the 'outcast and wretched'. In the year ending July 1870 the institution provided 70,000 meals and 14,900 nights shelter. For the year 1874-75 the refuge provided over 65,000 meals and nearly 24,000 nights shelter. In addition to the Soup Kitchen there were a number of institutions which provided for the destitute of Sydney - the Hyde Park, Benevolent, Liverpool and Parramatta Asylums. In 1873 the entire system of charitable relief was examined closely by a Royal Commission appointed by the Legislative Assembly. The Commission included two of the strongest supporters of Permissive Liquor legislation, Joseph Wearne and Samuel Goold.

Its Chairman, the barrister and politician William Windeyer, noted as the Commission's fundamental concern 'the growth of pauperism in this Country' to which 'public attention has been directed'. The Commission

25 S.M.H., 31 July 1873. 26 Ibid., 27 July 1870.
27 Empire, 27 July 1870.
did not set about statistically proving that poverty was on the increase and indeed it is difficult to do this. Nevertheless there is strong evidence of the existence of widespread and appalling poverty in Sydney during the early 1870s. Graphic details of distress were reported by a journalist from the Herald who, in July 1870, wrote a series of investigative articles entitled 'Sydney By Night', on the slum dwellers of the inner city. The reporter was shocked by the deeply-rooted poverty he witnessed, especially the 'tumble-down rookeries in which the people live'. One of his many lurid descriptions was of Donovan's Lane. It was a 'very dirty place', he told the Herald's readers:

Deceased rats rot here in undisturbed tranquility; domestic offal, the refuse from neighbouring kitchens and back slums, collects here in fetid pools, and from the wretched dwellings of the places, come large tributary streams to swell the filthy tide.

The inner-city slum district also contained numerous 'common' lodging houses or, as they were more frequently known, 'sixpenny' lodging houses. These establishments were examined in the mid seventies by a Select Committee whose report referred to enormities 'shocking to human nature and derogatory to the welfare of the community'. The witnesses to this Committee were drawn mostly from the police force and from the City of Sydney Corporation. All claimed to have a direct knowledge of the inhabitants and conditions of these lodging houses. Richard Seymour, Inspector of Nuisances for the Corporation, explained that those forced to live in this cheapest form of accommodation were 'very low, drunken

30 Allan Mayne provides detailed evidence about poverty and slums in the mid-1870s and later — A.J.C. Mayne, Fever, Squalor and Vice, St. Lucia, 1982, Chapter 7.
31 S.M.H., 1 July 1870. 32 Ibid., 8 July 1870.
people, or more accurately, the poorest of the city. Seymour had recently inspected some of the lodging houses:

We found eight or ten beds in one house - sofas or stretchers - crawling with filth, and the sacks that people lay on covered with human excrement or blood, and all the place stinking in such a way as to be sickening to go into.

Other witnesses gave similar descriptions of over-crowded, badly ventilated and vermin-ridden rooms. Such places, all argued, encouraged crime, immorality and drunkenness.

Poverty, of the kind that anti-drink crusaders could readily observe, was also indicated by the prevalence of child employment. For a number of struggling parents, children's wages were essential to the income of the household. In the brick, drapery, leather and tobacco trades, boys and girls as young as eight years worked up to a ten hour day, often at very heavy tasks. These were children of 'working people, labourers and mechanics'. Children of this class had traditionally worked and even after the advent of a public school system many parents remained either indifferent to their children's education or could not afford to allow them to attend school. This latter point was illustrated in evidence given to the 1875 Select Committee on the Employment of Children. Of the many children the Committee interviewed in their workplace Edward O'Keefe and Adelaide Burke were typical. O'Keefe who was aged ten, gave his earnings to his mother: 'father is not alive; mother does washing; has two big sisters and two little ones'. Adelaide Burke who was eleven, worked in

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34 Ibid., p.8 (Minutes.)
35 Ibid.
37 S.M.H., 16 May 1874.
a boot factory for 4s. a week. Her father too was dead and her mother did not work.\textsuperscript{39}

This descriptive evidence gives some colour to the observations made by Protestant anti-drink crusaders on the existence of poverty and squalor. Rev. Lang was one who believed that the extent of poverty in the community showed that 'something was wrong in our social system'.\textsuperscript{40} He, and other Protestant philanthropic workers, did not ask whether the poverty was the product of forces inherent in the social and economic system of the day. Their evangelicalism and conservatism had centred their thinking too firmly on the notion of individual responsibility. Crusaders believed that, just as it was the responsibility of each person to strive for domestic comfort and personal propriety, it was the individual's fault if he fell short of these desired ideals. Under the influence of this outlook Protestant anti-drink campaigners explained poverty largely in terms of people's drinking habits. Committeemen attached to the Soup Kitchen commonly expressed this view. W.J. Foster, for example, recalling the 'deplorable state' described in the 'Sydney By Night' articles, asked rhetorically:

And what is the cause of this pauper population? He contended that in four cases out of five home destitution was caused by drunkenness, and that in nine cases out of ten destitution had been brought on indirectly by drunkenness.

This, Foster believed, necessitated 'an improvement in our social state', by which he meant legislative restrictions on the drink traffic.\textsuperscript{41} Dr. Steel shared this view enthusiastically. He told the Committee inquiring into the Permissive Liquor Bill, which was chaired by Joseph Wearne, that restrictive legislation would 'do much to improve the condition of that class of people who are least able to take care of themselves'.\textsuperscript{42}

\textsuperscript{39} Ibid. \textsuperscript{40} S.M.H., July 1870. \textsuperscript{41} Ibid., 30 July 1870. \textsuperscript{42} Select Committee on the Permissive Liquor Bill, N.S.W.L.A., V. & P., 1872-73, vol.3, p.13 (Minutes).
Some of the administrators of the various charitable institutions endorsed the Protestant campaign. During the inquiry into Public Charities Dr. William Strong, Surgeon Superintendent at the Liverpool Asylum, was asked by Samuel Goold how many of the inmates were the victims of intemperance. 'Well, I should say', he replied, 'precious near the whole of them.' Strong said that he could not 'send out a dozen men with threepence in their pockets who would not get drunk'.

The belief that drinking and poverty were linked corresponded with the commonly held view that drunkenness was a problem peculiar to the working classes. Inspector George Read of the Sydney Police Force outlined for the 1872 Select Committee on the Permissive Liquor Bill the occupational backgrounds of the people arrested for drunkenness in 1870. Of the 2,708 convictions 937 were described by Read as having no trade, 145 as 'women of the town', 49 were servants, 622 labourers, 24 blacksmiths, 40 masons, 68 carpenters, 62 clerks, 287 seamen, 61 tailors, 82 shoemakers, 22 printers, 77 dealers, 59 cabmen, 35 butchers, 25 painters, 21 cooks, and 202 as 'miscellaneous' trades. The significance of these figures was not lost on Henry Parkes. 'I do not notice', he told Read, 'persons above the manual labour class'. Read explained that the number of persons in the 'higher ranks' arrested for drunkenness was so small that they were included in the miscellaneous category. However, Read did not point out that members of 'respectable' society were less likely to be arrested for drunkenness because their drinking was conducted more privately in homes or in clubs. There is very little information on the drinking habits of middle class people at this time. Of those who did drink in hotels there was little chance that they would appear before the courts for public

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43 Public Charities Commission, op.cit., p.17.
44 Select Committee on the Permissive Liquor Bill, op.cit., p.22.
drunkenness as the police followed the procedure of discharging persons from the watchhouse following payment of their fine. As Police Magistrate James Dowling explained to the 1854-55 Select Committee into Intemperance, the sergeant in charge of the watchhouse has the power of discharging the [arrested] party as soon as he is sober, upon his depositing forty shillings for the penalty. In every instance, if brought before me, the drunkard has to pay one pound, and in glaring cases forty shillings. When the party has deposited forty shillings with the sergeant ... as security for his appearance, his name is called three times, and if he does not appear the money is forfeited and in due course handed over to the Benevolent Asylum. 45

This arrangement obviously suited people with means.

Expenditure on liquor for working people with heavy drinking habits could undoubtedly cause destitution. Equally, there can be little doubt that for those confirmed in poverty, expenditure on liquor exacerbated their circumstances. However, this should not obscure the likelihood that drinking, in addition to being a cause of poverty, was also a reflection of it.

As we shall see in a later chapter, the temperance campaign's simplistic association of drink and poverty was to be increasingly criticised as social reformers came to have a fuller understanding of the varied reasons why material deprivation remained widespread among urban wage-earners. During the early 1870s unemployment was one factor, not recognized by anti-liquor advocates, which seriously affected the lives of many semi-skilled and unskilled workers in Sydney. Little can be said about the rate of nineteenth century unemployment because of the deficiencies of the available statistical evidence. In a 'new' and obviously 'expanding' society it was easy to believe that unemployment and under-employment simply could not exist. Hence, the plight of those

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unable to find work only attracted comment during the more severe periodic downturns. According to T.A. Coghlan the late 1850s and mid 1860s were two such periods.  

Evidence suggests that the early 1870s was another time when employment was difficult to find. Letters to the Editor of the Herald from unemployed stone masons and wharf labourers, for example, complained of men 'starving for want of employment'. Wharf labourers also complained of widespread under-employment. It was claimed that very few were able to work more than a three day week.  

In October 1870 a deputation of 'some hundreds' of unemployed petitioned the Premier, Charles Cowper, for an extension of public works. One member of the deputation informed Cowper that the men were prepared to take any kind of work which would enable them 'to get bread for their children'. Cowper rejected their demand for work. Instead he offered soup tickets as a means to relieve their distress. Mr. Jennett, spokesman for the delegation, insisted that this was 'an insult to the working man'. He told Cowper that there were between 1500-2000 men without work in Sydney and that most would sooner starve than go to the Soup Kitchen. 'Many of them,' Jennett claimed,  

had been forced to part with their own and family's clothes to satisfy their landlords, and save them from being turned out of their houses.  

A few days later Jennett organized a rally of the unemployed in Sydney's Hyde Park. Two thousand people turned out for the occasion. Jennett used the platform to criticise the colonial press for conveying an
inaccurate picture to Britain of the condition of the labour market and to castigate the Cowper Ministry for 'shilly-shallying in providing employment for labourers'.

The meeting drew up a petition which they presented to the Legislative Assembly, pointing out the suffering endured by unemployed mechanics, artisans, and labourers. Nothing, however, was forthcoming. On one occasion the Herald acknowledged that unemployment was not widely recognized as a cause of destitution. 'There is no class of people in the colony', commented the editor,

that gets so little sympathy as the unemployed ... the claim of the able-bodied to public support is rarely recognized with a good grace.

Another social evil in which there was, among temperance reformers, an exaggerated notion of the role of drink was child desertion. The community was concerned about the large numbers of deserted children. E.G. Ellis, a member of the 1873 Public Charities Commission, said that it was disastrous for 'the state of society' that so many children were compelled to seek refuge in orphanages and reformatories. Destitute children were first recognized as a problem in the 1850s. The absence of income security for poor parents together with the lack of community support services, necessitated the institutionalization of these children. This

49 Freeman's Journal, 22 October 1870.
51 S.M.H., 18 April 1870.
52 Public Charities Commission, op.cit., Orphan Schools, p.8.
situation continued into the 1870s by which time there were three main institutions for the care of children - the Protestant and Catholic Orphan Schools at Parramatta and the Randwick Asylum for Destitute Children. Children arrived at the various asylums looking 'perfectly joyless,' often in a 'dreadful state of destitution and filth'. Some in the community doubted that they experienced much joy in the various orphanages. Rev. Dr. Quinn, Catholic Bishop of Bathurst, asked the Charity Commissioners whether, on their tours of inspection, they had noticed 'a sad, dejected appearance' among the children. Quinn put this down to the size of the institutions (Randwick, for example, housed 571 children in 1875) and the sameness of dress and routine. This, he believed, had the effect of continually reminding the children that 'they were destitute and dependent'.

Temperance reformers maintained that drinking habits of parents were the common cause of the children's destitute state. 'It is evident', declared the Protestant Standard, that most children belonged to a class the most difficult to deal with - the idle, loafing, dissolute, drinking class, who are able to work ... but spend their means in drinking and vice, and then turn their children out to the streets.

Prominent Permissive Liquor supporters such as Rev. Dr. Lang and Rev. W. Slayter, who were both associated with the Randwick Asylum, repeated this claim.

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54 Public Charities Commission, op.cit., p.43.
55 Ibid. 56 B. Dickey, op.cit., p.38.
57 Public Charities Commission, op.cit., p.23.
58 Protestant Standard, 21 August 1869.
59 Empire, 26 January 1870.
Quite a different picture was given by some of the witnesses to the 1873 inquiry into charities. Mrs. M.A. Adamson, Matron of the Roman Catholic Orphan School, was asked by Samuel Goold whether she had any means of knowing the extent to which the intemperant habits of parents 'had to do with the position of these children'. She replied that she knew 'nothing of the parents. We receive the children, and they tell me that their parents have died'.

John May, Superintendent of the Randwick Asylum, attributed children's destitution to the 'migrating population'. Husbands, he said, left their homes not necessarily with the intention of deserting their families, but once away they 'at last get weaned from their homes'. May agreed that drunkenness was a factor in such behaviour 'but not to the extent that is generally believed'.

Figures given to the Commission appear to bear out May's statement.

TABLE 3

Reasons given for children being sent to the Randwick Asylum.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stated Reason</th>
<th>Numbers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Desettion by one or both parents</td>
<td>196</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Destitution of one or both parents</td>
<td>281</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One or both parents in an institution (e.g. gaol, lunatic asylum, Benevolent Asylum)</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother was a prostitute</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drunkeness of one or both parents</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child was illegitimate</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Death of one or both parents</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


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60 Public Charities Commission, op.cit., p.8.  
61 Ibid., p.50.  
62 Ibid.
How these figures were compiled was not stated. They suffer from several inadequacies. The figures, as Mrs. Adamson indicated, may have been based on the testimonies of children and it is difficult to gauge the accuracy of the above categories. Although each child's name was listed in the records the reasons for his destitution was described only briefly. It was not uncommonly stated, for example, that a child was deserted by his single parent mother. The root cause of this may have been inadequate income for the child's upbringing. Drunkenness was put down in several cases on the authority of a mother whose husband and either died or deserted her. Again, destitution may have encouraged the drinking. Nevertheless the figures are useful in suggesting that destitution, through various causes, outweighed drunkenness as a factor in creating the army of orphaned children.

Prostitution disturbed the community and was seized upon by Permissive Liquor advocates as justification for their attack on drinking and public houses. But, as with poverty and child-desertion, temperance reformers took a naive view about cause and effect when they tried to relate prostitution to habits of drinking. It is impossible to assess the extent of prostitution. D.F.C. Scott informed the 1870 Select Committee inquiring into the Sale of Liquors Licensing Act Amendment Bill that there were 600 prostitutes in Sydney and about 100 brothels. Scott did not say how his estimates were arrived at and his are the only figures ever quoted. In fact without doubt he under-estimated the extent of prostitution. Child prostitutes, for example, were not included in his figures, and such prostitutes were numerous but often unrecognized at the time Scott compiled his figures.

The author of the 'Sydney by Night' articles discovered that 'whores' were common in the slum areas. The impression he conveyed was that they were victims of poverty; prostitution was the only way some single women, often with children, could earn an income. In the lanes and alley-ways, you will see dowdy, dirt-bedraggled girls, with bold eyes and unkempt hair, and shoeless feet, lounging against the door posts, or peeping at you from behind ragged window curtains. 64

In Druitt Street the journalist discovered 'a row of wooden hovels' where the 'lowest prostitutes' lived. Two or three women, some of whom had children, resided in each place. In one he found a couple of 'dissipated women' who appeared to have slept in their clothes for months and 'never combed their hair in their lives'. 65

Common lodging houses were also widely associated with prostitution. Witnesses to the Select Committee on these establishments offered two reasons for this: rooms could be rented by prostitutes or their clients on a daily basis; and some lodging house owners operated their premises partly as brothels. Several witnesses expressed disgust at the involvement of Chinese lodging house owners in organizing prostitution. Richard Seymour, for example, had recently been into small, dimly lit rooms where he was shocked to encounter:

a Chinaman (sic.) with a woman between his legs, naked all but a petticoat, and another Chinaman on another part of the stretcher.... I have found another Chinaman (sic.) lying with his arms around a woman, one hand on her bosom, and his other under her legs, pulling her parts about like a dog. In another place... a Chinaman (sic.) had a girl on the table, sitting up with his trousers down, and one girl's leg over his shoulder; she was under the influence of opium and he was using her - having connection with her - and seven or eight Chinamen waiting at the door to do the same to this woman. 66

Seymour, and other witnesses, testified that some of the prostitutes were 'diseased' and became 'so exhausted that they could not walk across

64 S.M.H., 25 July 1870. 65 Ibid.
66 Select Committee on Common Lodging Houses, op.cit., p.9.
the room'. Many, it was claimed, were opium addicts and worked for the Chinese because they could obtain supplies of opium from them.

Witnesses to this Committee referred to prostitutes as young as ten. In fact child prostitution seems to have been common. Edmund Fosbery, Secretary and Superintendent of Police, told the Charities Commission that the community could not ignore the reality that prostitutes began 'at a very early age' and were frequently encouraged by their parents.

Young girls found by the authorities were sent to the Industrial and Reformatory School at Bileola. The Charities Commission condemned this institution for its 'prison-like aspect' - the iron bars, white washed walls and barred windows. Mary Anne Rowland, house matron at Bileola, told the Commission that there were 25 under-aged prostitutes housed in the institution, the youngest of whom was twelve. She, and other witnesses described the girls as a hardened lot. They refused to wear their dresses long, tearing strips off them 'so they can show their legs to people about the place'. Commissioners were even more alarmed to learn that the girls did not wear 'draws'. George Turner, a police constable, described their manner as riotous and indecent. They frequently caused offence by singing uncouth songs: 'one was a blackguard song about 'lily-white thighs' - a beastly, dirty, blackguard song'. F. Crane, a former clerk at Biloela, had made a habit of enquiring about the girls' backgrounds. One fourteen year old taught him more about vagrancy legislation and the difference between larceny and vagrancy than he had ever known.

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67 Ibid. 68 Ibid., pp. 12, 14. 69 Public Charities Commission, op.cit., p. 69. 70 Ibid., p. 72. 71 Ibid., p. 110. 72 Ibid., p. 115. 73 Ibid. 74 Ibid., p. 150. 75 Ibid., p. 159.
William Windeyer, a committed liberal with a strong belief in the need for social reforms, thought he understood how girls were brought to this state. He believed they were raised with the 'idea that they are natural enemies of decent society, and in a state of antagonism to it'.

Temperance advocates, however, preferred to argue that the cause of prostitution lay in the women's addiction to drinking and their visits to public houses. William Crane, Secretary of the Sydney Female Refuge and a member of the July 1870 delegation to Cowper, maintained, that if a 'woman drank she would do anything'. Not only did strong drink cause the 'fall' of women but it was subsequently resorted to by prostitutes to enable them to 'keep up their vicious practices'.

These claims were repeated by Joseph Wearne when he introduced the 1870 Permissive Liquor Bill. He said that 90% of 'ruined women' were brought to their 'degraded position, their chances of reformation barred, and every idea of good drowned in them by drink'.

Advocates of Permissive Liquor argued that public houses fostered prostitution. Witnesses to the 1870 and 1872 Select Committees inquiring into the liquor bills distinguished between 'respectable' hotels, offering accommodation to travellers, and the 'low' public houses of Sydney. Many of these witnesses held that the morals of the community were corrupted by allowing music and dancing in hotels. These entertainments were believed to attract women of poor character. Inspector Read told the 1870 inquiry that public houses were patronised by 'the lowest orders of men and by young girls on the verge of prostitution'.

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76 Ibid. 77 S.M.H., 27 July 1870.
78 P.D. S.M.H., 1 October 1870.
79 Select Committee on the Sale of Liquors Licensing Act Amendment Bill, op.cit., p.19.
1872 inquiry that the attractions of public houses were of the 'most improper and immoral character'.

Police witnesses were more forthright in establishing that prostitution was, at least on some occasions, carried on in public houses. John McLerie Inspector-General of Police, informed the 1870 Committee of one instance when police, on inspecting a public house, 'found it fitted up for the purpose [of prostitution] on the upper floors'. Inspector Read told the same inquiry of an occasion when he, together with some of his officers, entered a public house and found a large room in it partitioned off ... into small boxes; and we obtained sufficient evidence to satisfy us that this house had been altered in this manner for the purpose of a common brothel.

Anti-drink crusaders may have found it distasteful to draw attention to prostitution but their social outlook compelled them to. They felt that, in addition to undermining the moral standards of the community, prostitution threatened the very basis on which civilization rested. Women, they argued, were 'the very salt of the earth'. To the evangelical mind it followed that if women were 'corrupted' society too would decay. 'If we regard women's position in society', the Protestant Standard commented,

we shall see that their virtue is a safeguard of a nation's greatness. A nation of profligate women cannot long exist ... The mother is the instructress of the infant mind. Many of our greatest men have acknowledged their indebtedness to their mothers.

The fear that prostitution was rampant, and that it would threaten the basis of society, led to the formation, in August 1873, of the New South

80 Select Committee on the Permissive Liquor Bill, op.cit., p.6.
81 Select Committee on the Sale of Liquors Licensing Act Amendment Bill, op.cit., p.9.
82 Ibid., p. 19.
83 Protestant Standard, 7 August 1869.
Wales Association for the Promotion of Morality. Protestants also inspired this society and its committee included most of the prominent supporters of the Political Association for the Suppression of Intemperance. 84

The new Association resulted from a strongly worded letter which the Dean of Sydney wrote to the Herald in June 1873, in which he commented on the 'fearful demoralization of society'. He went on to criticise the 'depravity of morals' which abounded among the female population. He had observed that mothers connived at their daughters' prostitution and husbands were 'base enough to live upon the wages of their wives' iniquities'. Landlords too were culpable. They turned a blind eye knowing that 'this nefarious trade' was being conducted on their properties. Cowper greatly feared the rise of juvenile prostitution. He recently had had his attention drawn to a 'house of ill-fame' in which 20 children from 12-18 years pursued their 'awful work of ruin'. 85 Cowper believed that this shameful state of affairs could only be rectified by 'proper home training', raising children in the 'fear of God', and inculcating in them a 'chaste and modest demeanour'. With these values firmly implanted the community would witness 'a wonderful social reformation'. 86

The public response to Cowper's letter was overwhelming. The Herald received a flood of letters in support of his stand. One correspondent called for the founding of a society to promote morality which would, among other tasks, campaign for the closure of 'disreputable and demoralizing

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84 Committee consisted of: President, Bishop of Sydney; Vice-President Mr. John Fairfax, Dean of Sydney; Treasurer, J. Watson, M.L.A.; hon. lay Secretary W. Crane; hon. clerical secretary, Rev. G.C. Bede; and W. Foster, J. Goodlet, Dr. Motlitt, S. Goold, R. G. Reading, Mr Plummer, Dr. Neild, Professor Smith, J. Wearne, C.Lester, G. Allen, J.S. Harrison, Canon O'Reilly, Revs. G.H. Moreton, T. Johnson, J. Greenwood, A.W. Webb, R. Steel, J.G. Fraser, A. Thomson, T. Gainford, E.G. Pritchard.

85 S.M.H., 24 July 1873.

86 Ibid.
places of amusement'. The suggestion was adopted and the New South Wales Society for Promotion of Morality was formed on 12 August 1873. Its first public meeting, which attracted a large crowd, was held in early September in the Masonic Hall, York Street.

The Bishop of Sydney, Rev. Dr. Barker, told the gathering that the Association was being formed in 'the interests of good order and morality'. He was convinced that a stand had to be taken against the 'vices of gambling, drunkenness, and of licentiousness', and that Christian influence must be brought to bear on society. He was followed on the platform by the Dean of Sydney who made a powerful attack on public houses. He claimed that these establishments fed the vices which all the people present condemned. He, and subsequent speakers, reiterated their central claim that the cause of the present social decay lay in drink and public houses. 'Was it in the interests of society', Rev. J. Greenwood asked,

that the state continue all those temptations to insobriety - to increase its revenue by increasing the vices of its citizens ....These places swallowed up the income of families, turned half-starved children into the streets, filled our prisons with criminals, our brothels with prostitutes, and our asylums with the insane."88

The Association, like its temperance counterpart, viewed its task as a 'social crusade'. Its stated objective was to discover 'satisfactory solutions for the several graver problems of city life'. The Association decided to hold a series of four public lectures which would illustrate the relationship between 'purity of public morals and national greatness'. The first of the lectures, given by Bishop Barker, discussed the connection between morality and national prosperity; the second presented by W.M. Cowper, addressed the importance of home

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87 Ibid., 29 July 1873. 88 Ibid., 2 September 1873.
89 Ibid., 19 December 1873. 90 Ibid.
91 Ibid.
influences 'upon the minds of the people'; the third lecture, delivered by Rev. John Greenwood, was on the 'Vices of Great Cities'; and the last, given by Rev. Steel, was devoted to 'Temperance, in its Relations to Morality'. The series of lectures was reported to have attracted 'crowded audiences'. But as the attendance mainly consisted of members of the Protestant churches the speakers were presumably addressing a predominantly 'respectable' audience who already shared their values and concerns.

Nonetheless the lectures revealed the anxiety of the Protestant churches and their supporters about the state of society. The spread of industrialization and urbanization seemed to pose a threat to accepted social values and patterns of life. Protestant opinion on the desired qualities of life, together with the role drink was seen to play in undermining them, emerged from each of the addresses. The Bishop, for example, was at pains to stress the need for 'industry, sobriety, and perseverance'. He believed that the great aim of philanthropists, statesmen and Christians was to uphold and maintain 'whatever gave a moral tone to the character of man'. Intemperance, he went on to say, 'can never be a public gain'.

The Dean in his lecture, evoked the 'influences of a well-ordered home', where security, mutual confidence, and family affections conduce to build up a happy, prosperous, healthy community ... rendering each member of the community at large ready for the honourable discharge of all religious and social duty.

The Dean also stressed the need for sobriety, industry and tidiness in the home. He severely condemned those who read 'loose sensational novels' and those who frequented 'low theatres, doubtful music halls, and disreputable dancing saloons'. The Dean was certain that these places led the

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92 Ibid. 93 Ibid. 94 Ibid.
minds of the young into 'vicious habits' which destroyed both body and soul.

Rev. Greenwood sought to illuminate the 'dark side of Sydney life'. He related his knowledge of people involved in prostitution and 'loose living ... beyond all calculations'. Disreputable people of this sort flaunted themselves 'in the glare of our street lamps' and haunted the public houses of the city. Greenwood was disgusted at the existence of over 500 hotels in Sydney, believing that these places were 'an element tending to this melancholy demoralization'.

Rev. Dr. Steel's lecture highlighted the same point. He explained that, as social and temperance reformers had hitherto failed to diminish the problem, it was necessary for crusaders to take a firm stand against the laxity of the colony's licensing laws.

The Association for Public Morality was thus an additional vehicle for evangelicals to publicise their concern about drinking, and to buttress their central claim that social improvements would flow from legislative restrictions upon the drink traffic.

The need to cure social ills which were seen as stemming from drunkenness was not the only theme anti-drink activists raised in their campaign. In their agitation against the liquor trade they sought to remedy what they thought of as a second evil - the entertainments offered in public houses. Although this matter was not widely discussed in the early 1870s, crusaders did seek to establish that popular entertainments were inconsistent with personal propriety. Evangelical Protestants, like Rev. W. Kelynack, had a deep suspicion of 'intense devotion to pleasure'. He thought 'the billiard-room, the casino, the theatre, had an influence fatal to mental strength and moral stamina'.

95 Ibid. 96 Ibid. 97 Empire, 26 July 1870.
The public house, as has been mentioned, was an important social centre for working people. Hotels were places for leisure and social interaction as well as for drinking. But Protestant anti-drink campaigners were anxious about the manner in which working people spent their leisure-time in hotels. Games including billiards and bagatells, (a game in which small balls are struck into numbered holes on a board with a semi-circular end) were commonly provided in both city and country hotels. However, these were seen to have deleterious effects on 'public morality'. J.B. Wilson, an active supporter of the temperance cause and Chairman of the 1870 Select Committee, believed that these forms of entertainment induced young men into dissipated habits and encouraged them to gamble. Dr. Steel maintained that dancing saloons, which were also commonly found in public houses, brought about 'bad effects'. Joseph Wearne shared this view maintaining that dancing in public houses did nothing to improve 'the morals of the people'. Several prominent members of the police force argued that all forms of entertainment should be banned from hotels. As Edmund Fosbery put it: entertainments formed 'an attraction to a certain class of people, who are thereby induced to resort to the public house and probably drink to excess'.

Anti-drink crusaders, then, began the consolidation of their case against the drink traffic in the early 1870s. Public houses were the chief focus of their attack, for these establishments retailed the liquor that was seen to bring about the social ruin of so many men, women and children. Hotels also undermined standards of moral behaviour by

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99 Ibid., p.7.
100 Select Committee on the Permissive Liquor Bill, op.cit., P.11.
101 Ibid., p.9. 102 Ibid., p.16.
encouraging prostitution and by offering popular entertainments. Thus, crusaders argued that society would undergo a dramatic regeneration if these establishments were closed.

In the decades after the 1870s the foundation of a number of different anti-drink organizations attracted new waves of activists. These will be examined in their turn together with the fresh energy new leaders infused into the campaign. But essentially the political temperance movement remained committed to the ideals crusaders had established in these early years of the campaign. Mrs. Harrison Lee, for example, an activist in the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, explained in an interview with the Daily Telegraph in 1898 that

her battle has been with the liquor traffic, because she believes that it lies at the root of other social evils, and that with the removal of the drink traffic there will come a larger proportion of the peace and contentment and industrial progress, and what she calls national righteousness.\footnote{103}  

The same appeal to social and moral reformation was carried into the twentieth century by Grit, the newspaper of the anti-drink movement. In July 1907 the journal commented that, without liquor

no second sight is needed to forsee a mighty improvement in the lives and homes of the people ... The death rate would fall, and the hospitals would be relieved of many of their patients, the cry of children would be turned to laughter ....While many of our prisons crumbled away, churches and schools would flourish...Private virtues, public morals, and national ideals would all participate in the grand ascent through freedom from alcohol.\footnote{104}  

The vision of social and moral improvement, which remained central to the anti-drink cause, represented essentially conservative values. The eradication of poverty, prostitution and deserted children would foster social stability and permit Christian values of home and family life, industriousness, sobriety, femininity and healthful recreations to spread.

\footnote{103} D.T., 8 November 1898.  
\footnote{104} Grit, 4 July 1907.
This vision, then, was the social reformation evangelicals promised would come with curtailment of the liquor trade.

Catholics took no part in the organization of the political anti-drink crusade. Catholic attitude to liquor and to reform of the trade is, in itself, a large subject involving some profound issues which can only be briefly discussed here.

Although Catholics were conspicuously absent from the political anti-drink movement Catholic clergy were worried about drunkenness. In 1885, for example, Cardinal Moran founded the Catholic Temperance Society. Active members of this society had similar social concerns to those who belonged to Protestant organizations. Rev. A.W. Petre's address to the Armidale branch decried the 'desolate homes, the weeping of women, the wailing of children', all of which resulted from the 'fatal vice' of drunkenness. 105

Several factors, however, combined to disuade Catholics from embracing the Protestant political anti-drink campaign. In part their aloofness stemmed from the determination of many Irish Catholics 'to preserve Irish nationalism in Australia - to keep alive in the colony a traditional anti-English and anti-Protestant animus'. 106 Certainly Catholics were deeply suspicious of the Protestant anti-drink organizations claiming that they had 'violent anti-Catholic prejudices'. 107 There appears to be some link between the temperance and anti-Catholic movements. John Davies, for example, was prominent in both temperance circles and in the Protestant Political Association.

105 Armidale Express, 18 November 1887.


107 Express, 11 February 1882.
Catholic reaction, however, goes deeper than either sectarianism or the desire for cultural separateness. Catholic theology produced a different view of social problems from that held by Protestants. The Catholic hierarchy may have decried drunkenness but they saw no particular harm in moderate drinking. This view came to the fore particularly at the time of the 1928 referendum on prohibition. Archbishop Kelly publicly declared that "Drink is not a bad thing in itself" and that those who drank reasonably should not be condemned. Kelly's opinion was shared by the Bishop of Forbes-Wilcannia, Dr. Hayden, who protested that 'Prohibition condemned something that God had sanctioned and provided for humans'. A leading Catholic journal once explained that the 'Catholic religion has never been associated with Puritanism'. With the exception of its strict attitude on sexual matters this is a reasonable assessment. Catholics had a relaxed attitude towards Sunday observance, much to the disgust of Protestants, and moreover, did not worry greatly about gambling. Indeed the Catholic church financed some of its enterprises from raffles and other games of chance. Catholics, then, were not greatly inspired to join in the call for legislative action against the drink trade. The promise of great social change was a peculiarly Protestant one. But Protestantism was a solid base on which to found the anti-drink cause. In 1870 an average of more that 100,000 people attended Protestant churches each week. With this reserve of support to call upon anti-drink crusaders mounted their parliamentary campaign.

112 J.D. Bollen, Protestantism and Social Reform in New South Wales, 1890-1910, Sydney 1972, p.185.
CHAPTER THREE

REACTION TO THE PERMISSIVE LIQUOR BILLS

The liquor bill, which was debated in the Legislative Assembly on several occasions between 1870-1873, was a simple measure. It stipulated that, in a municipality, any 50 ratepayers who believed that at least two-thirds of all ratepayers wished to suppress public houses, could require the mayor to hold a plebiscite. This would determine whether hotels in the district would be forced to close. Thus, the measure was an attempt to introduce prohibition by local ballot. The simplicity of the bill could not disguise the fact that it was a radical and extreme measure. The *Herald* was at pains to make it perfectly clear to its readers that the Permissive Liquor legislation was calculated by its authors to be prohibitive.  

None of the Permissive Liquor bills passed into law. The first bill, introduced in October 1870, reached the second reading stage but was then counted out. As soon as parliament met in November 1871 the bill was reintroduced but it lapsed when parliament was dissolved after the fall of the Martin government in the following January. The bill was brought up again in November 1872 and referred to a Select Committee. The report of this Committee was debated in February 1873 but the House was prorogued before the debate could be closed. When the Permissive Bill was discussed again, in November 1873, it was rejected in a closely divided vote. Joseph Wearne, who was responsible for the bills in the Assembly, was acknowledged for his pertinacity. A less single-minded man, it was believed, might have become so discouraged by these defeats and delays 'as to give up in despair'.  

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1 S.M.H., 6 October 1870.

2 Ibid., 17 November 1873.
These early attempts to reform the licensing laws attracted significant community support. At this stage in the anti-drink movement, however, support was mainly confined to Protestant societies and to sympathisers in positions of authority. The Protestant churches actively endorsed the call for Permissive Liquor legislation. The Church of England Synod of 1870, for example, passed a resolution calling on government to reform the licensing law. The churches also presented parliament with numerous petitions on the subject. A typical example was the petition which Benjamin Chapman, President of the Australian Wesleyan Methodist Conference, organized. It declared that the Permissive Liquor legislation was urgently required because 'the large consumption of intoxicating liquors in this Colony is the chief cause of drunkenness, immorality, lunacy, crime and pauperism'.

In the early 1870s there were several temperance societies to provide a basis of support for the Political Association's campaign to win legislation. The largest was the Sons and Daughters of Temperance. Formed in 1864 it also operated as a benefit society for members. By mid 1871 the society had established 200 divisions throughout the colony and had in excess of 16,000 members. Another flourishing body was the Independent Order of Good Templars. It was established in New South Wales in July 1872 and carried as its guiding principles 'Total abstinence for the individual, and prohibition for the State'. Its leadership included some prominent Protestant anti-drink campaigners - Samuel Goold, Dr. J.C. Neild, P.R. Holdsworth and John Roseby.

In 1872 Protestant groups objected to a proposal to allow the sale of liquor in railway refreshment rooms. Petitions opposing the proposal were

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sent from the Independent Order of Good Templars, the Sons of Temperance, and the Presbyterian, Baptist, and Congregational churches. The Bishop of Sydney made special representations. The petitioners complained that 'the supply of intoxicating drink at such [railway] refreshment rooms would tend to the discomfort and annoyance of respectable persons'.

Protestant anti-drink activists stirred public interest in the necessity for licensing reform by highlighting the inadequacy of the existing legislation. An Act of 1862 - the Licensed Publicans Act - formed the basis for current regulation of the drink trade. In the eyes of reformers it was, as Dr. Steel often put it, a 'singularly bad' measure. It did not demand of an applicant for a license proof of good character; it gave no right of objection to residents in the neighbourhood of a proposed public house; it did not afford adequate police inspection of public houses; it allowed the smallest possible amount of accommodation to secure a license; it legalized long hours of sale; and it failed to prevent adulteration of liquor.

The Act can in fact be fairly criticised for failing to provide effective control over public houses. A prospective licensee was required to provide only two sleeping rooms and two moderate sized sitting rooms to make his house eligible for a license. This easily met requirement was chiefly responsible for the proliferation of public houses and, particularly, for the existence of the 'low' drinking dens so often complained of. Inspector Robert Anderson once gave a vivid description of this type of public house. during 1877 he had been called to visit one establishment in Clarence Street, in the city. He was amazed by the scene he encountered:

9 S.M.H., 10 January 1870.
10 Ibid; 25^oVic. No.14, 1862.
a young girl of about twenty years of age behind the bar, and two men standing at the counter. There were some other persons about the place also; one of the men turned towards the window and made water in the bar of the house. I found that others had been doing the same, and the place was covered with urine, and the stench was abominable. I went through the house, and there was not 10 worth of furniture in it.11

Anderson classified the public houses in his Sydney division into the following: 13 large family hotels offering 'splendid accommodation for travellers'; 28 'good hotels, well conducted'; 75 which were 'fairly conducted'; 43 which were 'badly conducted'; and 15 which he described as 'very badly conducted'.12

Once opened for business the publican could trade between 4 a.m. and 12 p.m. on the six business days of the week. If a passing police constable suspected that a particular publican was breaching these hours of sale, or permitting prostitution, drunkenness or other 'riotous' conduct, the policeman had to secure authorization from a superior or from a Justice of the Peace before entering the hotel. Police authorities maintained that this restriction was a principal reason for the inability to control undesirable conduct in public houses.13

Adulteration of liquor was a major problem of the drink traffic in spite of the provision for fining offending publicans. Adulteration came under a separate Act, passed in 1855. However, there was no provision for government inspection of liquor and thus the Act was of little benefit. Complaints about adulteration were common. One letter to the Herald claimed that throughout the interior, liquor contained chemicals, many of which were known to be 'deadly poisons'. They were only used in small quantities, the writer continued, but they acted on the nervous system and

12 Ibid. 13 Ibid. p.19.
induced intoxication. The writer listed *cocculus indicis* (a 'bitter poison which can act convulsively on the central nervous system and induce confusion'), laudanum (an opiate), vitrol, bitter almonds and tobacco oil as being frequently used. Similar claims were repeatedly made in formal inquiries into the drink trade. John McLerie, Inspector General of Police, thought that liquor sold was 'almost rank poison in many cases', and that deaths often resulted from indulgence. Adulterated liquor will be examined in greater detail in a later chapter but, at this point, its connection with the incidence of drunkenness should be mentioned.

Adulterated drink was also linked to the incidence of lunacy. In mid-century it was commonly believed, although not understood, that heavy drinking caused derangement of the mind. A number of chronic drinkers, believed to be insane from their drinking, were sent to lunatic asylums such as the one at Tarban Creek, supervised by Dr. Francis Campbell. He was one of the earliest doctors to describe their condition as 'a positive disease':

> The incurable desire for intoxicating drink is certainly a species of insanity; it is called *Alcholismus chronicus* or the enveterate desire for alcoholic stimulants ... it is a madness for drink.

Campbell also recognised that some of the adulterants commonly put in drink, supposedly to increase thirst, had the effect of 'maddening the drinkers to a certain point'. He informed the 1854-55 Committee inquiring into Intemperance that he had received cases at Tarban Creek 'in a state of insanity' caused by adulterated liquor.

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15 S.M.H., 27 September 1870.
Additional problems flowed from the 1862 Act. D.F.C. Scott, a police magistrate, acknowledged that, under the provisions of the Act, magistrates could not take into account objections from local residents when hearing license applications. They were 'all but bound to grant a license if the accommodation is sufficient, and the applicant of good character'.\(^{18}\) It was the alleged inconsistency on the part of magistrates in determining who was of 'good character' which led to public outcry and to a general agreement that the licensing law needed urgent reform.

The Licensing Bench consisted of unpaid justices of the peace and magistrates, none of whom were compelled to attend license hearings. William Foster, the Crown Prosecutor and anti-drink activist, maintained that those best qualified did not attend and, as a consequence, those who did 'do not discharge their duty faithfully'.\(^{19}\) The _Herald_ reported that an application for a license could be rejected by one set of three magistrates following a careful inquiry. Afterwards the license could be granted, on appeal, by a differently constituted Bench with no inquiry at all.\(^{20}\)

There were plenty of dark allegations to explain magistrates' leanings in granting licenses. _Bell's Life_ maintained it was a 'notorious' fact that a 'large number' of the licensed public houses in Sydney and elsewhere were properties of either magistrates or their connections. The paper also claimed that as high rents were always obtained for such houses it was a matter of 'self-interest to keep a license on them'.\(^{21}\) P.R. Holdsworth, a witness to the 1872-73 inquiry into the Permissive Liquor Bill, also

\(^{18}\) Select Committee into the Sale of Liquors Licensing Act Amendment Bill, op.cit., p.2.  
\(^{20}\) _S.M.H._, 8 October 1870.  
\(^{21}\) _Bell's Life_, 25 June 1870.
alleged that magistrates were motivated by self-interest. He stated that although it was illegal for a magistrate, who owned the property on which a public house was situated, to sit on the bench during the hearing of the application, 'he gets his friends to do it for him, whilst he in turn votes for granting a license to their houses'.

John McLerie, Inspector General of Police, told the Select Committee on the Permissive Liquor Bill that 'a number of Magistrates sit on the Bench and grant licenses from motives that are frequently considered to be interested'.

The editor of the Herald argued that in practice anyone could obtain a license. However, the editor did not highlight the self-interest of magistrates as the cause but stressed the political pressure exerted on the Bench. As the government depended on revenue raised by licenses politicians looked coldly on any member of the Bench who tried to reduce this revenue. The result, claimed the Herald, was an attitude among licensing magistrates that "If I don't grant [the application], A and B will".

There is no adequate way to test these allegations of corruption and response to political pressure. The importance of the allegations, as mentioned, lies in the way they helped to create a climate of opinion favouring licensing reform. There is, however, no doubt that the proceedings of the annual licensing hearings were marked by gross irregularities. The 1862 Act, for example, forebade convicted criminals from holding a publican's license. Yet in March 1870 the Licensing Bench granted an application to one John Farrell, despite police evidence that he had been convicted in the Central Criminal Court in December 1864 of

22 Select Committee into the Permissive Liquor Bill, op.cit., p.9.
23 Ibid., p.15.
24 S.M.H., 11 October 1870.
'maliciously killing cattle' and sentenced to seven years with hard labour. George Perry's license application was approved in November 1869 even though police testified that he had previously kept 'a house of ill-fame' in Castlereagh Street. A senior police officer stated that, in past years, he had seen men and prostitutes go into Perry's house at various times from 8 a.m. until 2 p.m. In February 1871 the provisions of the 1862 Act were seemingly waived for William Cohen who secured his publican's license for an establishment in Balmain despite police protests that his premises did not have proper accommodation. These are only three of more than a dozen such cases reported to parliament in the early 1870s.

The exposition of deficiencies in the existing legislation led to wide agreement that reform of the liquor trade was urgently required. However, the press, witnesses to the two select committees into the liquor bills, and parliamentarians did not all agree that Permissive Liquor legislation was the best means to achieve reform: their objections to local option must now be discussed.

Those not committed to the religious and social ideals of the movement worried about the infringement to individual liberties that restrictive legislation posed. These people were often advocates of libertarianism. They believed that members of society had a right to pursue legitimate pastimes of which drinking was one. James Ryan, a pastoralist, racehorse owner and member for the Nepean, was an example of one who took this view. He saw no good reason why people should not indulge in 'a glass of grog'

26 Ibid., pp. 1561-62.
27 Ibid., p. 1554.
if they wished. On one occasion he raised roars of laughter in the Assembly when he explained that 'a glass of grog or two would not hurt any man - or even five or six - or perhaps eight or ten - taken in moderation.'

William Forster, another pastoralist member of the Assembly, was also a strong advocate of the libertarian view. He told the Assembly, in March 1873, that 'If a person walking along the street required refreshment in a public house he had a right to it'.

In one of the early parliamentary debates on the Permissive bill Montagu Consett Stephen, a solicitor and son of Sir Alfred, declared his opposition to the bill in words which echoed John Stuart Mill:

True liberty consists in every man being able to exercise his individual determination in any way whatever, except in so far as that exercise might have the effect in limiting the liberty of another person.

It was a strongly held belief among some parliamentarians that legislative interference to regulate human behaviour transgressed notions of good and just government. This group maintained that if the principle of government responsibility for making men sober was established it would encourage further regulatory controls on human conduct. Michael FitzPatrick, a public servant before becoming the member for Yass Plains, feared that the logical extension of legislation to prevent people from drinking might be measures 'to regulate their domestic affairs'. Frank Farnell, another public servant and member for Central Cumberland, wondered whether some other group might press the legislature 'to restrict the smoking of tobacco'. The clash between libertarians and Protestant social reformers, which came to the surface during these early debates, was central to the debate on liquor reform over the ensuing decades.

28 P.D., S.M.H., 9 December 1871. 29 Ibid., 10 March 1873.
30 Ibid., 12 November 1870. 31 Ibid., 9 December 1871.
32 Ibid.
Assertions that liberty was to be infringed were fiercely denied by the bill's promoters. Joseph Wearne argued that instead of restraining the people's liberties Permissive Liquor legislation actually increased them. It extended, he said, an increased suffrage to electors: 'It placed in the hands of the people a power at present vested in the hands of magistrates'.

But this explanation did not satisfy Wearne's opponents who were concerned that the mechanics of the proposed legislation would limit personal freedom.

In fact, the proposal to hold the Permissive Liquor polls at the municipal level meant only ratepayers would vote: that the franchise would, in other words, be a property-owning one. In each municipality ratepayers were a minority of the population and, as mentioned, the bill proposed that two-thirds of this group could outlaw public houses. In parliament Montagu Stephen protested vigorously against the principle of allowing a few persons to decide whether others should be allowed to drink in hotels.

John Macintosh, member for East Sydney and owner of a firm of retail ironmongers, felt the same way and used his own electorate to illustrate how contrary to democratic principles the bill would be. His electorate contained four municipalities with a total of 5,500 ratepayers. However, 25,000 inhabitants and 12,000 parliamentary voters lived in the electorate. Thus, Macintosh explained, two-thirds of 5,000 ratepayers could determine whether any of the inhabitants of the electorate could drink in public houses. This situation he said was 'manifestly unjust, and contrary to the principle adopted in our political system - namely, that the majority should rule the minority'.

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33 Ibid 34 Ibid., 1 October 1870.
Even Henry Parkes, who supported the bill in the belief that 'it would do no great harm', acknowledged that its most objectionable feature was that it allowed one section of the community to completely override another. Others were more strident in expressing this objection. Michael FitzPatrick believed that it was 'tyranny to legislate in this way'.

There were other dimensions to the argument about liberty which opponents of Permissive Liquor legislation used to good effect. Several parliamentarians denounced the measure as a piece of class legislation maintaining that it infringed the rights of the working men, but did not affect their social superiors. William Forster strongly opposed singling out public houses for closure. These places, he argued, were 'the poor man's club'. When seen in this light the bill was not only unjust but hypocritical, for, while it was the fashion to regard the poor man who got drunk at his club as 'a drunkened blackguard', the gentleman who got drunk at his club was spoken of as 'a fine fellow'.

The class bias which underlined the bill attracted criticism from other Assembly members. Michael FitzPatrick asked what right parliament had to interfere with the poor man: 'Was it to be inferred that he only was intemperate?' Richard Driver, who had once been a publican, seized upon the issue of class to challenge the sincerity of those who supported the bill. 'If hon. members', he declared, were prepared to close their [own] refreshment room, he would believe in their sincerity. If people, instead of reeling drunk from their clubs would do what they could to prevent drunkenness, then he would believe them to be sincere.

36 Ibid., 1 October 1810.
37 Ibid., 9 December 1871.
38 Ibid.
39 Ibid.
40 Ibid., 8 October 1870.
Driver added that his principal objection to the bill was that its sole intention was to keep the poor man from the public house. Charles Windeyer, the member for West Sydney, highlighted the impact which closing hotels would have on the lives of working people. He told the Assembly that they must all realise that these establishments were visited daily by hundreds of working people for meals and half a pint of beer. 'Why should such persons be deprived of this convenience', he asked.

These criticisms were indeed valid. The Permissive Liquor bills did not aim to close the clubs patronised by the wealthier classes and which operated free from the restrictions of the Licensing Act. Moreover, the bills did not seek to close the shops of spirit merchants where people with ample means could purchase larger quantities of liquor to consume in their own homes. But Permissive Liquor legislation was aimed at social reform and this ideal left advocates of the measure untroubled by notions of equality of sacrifice. Public houses were singled out for closure because, as Dr. Steel once explained, 'It is the existence of so many public houses that occasions so much drunkenness'.

Libertarians' belief in individual rights prompted them to make another criticism of the bill - its failure to include compensation for publicans who might be forced to close. This did not worry advocates of the measure. 'Why should we be so careful of the rights of the publican', Joseph Wearne asked the Assembly, 'and at the same time ignore the rights of every other section of the community'. Campaigners

41 S.M.H., 10 January 1870. 42 P.D., Ibid., 23 November 1872.
maintained that publicans were 'undeserving of compensation' because they peddled the substance of social misery. It is likely, however, that promoters of the bill were also aware that compensation was financially impossible and simply hoped that the issue could be ignored. But the failure of the bill to include compensation figured prominently in some Assembly member's opposition to it. John Lucas, who represented the electorate of Canterbury, pointed out that there were 3000 inkeepers in the colony many of whose livelihoods would be threatened if the bill was enacted. He told the Legislative Assembly that some publicans might be forced into poverty as few would have other occupations to fall back on. John Macintosh wondered why the principle of compensation and adequate notice of closure was not extended to publicans when owners of slaughterhouses and tanneries had received both after it had been necessary to close their operations in some residential areas.

Compensation for publicans, had it been included as part of Permissive Liquor legislation, would have worried government enormously. Cowper had already expressed concern about the detrimental effect enactment of the bill would have on the revenue. He told the July 1870 delegation that his government would be reluctant to endorse the measure until alternative sources of revenue had been found. The Herald noted that

the license fee brings in a good round sum, which Ministers dare not curtail, because they lack the financial ability to suggest, or the Parliamentary strength to carry an effective substitute.

43 Ibid., 9 December 1871.
44 Ibid.
45 Ibid., 17 November 1873.
46 S.M.H., 11 October 1870.
TABLE 4
PARTICULARS OF CUSTOMS RECEIPTS
Return of Customs Revenue for the Colony of New South Wales, from 1877 to 1886, both inclusive, showing the amounts received for Spirits, &c.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Rate per Gallon</th>
<th>Rate per Gallon</th>
<th>£</th>
<th>£</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rate Proof</td>
<td>Rate Proof</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>per gallons</td>
<td>per gallons</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1877</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1,012,806</td>
<td>506,403</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1878</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1,089,191</td>
<td>544,595</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1879</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>979,210</td>
<td>489,605</td>
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<tr>
<td>*'</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>52,779</td>
<td>31,667</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1880</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>999,744</td>
<td>599,847</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>1882</td>
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<tr>
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<td>1,204,784</td>
<td>722,870</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1886</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1,162,407</td>
<td>692,975</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


In these early debates searching questions were raised about whether Permissive Liquor legislation would reduce drunkenness throughout the colony. This early attempt at prohibition through the ballot-box was specifically confined to the municipalities of Sydney; for as Wearne explained, the weakness of local government outside Sydney prevented the principle being applied elsewhere. He maintained that the municipalities were convenient for 'testing the question'.

However this was no argument for advocating the measure as an effective cure for drunkenness. The Herald, for example, was disappointed by its geographic limitations. It commented that giving power to 'very few localities' would leave untouched the 'evils' in other parts of the colony.

47 Ibid., 1 October 1870. 48 S.M.H., 6 October 1870.
Drunkenness was not, of course, an urban phenomenon although the patterns of drinking evident in the bush appear to have differed from those in the city. John McLerie told the 1870 liquor inquiry that hotels were increasing in number in country areas and were generally of a 'very bad description'. These hotels were open, he said, for no other purpose than to sell liquor 'of the most poisonous kind' to shepherds, shearers, swagmen and 'others who came with their cheques'. The 'sweating' of cheques, that is, placing the entire amount with the publican to spend on drink was a common habit among bush workers. According to the Herald, at harvesting and shearing times labour was in demand, wages were high and workmen were kept at their tasks for months on end. But, it is only too well known what generally becomes of these well-earned wages. The traditions of the country are too uniform in this respect. Big cheques are knocked down at the nearest public-house. A week of drunken revel, followed by a fit of \textit{delirium tremens}, empties the leather purse, and before the year is out, the free-handed squanderer is complaining of bad times.

The Permissive Liquor Bill not only left the country areas untouched, but its operation in the city was likely to be highly uneven. While no-one doubted that ratepayers in some municipalities would seek a ballot to close public houses, it was thought unlikely that this would occur in the areas where people most frequented them. Inspector George Read believed this. He maintained that it would be difficult for the bill to work satisfactorily 'where drinking customs largely prevail'. Read instanced Randwick, Woollahra and North Shore as areas where local prohibition would probably be adopted. These were areas inhabited by the 'well-to-do classes' who, according to Read, kept drink on their premises

\footnote{Select Committee into the Sale of Liquors Licensing Act Amendment Bill, op.cit., p.12.}

\footnote{S.M.H., 17 September 1870.}
and thus did not need to frequent public houses. Conversely, he thought that the measure would not be supported in 'the densely populated districts', close to the city, where working people regularly drank in hotels. 51

The Newcastle Chronicle also doubted whether Permissive Liquor would be universally adopted. The bill, the Chronicle said, could if placed on the statute book be used as a means to legitimise, as well as to outlaw, public houses. 52 Some people thought this was a likely outcome of a number of Permissive Liquor plebiscites. Edmund Fosbery who, as Secretary and Superintendent of Police, was well acquainted with the licensing system. He believed that in many areas publicans had 'a vast amount of influence' and would have no difficulty in mustering a majority of votes. 53 Information presented in a later chapter on patterns of drinking lends some weight to this claim. Public houses were not only places for drinking and entertainment but often provided many additional services. In many cases this meant that the publican was an important local identity, with considerable influence over his clientele.

Acting-Inspector George Waters raised a different issue. He pointed out that, if the bill became law, hotels could exist on streets bordering a municipality which had voted to close them. Thus, the effectiveness of the measure would be ruined. Several members expressed concern that the evil effects of drunkenness and public houses might simply become

51 Select Committee into the Permissive Liquor Bill, op.cit., p.21.
52 Newcastle Chronicle, 1 September 1870.
53 Select Committee into the Sale of Liquors Licensing Act Amendment Bill, op.cit., p.15.
concentrated in areas untouched by the proposed legislation.54 The Herald also believed that prohibition in one municipality would aggravate evils in adjoining areas.55 Because of the bill's potentially limited application it was not widely seen as an effective way to reduce drunkenness. In this respect, there were other searching criticisms of it. David Buchanan, a barrister, and supporter of working class and Catholic causes, was convinced that the measure would not affect the habits of 'reckless and criminal drunkards'. He wondered what the drunkard would gain by 'taking away one public house which was a hundred yards from his dwelling, and leaving another 200 yards away?'56 Opponents of the legislation argued that the list of drunkards was immensely swollen by 'a few poor old men and women who made their appearance twice and three times a week at the gaol'.57 There was some basis for this view. Police witnesses, familiar with the appearance of drunks before the courts, informed the 1854-55 Select Committee into Intemperance that 'several old stagers, men and women' appeared before the courts 'time after time'.58 Inspector James Singleton told the Committee that very few new faces came before the police as drunkards:

they are pretty much the same class. Old confirmed drunkards. Some of them are sent to gaol for two or three months, and as soon as they are out of gaol they are sent to the watchhouse again.59

54 P.D. S.M.H., 8 October 1870.
55 S.M.H., 19 October 1870
56 P.D., Ibid., 1 October 1870.
57 Ibid., 9 December 1871.
58 Select Committee into Intemperance, op.cit., p.2.
59 Ibid., p.79.
Speaking in the 1880s Whittingdale Johnson, a stipendary magistrate, said that, from his experience, 'nearly one-half of the cases for drunkenness in the Police Courts are those of habitual offenders'.

Existing knowledge about habitual drunkards, slight though it was, raised a further important question - would their condition be improved if, under Permissive Liquor legislation, their access to public houses was restricted? Temperance advocates simply believed that temptation led inexorably to indulgence. As mentioned earlier, Dr. Francis Campbell was among the first to view habitual drinkers from a medical perspective. But developments in understanding alcoholism were slow to spread. Most nineteenth century scientific research into the disease was conducted in Europe and was not easily accessible in the Australian colonies. Nevertheless by the early 1870s a change in the community's attitude towards habitual drunkards had emerged. These people were no longer universally looked upon in the same way as lunatics but began to be thought of as patients requiring specialised treatment.

Frederick Norton Manning, Medical Superintendent at the Hospital for the Insane at Gladesville, Sydney, was instrumental in modifying social attitudes towards habitual drinkers. Manning was a well-qualified and respected doctor who had settled in Sydney in 1868. He was invited by Parkes to take on the demanding position at Tarban Creek Lunatic Asylum [renamed Gladesville] from Dr. Campbell who was nearly 70 years of age.

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and was no longer competent to manage a large, over-crowded asylum.\(^{62}\)

One of Manning's first actions was to persuade the Colonial Secretary to change the name of Tarban Creek to The Hospital for the Insane, Gladesville. Manning was committed to improving the conditions and treatment of lunatics. In the early 1870s they were still one of society's forgotten groups. Gladesville was certainly in a deplorable condition when Manning took charge. The 300 patients were housed in rooms many of which were poorly ventilated, dirty and evil-smelling. Medical treatment of patients was minimal.\(^{63}\)

Manning told the 1872 liquor inquiry that experience had led him to conclude that the effect of alcohol was more deleterious to the body than to the mind. He pointed out that heavy drinkers suffered diseases of the liver and kidney and not usually of the brain. Only about 15% of lunacy cases he had come into contact with had been caused by abuse of liquor.\(^{64}\) Manning was not asked to comment whether adulterated drink had been responsible for the condition of this group, although it is likely the case. The earlier mentioned opinion of Dr. Campbell can be added to the report of a South Australian liquor inquiry which concluded that:

> very few of the chronic cases of lunacy in the Adelaide asylums are the result of indulgence in drink; and that in those cases where insanity supervenes the immediate cause is found in the noxious articles wherewith the liquor has been drugged.\(^{65}\)


\(^{63}\) Ibid., pp.192-193.

\(^{64}\) Select Committee into the Permissive Liquor Bill, op.cit., p.27.

\(^{65}\) Royal Commission into Liquor Laws, South Australia P.P., 1879, vol.3., p.8 (Report).
Manning chaired a public meeting in November 1871 in advocacy of establishing an inebriates' asylum. This meeting led to the formation, in July 1872, of a Drunkards' Reformatory Committee whose aim was to interest government and the community in building an inebriates' asylum for the proper treatment of habitual drinkers. Committee members and supporters came principally from the medical profession and clergy. A few, including Rev. T. Gainford and Samuel Goold, were prominent temperance activists. The asylum was intended for people who had hitherto been remanded in gaol. D.F.C. Scott maintained that habitual drinkers 'consider it a degradation to be sent to gaol ... I think it preys on the mind of ... a man who is half a lunatic from drink, to be sent to a common gaol'.

There is very little information available on the functioning of the Drunkards' Reformatory Committee. It is known, however, that it laboured throughout the mid 1870s without securing government support for the project. It is likely that the Committee's work did help to awaken sections of the public to the needs of habitual drinkers. In 1874 the Herald commented that inebriate asylums had 'much to recommend them'. There is in fact no evidence to suggest that restrictive or prohibitive legislation would cure the craving for alcohol of this unfortunate section of the drinking public. For them temptation could not be easily overcome. In a later chapter I will explore the lives of chronic drinkers together with developments in their treatment.

66 S.M.H., 27 November 1871. 67 Ibid., 30 July 1872.
68 Select Committee into the Sale of Liquors Licensing Act Amendment Bill, op.cit., p.6.
69 S.M.H., 21 August 1874.
Critics of Permissive Liquor legislation were also concerned to find alternative means of reforming the drink trade. Their interest had been awakened by the anti-drink campaign but they opposed the extreme measures advocated by temperance crusaders. Several possibilities were suggested. Police authorities widely favoured giving greater powers to magistrates to refuse unsuitable applicants for licenses and extending police powers to control conduct in public houses. Inspector George Read believed that it was 'absolutely necessary that ordinary constables should have authority to enter a public-house'. Police officials also supported closing public houses earlier. Edmund Fosbery suggested they be shut at 10 p.m. while John McLerie favoured 11 p.m.

Some commentators believed that the Licensing Bench should be able to limit the number of licenses. Montagu Stephen suggested that the Bench be prevented from licensing more than one hotel for every 80 households instead of the existing haphazard ratio of one to every 30 households. John McLerie's suggestion in this regard was less specific but he maintained that the licensing body should be given discretionary power over the number of houses they license 'having regard to the requirements of each neighbourhood'.

The establishment of a Licensing Board to replace licensing magistrates was widely favoured. Bell's Life recommended that such a board be composed of responsible and paid officials and include the Mayor of Sydney, two stipendiary magistrates and the Inspector-General of

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70 Select Committee into the Sale of Liquors Licensing Act Amendment Bill, op.cit., p.7,8.
71 Ibid., p.19.  
72 Ibid., pp. 9,15.  
73 P.D., S.M.H., 12 November 1870.  
74 Select Committee into the Sale of Liquors Licensing Act Amendment Bill, op.cit., p.8.
Police. The paper believed that the public would have confidence in a board of this sort. The appointment of a government analyst to test liquors sold by publicans was regarded as a practical and effective solution to control adulteration. David Buchanan suggested that any publican found selling 'hocused' liquor should be fined £100 and be debarred from ever holding a license again.

Suggestions of these kinds did not find their way into Select Committee recommendations in New South Wales; a most interesting contrast was provided in South Australia in 1879 when a Royal Commission reported there on the liquor laws. This Commission worked on a set of assumptions which were beyond the range of the thinking of New South Wales temperance reformers. The Commission stated that:

as to prohibiting the sale of intoxicating liquors with the intention or hope of putting down drunkenness, legislation alone would not be successful. Habits and tastes cannot suddenly be changed, nor in a free country would people submit quietly to what they might consider undue restraint.

Working on these assumptions the Commission recommended a number of practical steps to reduce drunkenness. Strict inquiry should be made into the character of every applicant before a license was granted 'and in no case should a license be given to other than persons of good character'. The Commission also recommended that hotels close at 10 p.m. and that they should be required to provide proper facilities for accommodation. Commissioners suggested that hotels should be compelled to keep a book in which travellers could record 'their satisfaction or any want of attention on the part of the licensee'. This book would be

75 Bell's Life, 25 June 1870.  
76 S.M.H., 17 November 1870.  
77 Royal Commission into Liquor Laws, op.cit., p.9 (Report).  
78 Ibid., p.10.
produced each year to the licensing bench.\textsuperscript{79} Heavy penalties for publicans selling adulterated liquor together with government testing of liquor were among the other recommendations suggested by the Commission.\textsuperscript{80}

The South Australian Commission was realistic enough to consider whether some exceptions to this general policy of strict regulation were required. William Sandover, M.L.C., was one of the witnesses who was asked whether he thought it necessary that there should be 'a low class of public-house in particular districts for the convenience of a low class of customer?' Sandover agreed, explaining that:

\begin{quote}
low places of resort and low characters have always existed, and in my opinion will always exist, and therefore it is better to recognize the difficulty, frankly, and make suitable provision accordingly.
\end{quote}

Sandover went on to state that brothels and 'low-class public-houses' should be licensed as places of 'resort for low characters'.\textsuperscript{81}

These opinions were included in the Commissioners' report. 'Much evidence was taken', they wrote,

\begin{quote}
about low-class houses frequented by people of objectionable character. They exist in large cities and sea-ports everywhere. Although their existence is much to be deplored, it has not been satisfactorily shown that closing them would put down the evils connected with them; indeed the presumption is that they would spread, which would be worse than centralization.\textsuperscript{82}
\end{quote}

There was no equivalent inquiry undertaken in New South Wales into practicable means to reduce drunkenness during the 1870s, or indeed, later. Although many of the recommendations made by the Royal Commission in South Australia had been expressed by interested parties in New South Wales, they did not find their way into any official reports. In the

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{79} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{80} Ibid., p.11.
\item \textsuperscript{81} Ibid., pp.54-55 (Minutes).
\item \textsuperscript{82} Ibid., p.6 (Report).
\end{itemize}
following decades it was difficult for critics of the anti-drink crusade to generate support for a coherent but moderate programme to reform the drink trade. Anti-drink activists succeeded in keeping their simple but sweeping demands at the fore-front of political debate.

Crusaders had been unsuccessful in their first campaign to win legislation. There were lessons to be learnt from their defeat. The prohibitionists had been exposed as politically inexperienced. In particular they failed to appreciate that to win their legislative demands required more active and direct involvement in politics. No efforts had been made between 1870-73 to make Permissive Liquor legislation a party issue or an issue at elections. Moreover, the campaign had lacked effective leadership. For all his persistence and dedication, Joseph Wearne was not well placed to secure passage of the bills. His independence of the main parliamentary factions left him with little influence when such a controversial matter was at stake. His career in parliament has been described as 'somewhat erratic':

"certainly none can be able to accuse him of being a party man, since he has wandered from side to side of the House in the most unaccountable manner, having supported every side in turns, and no one for long. Even now [May 1874] he is looked upon by both parties as the most independent man that has a seat in the House."83

Wearne had another disadvantage which did not recommend him as a principal parliamentary spokesman for a cause seeking radical reform. He was a 'somewhat heavy speaker' who, while he took the points of a question 'fairly enough', dealt with them 'in so lumbering a style as to have little effect'. As a consequence, his speeches did not 'tell very materially either on one side or on the other'.84

83 Sydney Illustrated News, 30 May 1874.
Effective, astute leadership and a more active involvement in electoral politics was thus shown to be vital to the future of the anti-drink crusade. The public and political debate on the drink traffic in the early 1870s had revealed strong support for reforming, but not yet for abolishing, the trade. The task ahead for campaigners was to convince electors and their representatives of the need gradually to eradicate the trade by legislation.

84 Ibid.
In the latter 1870s and early 1880s anti-drink forces fought the liquor trade on two fronts. The long-term objective remained the implementation of local option: but for the immediate future they concentrated on restrictive legislation to curtail specific activities associated with public houses - Sunday trading, the employment of barmaid and the provision of entertainment. Crusaders believed that these features of hotels not only underpinned their popularity and hence perpetuated drinking habits, but also undermined Christian values.

The anti-drink campaign was greatly advanced by the active support of John Davies, who emerged as the principal parliamentary spokesman on temperance issues. During the late 1870s and early 1880s he brought considerable political influence to the cause. Davies was an accomplished political organizer. In July 1868 he became President of the Protestant Political Association, newly formed to secure the return of Protestants to parliament and to the City Council. Following his election to the Assembly in the mid-1870s Davies became John Robertson's whip, a position which he later held under the Parkes-Robertson coalition. He was thus in a position to secure political support for temperance policies. He has been described as astute and frugal and a committed teetotaller and non-smoker.

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2 Ibid.
3 Ibid.
In February 1877 Davies introduced into the Legislative Assembly a bill to close public houses on Sundays. The 1862 Licensed Publicans' Act allowed hotels to open between 1-3 pm on Sundays. This provision was chiefly to permit working people to purchase beer to drink with their Sunday dinner. The law did not permit customers to consume liquor on the premises during these hours. Davies' bill was narrowly defeated. However, the Assembly agreed to set up a Select Committee into Sunday trading to which Davies was appointed.

Evidence given to this Committee confirmed that the Sunday trading law was being evaded. But none of the witnesses, including the police, were able to specify the extent of illegal drinking on Sunday. Robert Anderson, a sub-Inspector of Police, maintained that 'a great many' publicans violated the law. However police witnesses explained that they were unable to detail accurately the extent of illegal trading because of the restrictions the 1862 Act imposed on their entry into public houses. Samuel Johnson, a divisional inspector for Balmain, told the inquiry that during 1877 he had secured 43 convictions for illegal Sunday selling but that these had been obtained only 'under the greatest difficulties'.

The findings of the Select Committee provoked Protestant temperance groups and churches to campaign for the closure of hotels on Sundays. Petitions to parliament from local bodies protested that 'the Sunday traffic in intoxicating drink is a fruitful source of crime, misery, drunkenness and immorality'. Prominent anti-drink activists had long held this view. Joseph Wearne, the Chairman of the 1872 liquor inquiry, asked fellow temperance enthusiast William

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Foster if he had 'heard any complaints as to the state of drink on the Sabbath-day?' Foster replied that he thought 'more mischief is done by the sale of drink on the Sabbath-day than during the whole of the rest of the week'. When John Davies delivered his opening speech on the bill to close hotels on Sundays he explained that the measure was justified on the grounds that Sunday trading was 'productive of a great deal of crime and immorality'. Trading, he continued, should be prohibited on 'social and moral grounds'.

Davies' comments highlight the twin reasons which underlined Protestant anxiety about Sunday drinking. The social grounds for Sunday prohibition rested on campaigners' belief that drunkenness was rife on the Sabbath. They argued that Sunday was the publicans' busiest day and that the extent of the drunkenness this caused could be seen in the large number of arrests which brought cases to the court each Monday morning. Protestant petitioners wrote that the ill-effects of Sunday drinking were proved by the records of our Police Courts, whose Monday business chiefly consists of cases arising from this cause, and that it is therefore necessary to the welfare of the community that publicans should be compelled to close their houses on Sundays, as other tradesmen.

The existence of the 'Monday business' was also stressed by some police officers. Inspector James Rush was asked by the committee inquiring into Sunday trading whether he made more arrests for drunkenness on Sundays than he did on week days. Rush replied that he

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7 P.D. S.M.H., 19 February 1877.
thought this was the case although he admitted that he had no returns to prove the point. In fact figures did not exist. Statistics for New South Wales did not separate arrests made on Saturdays, Saturday nights and Sundays. The Herald acknowledged the unreliability of police records to indicate the extent of intoxication on Sundays. The paper doubted that a strong case could be made for prohibitive legislation:

all the facts would show that Magistrates' work on Monday is quite as much the result of what goes on on Saturday nights as \ldots{} on Sundays, and would therefore be quite as good ground for an Act to close public-houses on Saturdays as for an Act to close them on Sundays.\(^9\)

Figures collected by the South Australian Royal Commission into the Liquor Laws lends some weight to the Herald's view. Police records for Adelaide showed that in 1878 there were 263 arrests for drunkenness on Saturdays and 134 on Sundays. In 1879 369 were arrested on Saturdays and 140 on Sundays.\(^10\)

As Davies indicated, the 'moral' aspects of Sunday trading was the second major concern of Protestants. Indeed, those who advocated Sunday closure of hotels acted, so the Herald believed, 'chiefly on religious grounds'.\(^11\) To Protestant anti-drink campaigners Sunday trading encouraged desecration of the Sabbath and thus undermined the Christian principles on which they based their campaign for social reform.

From the mid-1870s desecration of the 'Divine law' of the Sabbath became a grave concern to committed Protestants. By this

\(^9\) S.M.H., 4 May 1877.
\(^11\) S.M.H., 4 May 1877.
time recreational facilities had expanded and were patronized by growing numbers of the public. The author of the Vagabond Papers clearly illustrated the popularity of Sunday recreations in the late 1870s:

The steamers which ply to Manly beach and other beautiful waterside resorts are always crowded on fine Sundays, and the roads to Botany and Coogee are thronged... The beautiful Domain, too, is filled with Sabbath-breakers. Here on summer mornings one finds hundreds walking around or lying in the grass, inhaling the pure air and shaking off the rust of the week's hard toil.12

Protestants not only campaigned to close public houses on the Sabbath, they also organised opposition to the Sunday opening of the public library, museum and art gallery. Thus, the debate on Sunday closure of hotels must be seen within the context of Protestant concern to preserve the Sabbath. Its strict observance was argued to be essential to maintaining the Christian character, and hence the moral standards, of the community. The Protestant Standard expressed the prevailing disquiet about the threat to Sabbatarian principles when it maintained, in April 1878, that it would be a 'sorry change' for New South Wales if libraries, museums, theatres, public houses, steamboats, picnics and outdoor concerts were to be accepted in place of quiet repose. The journal warned against tampering with 'the sacred time which invites man to think of his soul and eternity'.13

The matter was even more pressing because of committed Protestants' anxiety about a growing trend towards 'spiritual degeneracy' and 'visible decay of faith and godliness'.14 They were particularly concerned that it was now widely acknowledged that the churches held 'small attractions for large numbers of the working

12 Vagabond Papers, 5th Series, Melbourne, 1878, p.96.
13 Protestant Standard, 6 April 1878. 14 Ibid., 23 June 1883.
classes'. The churches found that their chief rival on Sundays were public houses. 'The principal Sunday attractions', remarked the Herald,

are the temple and the tavern, and the rule has been that too many of those who have no taste of the former find their way to the latter.16

Sunday closure of hotels, and of other recreational facilities, fitted into the concept of social regeneration which lay at the heart of the Protestant anti-drink movement. The vision of reform, as we have noted earlier, was of a society whose freedom from liquor would see the disappearance of social ills. But the reform Protestants spoke of also involved encouraging 'the better morals of the people',17 by whom they usually meant the working classes. Thus Rev. Joseph Barnier, an Anglican minister from Parramatta, told the 1877 Committee that hotel trading on the Sabbath tempted 'a large number of persons to drink', and led many into undesirable social behaviour. He instanced 'the gathering of people about the doors of the public-houses', and the fact that, as a consequence, the streets were 'unpleasant to walk through on Sunday'.18

Protestants argued that, if the working classes could not be forced to attend church, then the law should at least prohibit all recreational facilities on the Sabbath. This would allow the labouring classes to educate and improve their minds. 'At home', the Methodist Weekly Advocate wrote, working people 'can read the best productions of the wisest human writers', and study the Bible.19

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15 S.M.H., 24 April 1875. 16 Ibid., 3 April 1878.
17 Select Committee on the Sunday Sale of Liquor Bill, op.cit., p.8.
18 Ibid., p.9. 19 Weekly Advocate, 12 November 1881.
society neglected to provide the opportunity for such quiet reflection on the Lord's Day it would, the Protestant Standard argued, inflict 'positive injury' on man's 'moral and physical well-being'.

These were the ideals which motivated Protestant groups to press parliament to close hotels on Sundays and to prevent the opening of other recreational facilities. But they encountered strong opposition. In 1878 parliament sanctioned the opening of the Public Library and Museum on Sundays. Government responded to secular and Catholic demands that people should 'be free to take their pleasure in their own way' on Sunday as on any other day of the week.

Several thousand Protestants petitioned parliament not to proceed with the measure. When this action failed, the churches held a public meeting to discuss all matters relating to Sunday observance in the Masonic Hall on 1 April 1878. On the dais were the Dean of Sydney, the Moderator of the Presbyterian Church and the Chairman of the Wesleyan Conference. Alongside these church officials sat some familiar anti-drink campaigners - Rev. Dr. Robert Steel, Rev. J. Barnier and John Davies. Thirty one of the 73 members of the Legislative Assembly were also present which was testimony to the influence of organized Protestantism. The Dean of Sydney was received enthusiastically when he declared that those present must prevent the Sabbath from becoming a 'continental' one. If such a thing ever happened, the Dean said, all places of amusement would be

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20 Protestant Standard, 20 March 1880.
21 S.M.H., 7 September 1880.
opened, 'very harmless apparently, but leading on from one thing to another', and the Sabbath would be lost as a 'day of rest for mankind'. This meeting was a forerunner to the formation, in June 1880, of the Lord's Day Observance Society, similarly composed.

The Bulletin, typifying libertarian reaction, ridiculed the composition and objectives of the Lord's Day Observance Society. The editor wrote that its audiences were composed of the ordinary Sunday-school and pious 'tea and muffin variety', along with 'persuasively invited' working men who heard themselves profusely patronised, and at the same time insulted by being told that in this democratic community they will infallibly be robbed of their one day's rest in seven if they fail to cling to the feeble skirts of the sanctified Sabbatarians.

Sabbatarians were unable to prevent recreational venues from opening. By the early 1880s they encountered strong opposition on two quite different grounds; first, that people had a right to spend Sundays as they wished; and second, that recreational institutions would actually encourage men to stay away from hotels. Catholics were prominent in the libertarians' attack on the Sabbatarian campaign. Freeman's Journal, the leading Catholic newspaper, had argued over many years that strict Sabbath observance unjustly curtailed 'the enjoyments of the people'. Protestants disliked the more tolerant attitude of the Catholic church towards Sunday observance. The Protestant Standard attacked Catholics for using

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23 S.M.H., 2 April 1878.
26 Freeman's Journal, 8 June 1864.
Sundays in the pursuits of 'politics, advertisements and money getting'.

In 1882 a bill was passed by parliament permitting the Art Gallery in Sydney to open on Sundays. John McElhone, a stock and station agent who represented the Upper Hunter, stoutly defended the bill. He challenged any member of the Assembly to point out what harm had arisen from allowing the Museum and Library to open on Sundays. He believed that a 'vast amount' of good had resulted. People, he said, could visit these places instead of spending the afternoon in the nearest hotel. There was a great deal of hypocrisy, McElhone continued, in the attitude of those who loudly proclaimed that Sunday was a day for religious observance and rest. He was angered that none of these people ever raised a voice in support of the omnibus men who laboured on Sundays, as they did every other day of the week, from 5 am to 11 pm.

Henry Copeland also expressed anti-sabbatarian views when he spoke on the bill. He failed to understand why Protestants were so fiercely opposed to the legislation. 'Are the clergy and church-going people', he asked, 'afraid that the Art Gallery will be so seductive that people will go there rather than listen to the sweet words of the clergyman?' Copeland believed that churches had nothing to fear from the legislation so long as they 'spoke the truth, and minister to the people's welfare'.

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27 Protestant Standard, 17 November 1874.
29 Ibid., p.188.
Neither Copeland nor McElhone had any formal connection with Protestantism. Their backgrounds, similar in many respects, help reveal the motives which prompted anti-sabbatarianism, including the opposition to Sunday closing of public houses. Both men were prominent supporters of working men's causes during the 1870s and 80s and each was said to receive the Irish Catholic vote at elections. McElhone, a 'hot-tempered... and at times scurrilous' character was elected to the Assembly in 1875 as the champion of free selectors.30 Copeland, elected in 1877, 'always strongly supported the working class', particularly as an advocate for the eight hours movement. He supported Sunday opening of the Art Gallery for the benefit of working people. In fact, when Parkes declared that 10,000 people had petitioned against the measure, and none for it, Copeland quickly collected 24,000 signatures in favour of the legislation. This helped persuade the Assembly to allow passage of the bill.31

It is clear that many in the community did not sympathise with the Protestant ideal of Sunday. The Sydney Mail reflected predominant secular opinion when it commented, in the early 1880s, that 'What was a day of rest is now more or less a day of relaxation. People only go to church when they want to'.32 By the mid-80s a variety of Sunday attractions were well-patronised. In addition to the Library, Museum, Art Gallery and sea-side resorts, public interest had made Sunday concerts popular as well. In the city and suburbs large crowds were attracted to performances of classical and contemporary music.33

32 Sydney Mail, 19 November 1881. 33 D.T., 22 February 1886.
The wider debate about Sabbath observance is the context within which the Sunday closure of public houses must be placed. In fact Davies' 1877 bill was the first attempt made by Protestants to restore the Sabbath as a day of rest and religious observance. Libertarian opponents of Davies' bill attacked the sabbatarian ideals which they believed lay behind its introduction. Michael FitzPatrick, also a Catholic, was a fierce critic of the bill. He protested that it was not aimed at the consumption of liquor but Protestant concern about the desecration of the Sabbath. 'It was not that you should drink beer', he declared, 'but that you should not get it on Sunday'. FitzPatrick believed that this amounted to a 'piece of goody-goody legislation'. He concluded by stating that he was not an advocate of the 'black Sabbath' and that he 'would never consent to any vote of his coercing a man into keeping one'. 34 Samuel Charles, a pastoralist from Kiama, acknowledged that, as he drank on Sundays, the working man had no right to be deprived of his liquor. 35

Davies' bill, as mentioned, was defeated by the barest margin. Those who rejected it believed, like Samuel Charles, that it would be unjust to force the working man to observe the Sabbath strictly in this respect, while the wealthier classes could afford to lay in stocks of liquor for the weekend or had access to private clubs on Sundays. In the 1880s there were seven well appointed clubs in Sydney which were conducted much like private hotels. As they

34 P.D. S.M.H., 19 February 1877.
35 Ibid.
operated outside the regulatory controls governing public houses they were able to serve their well-to-do patrons with liquor at any time during the week.  

William Forster, after raising roars of laughter in the Assembly by announcing that he was 'teetotally opposed to this bill', turned to Davies and asked him why he had not sought to ban drinking in private clubs on Sundays. 'Why should a gentleman', Forster asked, 'because he was wealthy and able to be a member of a club, have a privilege which was to be denied the working man?' If the law was to appear even-handed this was surely a reasonable demand. The failure to include a provision that drink venues other than public houses be closed on Sundays, in either Davies' bill or in the Parkes government's 1881 licensing Act, illustrates that the temperance lobby accepted the notion of one law for the rich and another for the poor.

The narrow defeat suffered by Davies' bill in 1877 encouraged its reintroduction. Sunday closure remained part of the reform of the licensing laws demanded by the various temperance organizations, the Lord's Day Observance Society and the Protestant churches, and was included as part of the 1881 Licensing Act. In the following chapter I will examine the political pressure exerted on parliamentary members in the lead up to the introduction of this bill. At this point it is sufficient to say that, following the November 1880 elections, Parkes could no longer ignore the demands from the anti-drink movement for licensing reform and especially for

Sunday prohibition. Parkes could not help but be aware that between 30–40,000 people had petitioned in its favour. 39 When the Assembly met after the elections FitzPatrick tried to goad the government to acknowledge that, as a political issue, Sunday trading had become 'a little too hot'. 40 Sunday trading, and indeed licensing reform generally were indicative of the sectarian differences which characterised colonial politics. Parkes certainly harboured anti-Catholic sentiments, and his 'old Birmingham-bred sentiments of no-popery', 41 now surfaced over Sunday issues.

Parkes vigorously defended the Sabbatarian views of Protestant groups. In September 1880, just after he became Premier, he authorised the police to stop Sunday theatre evenings. 42 He opposed the Art Gallery opening on Sunday, offering the terse comment – 'We are either a Christian community or we are not' and went on to say that he could not support the opening of institutions which competed with church services. 43 When Parkes introduced the Licensing Bill in September 1881 he proudly announced that, henceforth, 'all public-houses will be closed on Sundays'. He later defended the Sunday prohibition clause in committee when an amendment was unsuccessfully moved against it. He declared that:

Sunday with the Englishmen is a day of repose, of rest, of quiet, of decency, of respect for people's religious opinions, where no ordinary occupation is followed. 44

39 N.S.W. P.D., Series 1, 1881, vol.6, p.1658.
40 Ibid., p.1657.
42 Protestant Standard, 11 September 1880.
44 Ibid. p. 233.
Only five members of the Assembly opposed the clause at the time of the second reading debate and the amendment, moved by Sydney Burdekin, was easily defeated. This greatly increased political support for Sunday prohibition was acknowledged by the press to have stemmed from the influence temperance groups had exerted during the November 1880 elections.\(^45\) In fact the handful of Assembly members who continued to criticise the measure objected to the manner in which temperance societies had imposed their will on the legislature. David Buchanan contended that these groups had acted in an 'exacting and arrogant' manner.\(^46\) He maintained that there was no more 'innocent recreation' than drinking on a Sunday.\(^47\) Henry Copeland also continued to protest against Sunday closure of public houses. However, clamour for the measure was, apparently, overwhelming.

Protestants were delighted with the inclusion of the Sunday closing clause in Parkes' Licensing Act. It would be welcomed, the Protestant Standard believed, by 'Social Reformers and by Religious people'. The journal envisaged that 'public morals' would benefit from this 'installment of good'. The prohibition on Sunday trading would reduce police and magistrates' duties. Moreover, families would enjoy 'peace at home' and the workman would begin the week fresher.\(^48\)

\(^45\) Sydney Mail, 27 November 1880.

\(^46\) N.S.W.P.D., Series 1, 1881, vol.5, p. 1111.

\(^47\) Ibid., p. 1115.

\(^48\) Protestant Standard, 29 October 1881.
However, the benefits Protestants expected from Sunday closure were unfulfilled. The Sunday clause remained in force, thanks to pressure from temperance groups, but at the time the Royal Commission into Intoxicating Drinks interviewed witnesses during 1886-87, it was clear that Sunday opening of hotels was widely evaded. Drinkers and publicans were prepared to risk criminal prosecution in order to continue the custom of drinking on Sundays. In its report the Commission referred to the 'wholesale evasion' practised by 'a large majority of publicans'. In fact sub-Inspector Atwill told the Commission that fewer than 200 of the 822 holders of publicans' licenses in Sydney observed the law. Drinking was now widely characterised by criminal activity.

The continuing incidence of Sunday drinking was confirmation for those who had argued that people's 'moral' or social behaviour could not be altered by merely changing the law. Several witnesses to the Commission explained that publicans were frequently forced into breaking the law in response to the demand from working people. E.W. Fosbery, the Inspector-General of Police, maintained that some customers told publicans that if they would not sell liquor on Sunday 'as others do, they will give their week-day custom where they get their Sunday drink'. Joseph Spora, who owned the Australia Inn on the corner of Woolloomooloo and Riley Streets, complained that he found his business on week-days was falling off very fast. My customers were going to other places, because they said that they would patronise houses where they could be served on Sundays.

51 Ibid. 52 Ibid., p.5. 53 Ibid., p.287.
Evidence given to the Royal Commission by, or on behalf of, working people differed on the desirability of Sunday closing. Charles Paul, for example, a station master with the Railway Department, told the Commission that most of his work-mates were in favour of the law as it stood. But the greater part of these men, he explained, were teetotallers. However, strong endorsement for at least partial Sunday opening was given by men in the factory and printing trades as well as from seamen and wharf labourers. E.W. Fosbery believed that, in part, this was explained by the men's desire to spend Sunday in leisure following their receipt of wages on Saturday night.

Police were occasionally able to secure convictions for illegal Sunday selling. The following two cases were reported in the Herald on 12 June 1885. Henry Herwing, the licensee of the European Hotel, Castlereagh Street, was charged by Constable Hughes with Sunday selling. Hughes alleged in court that, on passing Herwing's premises, he noticed a number of men coming in and out of the hotel. The 1882 Act had given Hughes unrestricted right of entry into public houses and at the bar he found several people drinking. He described what followed:

one of the men spilt the contents of his glass on the floor, and the landlord snatched a tumbler out of the hand of another, and threw it behind the fire.

So long as the publican did not deny having served liquor no other evidence than the statement of a constable was required to obtain a conviction. Herwing was fined £3 for his infringement.

54 Ibid., p.349.  55 Ibid., pp.100-103 (Report).  56 Ibid., p.4 (Minutes).
On the same day the magistrates' court heard the case of Richmond Thatcher who leased the Bulletin Hotel in King Street. Constable Snellgrove deposed that as soon as the barmaid saw him enter she swept the bottles off the table, put the glasses in a tub of water and ordered the men out of the room. Thatcher was nonetheless fined £4. Reports of the police court, however, seldom mention prosecutions for Sunday selling.\(^{57}\) This is surprising given that over 100 police were attached to the newly created licensing squad. The \textit{Herald} pondered the curious absence of convictions for Sunday selling and concluded that offences were committed with the 'knowledge and connivance' of the police.\(^{58}\) Certainly police were aware of illegal selling but the charge that the force turned an approving blind eye seems likely but is difficult to substantiate.

Police witnesses to the Drink Commission were emphatic that some publicans, along with their customers, committed perjury to avoid prosecution. This obviously made convictions difficult to secure. Sub-Inspector Atwill instanced one publican in his division who had escaped the earnest attempts of Atwill's officers to catch him selling illegally. One evening Atwill dressed himself for church and, thus disguised, managed to get past the publican who was standing outside his hotel overseeing the entry of regular customers. Once inside Atwill claimed that he received assurances from the publican and his wife and from at least one customer that all would admit to having broken the law. However, when all came before court 'they actually swore that what the man was served with was tonic water'.\(^{59}\) Inspector Potter had had

\(^{57}\) S.M.H., 6 February 1886. \(^{58}\) Ibid. \(^{59}\) Intoxicating Drink Inquiry Commission, op.cit., p.40 (Minutes).
similar experiences as had Inspector Anderson. He told the Drink Commission that the perjury committed during the past two years had been 'something shocking'. It was frequently the case, he said, that publicans summoned for Sunday selling produced three or four witnesses 'who swear in direct opposition to the constable'. He gave the recent experience of a constable with over five years experience in the Irish Constabulary who, on entering a public house, detained the publican and several drinkers at the bar. The latter gave false addresses and could not be found when the case came to court. At the hearing the publican swore that he was at the bar only to tell the men that he could not serve them. The publican's wife, although she had not been present at the time, also swore that no liquor had been served.

The elaborate precautions taken by many publicans to avoid detection for illegal Sunday selling intensified the criminal character of the drink trade. Inspector Robert Anderson explained to the Drink Commission that in some cases publicans would only admit regular customers and then strictly one at a time. More seriously, publicans often employed 'touts' who took up positions in all the surrounding roads and alleyways. As Anderson explained they watched for the police

and at the approach of one of the inspectors... who are as well known as I am, a signal is given before he gets within 200 yards of the house...[whereupon] all signs of the consumption of liquor are removed.

Rev. W. Bradley, Chaplain of Sydney Bethel Union, had observed 'touts' operating. Before service one Sunday morning he saw a dozen men

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60 Ibid., p.67. 61 Ibid., p.16. 62 Ibid., p.15
standing at a corner 'waiting for the signal'. When that had been given the waiting men entered the public house 'by the back way'. After half an hour another dozen men would congregate at the corner and enter on receiving the signal, followed by a further batch after a similar period of time had elapsed.⁶³

Edmund Fosbery maintained that, when confronted with these methods of evasion, police could only prevent Sunday selling by despatching officers in plain clothes. However he was reluctant to do this because he believed that the force would lose the public's respect and would 'thereby be demoralised'.⁶⁴ There are isolated instances, nonetheless, where police did adopt this expedient. J.C.M. des A. Weale, Secretary of the L.V.A., told the Drink Commission that

A man went to a public-house in Sussex Street one Sunday in the dress of a sailor, and asked for a drink, saying he had just arrived from Newcastle. The publican, who did not like his look, told him he ought to have gone to one of the other houses he had passed on his way from the wharf, and refused to serve him. He would not go away, but remained while the publican served three or four persons who were lodgers, and then he brought a policeman to the house, and had the publican summonsed for serving. This man was himself a policeman in disguise.⁶⁵

Fosbery was not opposed to employing non-police officers as informers. In fact, a man known only as Orlando was employed by the Police Department to detect illegal selling. Fosbery's only complaint, expressed in a memo to the Under Secretary of Justice, was that men 'of high character cannot be obtained for the work; indeed

⁶³ Ibid., p.432.
⁶⁵ Intoxicating Drink Commission Inquiry, op.cit. p.278.
it is extremely difficult to get anyone to act as informer'.

There was one legal means available to drinkers to evade Sunday prohibition. The Act stipulated that bona fide travellers could be served on Sundays. This provision was designed to allow visitors, especially from the country, the same facilities they enjoyed during the week days. According to the Act, a bona fide traveller was a person who lived at least five miles from the premises where he was supplied with liquor. The public could exploit this clause simply by travelling five miles from their place of residence. Manly was a favourite destination for Sunday drinkers. Many of the residents became incensed at the weekly invasion. In 1883 250 of their number complained, in a petition to parliament, that

since the above Act has been passed, the excursion steamers from Sydney to Manly on Sundays have brought an average increase of five hundred passengers, many of whom came down expressly to claim the privilege of travellers to be served at the bar of our public-houses... in consequence of this influx, drunken men and women are frequently seen in our streets on Sunday afternoons.

Violation of Sunday prohibition was so widespread that the law had little, if any, impact on the drinking habits of the public. According to several witnesses before the Drink Commission the legal restriction on Sunday drinking was also responsible for a substantial increase in the retail sale of jug and bottle on Saturday nights. This liquor was taken home to be consumed on Sundays by people who wished to continue the custom of drinking with Sunday lunch but who were unfamiliar with, or did not wish to participate in, the illegal trade. J.M. Toohey, whose family founded one of the largest breweries in the colony, told the Drink Commission that consumption

for Sunday was chiefly responsible for the increase in sales of bottled beer and ale. The increase in 1885 over 1884 was in excess of 825,000 gallons.\textsuperscript{68}

It is surprising, given the extreme difficulty that enforcement of Sunday prohibition entailed, that the Drink Commission recommended its continuation.\textsuperscript{69} The Commissioners did acknowledge that opinion on this subject was 'singularly conflicting'.\textsuperscript{70} Police witnesses, publicans and brewers generally favoured some relaxation of Sunday prohibition, while clergymen and temperance witnesses opposed any change to the law. The Commissioners stated that they were induced to preserve the existing regulation by the testimonies of working people. That evidence, as we have noted, was also conflicting. Why then would Commissioners single out the favourable evidence given by some working men as being of 'the greatest value and importance'?\textsuperscript{71} It appears likely that Commissioners used the evidence of those working men opposed to Sunday opening as a convenient way to buttress their own belief that the law should remain unaltered.

Most of the Commissioners who produced the report had Protestant and temperance affiliations. This had not been the case when the Commission was first appointed,\textsuperscript{72} since its original membership reflected different interests on the drink question. J.B. Olliffe and J.M. Toohey had been appointed to represent the drink trade. Olliffe owned the Hyde Park Hotel and was President of the L.V.A. He

\textsuperscript{68} Intoxicating Drink Commission Inquiry, op.cit., pp.260,276.
\textsuperscript{69} Ibid., p.80 (Report).  \textsuperscript{70} Ibid., p.78.  \textsuperscript{71} Ibid., p.80.
had been elected to the Assembly in 1882. J.M. Toohey was Vice-President of the L.V.A. and, as mentioned, was associated with the family brewery. He too was a member of the Assembly, having been elected in 1885 as an opponent of 'local option and the abstinence party'. Anti-drink interests were represented by Ninian Melville, a Methodist and member of the Society of Good Templars, Francis Abigail, an ardent Orangeman and teetotaller, and John Davies.

The balance of the Commission was destroyed soon after proceedings began. George Cass resigned owing to his frequent absences from Sydney and two new appointments were made - John Roseby and Alexander Hutchinson. Both these men were long-standing temperance supporters. Their appointment prompted Toohey and Olliffe to resign.\(^{73}\) In the wake of these events the *Bulletin* commented, not unfairly, that the inquiry was 'being conducted by teetotallers who are pledged to their creed'.\(^{74}\)

The Government, no doubt, welcomed the Commissioners' decision not to alter the law on Sunday closing. By the time the report was published Henry Parkes was back in office and, despite his own predilections, no government would have wished to re-open the Sunday drink debate and risk the odium of the powerful temperance and church groups. Thus, Sunday prohibition remained as a legislative victory for the anti-drink interests. But it was only a symbolic victory. No-one familiar with the drink traffic could ignore the fact that Sunday closure was massively abused. The labouring classes in particular, did not share evangelical insistence that Sunday should

\(^{73}\) Intoxicating Drink Commission Inquiry, op.cit., p.4. (Minutes of Proceedings).

\(^{74}\) *Bulletin*, 11 December 1886.
be spent in religious observance or in quiet, sober repose. For many of these people Sunday was their only day of leisure. They flouted the law to continue the traditional custom of taking liquor with Sunday lunch or enjoying the companionship provided in the local hotel.

The employment of barmaids was fiercely opposed by Protestant clergymen and temperance bodies because they believed that women serving in bars increased the drawing power of public houses. Typically, barmaids were young and 'chosen for their attractive looks'. However, there is little to indicate when they were first employed in large numbers, and their occupation was not a source of concern until the early 1880s when it is estimated that upwards of 1,000 were employed in Sydney alone.

A position as barmaid was an appealing one for many young women despite the Herald's claim that 'few mothers even in the humblest walks of life had any ambition for their daughters to work behind hotel bars'. The occupation was, the Herald believed, 'attended with temptations and influences' to which it was not prudent to expose a young woman. However, for many young females the occupation offered the chance of employment when opportunities for poorly educated or unskilled females were restricted. Traditionally, young women of this background went into domestic service. But by the early 1880s there was a growing 'contempt' for domestic service. Wealthy households had difficulty in securing servant girls and

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75 S.M.H., 27 March 1883. 76 Ibid. 77 Ibid. 78 Ibid., 21 March 1888.
rarely did the girls themselves advertise for positions. Towards the end of the century the Telegraph considered, in some detail, the decline in number of general servants. The writer interviewed many young girls and he found their responses 'most interesting'. He summarised their reasons for not wishing to enter service:

Mistresses are nasty upstarts, with no breeding or training. They give low wages, expect too much for their money, give the girl poor quarters to sleep in, rigorously exclude all admirers from the premises, treat her generally like a dog, and keep her working from daylight till close on midnight, and in case of a party or other revelry even later.80

The growth in manufacturing industry opened up some opportunities for female employment. One of the attractions of this work was the 'ample leisure' factory work offered.81 Otherwise opportunities were restricted. Most offices, for example, objected to hiring women. Employers complained that females created 'opportunities for love-making' and that as soon as the female clerks secured their husbands 'the office knows them no more'.82 It is not surprising then that positions as barmaids were very popular with young girls. The Telegraph once outlined the advantages: girls had regular hours, clean work, and received reasonable wages with the chance to increase them through tips.83

Anxiety about barmaids accompanied the discussion on licensing in the early 1880s. The Protestant Standard was among the first to express concern. In May 1880 the editor called for their employment to be banned.84 The 1882 Licensing Act did not restrict their employment much to the anger of a handful of Assembly members.

79 Ibid., 10 February 1883. 80 D.T., 14 January 1899.
81 S.M.H., 21 March 1881. 82 Ibid., 23 October 1882.
83 D.T., loc.cit. 84 Protestant Standard, 8 May 1882.
During debate on the bill H.A. Jacob, J. Garrod, and G.L. Carter, all staunch Protestants and temperance sympathisers, called for barmaids to be outlawed. 85

A strong appeal to prohibit the employment of barmaids was made in 1883. In March that year John Goodlet, a timber merchant whose chief interests were philanthropy and the Presbyterian Church, 86 chaired a public meeting organised by the Local Option League, a newly formed anti-drink organisation. The purpose of the meeting was to formulate recommendations to government on amendments to the 1882 Act. The meeting endorsed Rev. Joseph Barnier's proposal that barmaids should be prohibited. 'It was fair to the girls', he proclaimed, 'fair to the persons who drank and fair to the community at large that there should be some restriction'. 87 The Local Option League sent a petition to parliament, containing 8,000 signatures, outlining their resolution. The Woman's Christian Temperance Union, also newly formed, took similar action. 88

The campaign to outlaw barmaids came to a climax in July 1883 when a bill to ban their employment was introduced in the Legislative Council. The measure was defeated, but only by the barest margin. The Barmaids' Restriction Bill was devised and presented by Edmund Webb, a prosperous storekeeper from Bathurst. He was a dedicated Methodist, a Freemason and involved in local philanthropy. 89

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85 N.S.W.P.D., Series 1, 1881, vol.5, pp.1022, 1188.
87 S.M.H., 31 March 1882.
Protestant hostility to the employment of barmaids was based on social and moral grounds. In the first place, activists argued that the presence of barmaids exacerbated public house drinking. They maintained that publicans employed them knowing they sold more liquor. Jacob Garrard, a strict teetotaller, told the Assembly in the course of debate on the 1881 Licensing Act that the system of 'barmaidism'... produces more drunkenness... than some honourable members think... I have no doubt that these pretty-featured and gaudily-dressed barmaids attract young men to the public-house.90

It is not certain how well-informed Garrard was but the Echo repeated his claim. This paper commented that experience had taught the publican that if he employed an attractive and well-dressed young woman behind his bar 'his receipts are larger than if his customers were attended to only by a barman'.91 However, the paper also recognised that wages paid to barmaids were lower than those for barmen and that this fact partly explained their attractiveness to employers.

Protestants' concern about barmaids also stemmed from their conception of the 'traditional' view of female behaviour and virtues. The Protestant Standard once wrote that the qualities desirable in females were 'tenderness, modesty, and chastity'.92 The Methodist Weekly Advocate believed women should uphold 'maidenly reserve [and]... modest demeanour'.93 Committed Protestants

90 N.S.W.P.D., Series 1, 1881, vol.5, p.1188.
91 Echo, 14 August 1882.
92 Protestant Standard, 26 September 1874.
93 Weekly Advocate, 3 August 1878
worried about the effects working behind a bar had on young, impressionable females. 'Is it possible', asked Edward Ogilvie when speaking in support of Webb's bill, that a young, modest girl can day after day be subjected to the sort of attention, and listen to the kind of language which is used in bars, without a serious deterioration in her moral character?\textsuperscript{94}

Ogilvie explained that he had seen girls sit behind public-house bars and listen to the 'most blasphemous and immoral language that it was possible for men to utter'. Jacob Garrard had earlier expressed the same fear. A bar, he said, was not 'the proper place for a woman; she ought not be be brought within the hearing of such lewd, filthy conversation as is carried on by drunken men'.\textsuperscript{95} The petition organized by the W.C.T.U. pleaded for parliament to save 'many of our sex from deep degradation and ruin'.\textsuperscript{96}

Protestant conviction that young females were exposed to moral degradation by working as barmaids was buttressed by the belief that some had been led into prostitution. It was not uncommon for temperance lecturers to denounce all barmaids as 'harlots'.\textsuperscript{97} Sir Alfred Stephen claimed that barmaids frequently flirted with young males which led the girls 'into seduction and common prostitution'.\textsuperscript{98} Although Sir Alfred believed he was 'a man of the world', he admitted that his knowledge of barmaids was negligible. He told fellow Councillors that he had never been into a public

\textsuperscript{94} N.S.W.P.D., Series 1, 1883-84, vol.14, p.4293.
\textsuperscript{95} Ibid., vol.5, p.1188.
\textsuperscript{97} Bulletin, 17 June 1882.
\textsuperscript{98} N.S.W.P.D., Series 1, 1883-84, vol.14, p.4297.
house and had therefore never seen a girl serving behind the bar. There is in fact no evidence to substantiate the alleged connection between barmaids and prostitution. This is not to deny its occurrence but it is unlikely to have been common. Prostitutes, as has been mentioned, did operate illegally from some hotels but not as direct employees of the publican. Women who worked in Sydney wine bars, as will be discussed later, were often prostitutes. But usually such women leased premises and thus they were not employed as barmaids.

Protestant temperance reformers also maintained that barmaids endangered the character of the men they served, particularly, younger males. Edmund Webb was convinced that 'fascinating young women' constituted a 'danger' for they acted as 'decoys' for young males to spend all their time and money... in drink; and they may go deeper than that in vice... in flirtation and in conversation of an immoral and disgusting kind.

Edward Ogilvie feared much the same 'degenerating' practices. Young men, he said, were lured to 'ingratiate themselves' with attractive barmaids, using 'amorous' language to them and, on occasions, attempting 'to make hot love'.

These views reveal more about the values and lurid imaginations of committed evangelical Protestants than they do about barmaids and actual practices in bars. Opponents of Webb's bill presented an alternative picture of the occupation. William Dalley, a loyal Catholic who espoused a doctrine of 'social enlightenment', was among Webb's fiercest critics. He dismissed out of hand 'any

99 Ibid. 100 Ibid., p.2489. 101 Ibid., p.4294.
connection between supplying a man with a glass of liquor and the moral ruin of a barmaid'. Moreover, Dalley maintained that girls engaged in bar work were 'decent and respectable members of society'.103 His opinion was shared by William Suttor, son of William Henry also a prominent Catholic and liberal. The younger Suttor's experience had led him to believe that barmaids conducted themselves respectably and 'shed an air of refinement' in the bar which encouraged men to restrain their behaviour.104 John Stewart, a liberal and free thinker, was certain that supporters of the bill could not refer to a dozen instances where bar language was as foul as these people had suggested.105

There is no satisfactory way of resolving these different views on the employment of barmaids. It is probably the case that none of the members who spoke on the bill had much personal knowledge of barmaids at work. Anti-drink activists certainly did not present any direct evidence to substantiate their claims about barmaids. While there were badly conducted hotels, which tolerated offensive behaviour, it is not certain that these places employed barmaids. Thus, even in the conservative precincts of the Legislative Council, a majority of members agreed with William Dalley when he asserted that the bill amounted to 'cruel fanaticism'.106 The daily press was also reluctant to endorse the measure. The Herald admitted that, 'Theoretically there is no more objection to a female serving a customer with liquor than serving him with his lunch'.107

The employment of barmaids continued to divide public opinion in the 1880s. Royal Commissioners hearing evidence during 1886-87 asked witnesses to comment on the matter. Much the same views on either side were re-stated. It is curious, given the anti-drink sympathies of the Commission, that no recommendations were made in the report about barmaids. Commissioners may have been influenced by the opinion of James Powell, the Collector of Customs, who strongly advised against legislation to prohibit the employment of barmaids, arguing that such a measure would amount to 'over legislation'. It would also leave governments prey to pressure from other groups who could implicate a number of vocations as a danger to morality. 108

Anxiety about the employment of barmaids was expressed by anti-drink activists in most Australian colonies. However, in 1908 South Australia became the only place to have prohibited their employment. A strenuous attempt was made in 1896 by some members of the House of Assembly during early discussions of the Licensed Victuallers' Bill which did not include a provision to ban barmaids. King O'Malley, one of the most vigorous advocates of the need to outlaw barmaids, outlined his objections to their employment in a characteristically colourful speech. He asserted that all government measures to regulate and limit the drink traffic were 'so much waste of paper' while the barmaid system continued. 'By sanction of law', he continued 'they were angels of mercy luring men to their own destruction'. O'Malley, like other temperance enthusiasts, combined this belief with his view that women were unsuited for such employment:

108 Intoxicating Drink Commission Inquiry, op.cit., p.166 (Minutes).
Women should be the immaculate loving constructors of social order and not their destroyers. God made women to be an angel of comfort and an emblem of joy for every man... Any system which destroyed or reduced men's respect and esteem for women was degrading and dangerous.\textsuperscript{109}

A licensing bill passed in 1908 finally contained a clause effectively prohibiting their future employment. While existing barmaids were not to be deprived of their livelihood no new females could be taken on. This was to be achieved by the registration of barmaids and the accompanying stipulations that only those who were registered could be employed. If a barmaid worked without authorisation both she and her employer were liable for punishment.

The measure was widely supported in the Assembly. William Archibald declared that 'the bar was not a good place for women'.\textsuperscript{110} Reginald Blundell maintained that barmaids were 'a sort of catch-bird to the young man who wanted his hand squeezed over the counter as he got a drink'.\textsuperscript{111} K.W. Duncan was convinced that Assembly members should 'take the position that it was undesirable that women should be placed in spheres of temptation'.\textsuperscript{112}

To anti-drink groups, and their sympathisers, the employment of barmaids was inconsistent with true morality. Similar arguments were applied to dancing saloons. These were places of 'popular' entertainment offering music, singing and dancing. Over many years these facilities had been provided by publicans although dancing saloons also operated independently of hotels. Periodically the 'evils' of dancing saloons caused outrage among members of

\textsuperscript{109} South Australia P.D., H of A, 1896, p.141.  
\textsuperscript{110} Ibid., 1908, p.726.  \textsuperscript{111} Ibid., p.797.  \textsuperscript{112} Ibid., p.828.
'respectable' society. The refusal of Martin Keeshan's music license at his Hamburg Hotel was one case already described. In the early 1880s the Protestant churches in New South Wales provided a focus for people concerned about the influence of dancing saloons, especially on the youth. These 'pestilential soul traps', Canon Rich, told the 1881 annual meeting of the Sydney Female Refuge,

should be put down with a strong and unsparing hand; and all good citizens ... should work and agitate persistently until the object is obtained, for there is no more prolific source of vice than these saloons, the ill-gotten gains of which enrich the keeper, but destroy the purity and innocence of young people.  

Protestant clergymen's main worry, it seems, was the harm inflicted by mixed gatherings on the youth who frequented the saloons. It was feared that young women's chaste demeanour and the respectability desired from young men were undermined. It is difficult to appreciate these fears. Dancing saloons were investigated by a reporter from the Daily Telegraph in 1883. He found that, in most saloons, the dancing, so far as outward and visible signs are concerned, is almost decorum itself. There is none of the real, thorough, vicious abandon or enjoyment of the 'cancan', and quadrilles favoured more.

In the mid-1880s 26 dancing saloons were located in the metropolitan district of Sydney. They were chiefly patronized by the working classes whose liberties were threatened by their closure. 'A vast proportion of our population', the Herald reminded its readers,

113 D.T., 14 April 1881.
115 D.T., 16 August 1883. 116 Ibid., 19 February 1885.
cannot give private dancing parties, and cannot attend expensive balls. Yet the youngsters of this class are just as anxious to dance as their wealthy compeers.  

Government did take action against dancing and singing in public houses. The 1882 Licensing Act removed the right of publicans to apply for a license to provide music, dancing or singing. This clause did not attract debate in the Assembly which indicates broad approval. Information supplied to the Drink Commission showed that the law had successfully prevented the operation of dancing saloons in hotels. However, it was not uncommon for saloon operators to open premises 'very near to a public-house if they can'. This worried several police officers. Inspector Cotter had frequently observed 'young girls going from the dancing saloon to the public-house; they [boys] leave the girls outside in the dark, and bring out drink to them'. Social behaviour was indeed difficult to alter through legislation.  

The debate over licensing reform in the early 1880s produced one further ban on behaviour considered to be socially undesirable – that of gambling. The 1882 Licensing Act stipulated that any publican who allowed gaming for stakes, or any unlawful game, on his premises was liable to a penalty of £10 for the first offence and £20 for subsequent offences. A separate act, passed in 1881, placed more stringent control over the licensing of billiard and bagatelle tables in hotels. A.H. Jacob, speaking on this measure in the Assembly, outlined the reasons why many Protestant sympathisers favoured clamping down on these entertainments. He told colleagues

117 Ibid.
118 Intoxicating Drink Commission Inquiry, op.cit., p.126 (Minutes).
119 Ibid., p.52.
that billiards and bagatelles encouraged young men to visit hotels where they played the games for money and drink. Jacob feared that this practice led to 'serious debauchery'.

The gambling habits of the population had worried the Protestant churches, the press and the police over several decades. In 1869 the Protestant Standard nominated gambling as another 'vice', like drinking, 'which calls for a much stronger hand than has yet been exerted to put it down'. Committed Protestants maintained that 'unscrupulous gambling' threatened 'the very existence of society'. The Methodist Weekly Advocate once described the social devastation which habits of gambling were believed to foster. No man, the journal commented, could follow the 'profession' without cultivating qualities which made him 'a source of danger to society':

his craft cannot be plied without bringing misery into many homes... Gambling is in fact a sin against society... It pollutes the innocence of healthful recreation, and like a poisoned atmosphere it infects with a feverish excitement.

In the early 1880s police attempted to enforce the laws against gambling as laid down in the 1880 Betting Houses Suppression Act, the 1881 Billiard and Bagatelle Licensing Act and the 1882 Licensing Act. The 1880 Act empowered the Inspector General of Police to authorise entry, with force if necessary, into any premises which he suspected were being used for gambling; the 1881 Act empowered the

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120 N.S.W.P.D., Series 1, 1881, vol.6., p.2683.
121 Protestant Standard, 11 September 1869.
122 Ibid., 3 September 1881.
123 Weekly Advocate, 27 May 1882.
Licensing Court to regulate the keeping of billiard tables and bagatelle boards to persons of good character; and the 1882 Licensing Act forebade gambling in public houses.

In 1881 124 people were charged with gambling offences and in the following year 226 came before the courts.\(^{124}\) This crackdown, however, did not eliminate the fondness many working people, in particular, had for gambling and game-playing. It appears that police were able to eradicate gambling from most public houses, but not so games. Sub-Inspector Atwill discussed this matter before the Drink Commission. The tone of his remarks reveal the social distance between 'respectable' society and the predominantly working class patrons of public houses:

Some people may think that the playing of dominoes in a public-house is a harmless thing; but I am sure that many men take three or four drinks who would have been quite satisfied with one, and who would have gone away after taking it if it were not for the dominoes on the counter.\(^{125}\)

Atwill added that he and his officers had actually seen publicans playing fan-tan in Chinese gambling dens. 'When they do that', he wondered, 'what will they do in their own houses?'\(^{126}\)

It appears that the crackdown on gambling in hotels was an important factor behind the rise of illegal gambling in the 'dens' operated by Chinese. Certainly Chinese gambling dens, which operated in the inner-city, proliferated from the mid 1880s. In 1891 a Royal Commission was appointed to investigate Chinese Gambling and


\(^{125}\) Intoxicating Drink Inquiry Commission, op.cit., p.41. (Minutes).

\(^{126}\) Ibid.
Immorality. Commissioners discovered that it was principally the working classes who frequented the secretly run Chinese establishments. Jack Armstrong, owned a tobacconist and hairdressing business in Lower George Street where there were a number of gambling dens. He informed the Commission that wharf-labourers, coal lumpers and seamen were the principal groups who frequented Chinese gambling dens, adding that post-office workers and boarding house owners were also regular attenders.\(^{127}\)

Thomas Davies, M.P., who had closely investigated the Chinese dens, offered an insight into the appeal of these establishments for working men. He told the Commission that the patrons of the 'dens' 'do not go to the horse-races or put money on 'totes', but many of them have a perfect mania for fan-tan'. He added that the gambling rooms were packed to 'over flowing' and that the excitement was 'intense'.\(^{128}\)

A number of witnesses described the 'harrowing scenes' which gambling in these establishments had caused. Richard Kelly, who operated a grocery business in Lower George Street, told Commissioners that one woman had recently come to the door of his shop crying bitterly. She had been waiting for her husband to come out of one of the gambling dens to which he had taken the whole of his week's wages. Kelly added that

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\text{It is a common habit of working men to go into these Chinese gambling-dens, and spend nearly every penny they have earned, and then they have to borrow a little money to keep the family in bread and butter.}\(^{129}\)
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\(^{128}\)Ibid., p.42.

\(^{129}\)Ibid., p.28.
Kelly probably exaggerated the financial hardship created by gambling although there is no adequate way to test his assertions. Gambling, like drinking, was indulged in by many working people without necessarily abusing the habit. Henry Saunders, for example, who lived in Miller's Point, explained to the Commission that he had gambled in Chinese dens, but that he was 'not a very constant visitor'.

Thus in the late 1870s and early 1880s anti-drink crusaders had achieved legislative success by adopting a policy of gradual and piecemeal reform. Sunday drinking together with dancing and gambling in public houses had all been outlawed. Prohibiting the employment of barmaids was the only regulatory measure which anti-drink campaigners failed to secure. The restrictions which were imposed fitted evangelicals' conception of social reform. They had hoped that the restrictive measures would undermine the popularity of hotels and hence diminish drinking. Protestant crusaders also believed that the legislative bans on Sunday drinking, gambling and dancing would encourage desirable social behaviour. Only a handful of libertarians and Catholics opposed the attempt to enforce observance of the Sabbath and the criminalisation of 'vices'. But even this group did not fully appreciate that the Protestant campaign represented a determined thrust against the habits and pastimes of working people. For their part, anti-drink advocates failed to appreciate the strong attachment many of the working classes had to social entertainments like drinking, dancing and gambling. Nevertheless, anti-drink crusaders never lost sight of their ultimate objective: the enactment of local option legislation, which would eventually ensure complete prohibition.

130 Ibid., p.94.
The 1882 Licensing Act introduced by the Parkes' government, was a landmark in the regulation of the drink trade. For the first time in two decades, the trade had been the subject of legislation. However, the measure had deeper significance. By embodying the demands of the anti-drink campaigners, the Act showed the political power now wielded by this group. In addition to the restrictions imposed on the trade which were discussed in the last chapter, the Act provided for the creation of licensing boards and introduced a limited form of local option. But the debate on licensing reform in the early 1880s did not settle the drink issue. Rather, it confirmed its central place in politics. Because Parkes had compromised on local option the anti-drink forces were compelled to continue campaigning for an effective means by which local communities could outlaw public houses.

The Parkes ministry, which took office in December 1878, could hardly avoid reforming the licensing law. The Premier himself had long been concerned about the social ill-effects of drink and public houses. His sympathy for the anti-drink cause had been publicly known since the 1854-55 Select Committee into Intemperance. Parkes was one of the committee members and was apt, like the other members, to ask leading questions of witnesses. These revealed as much about the attitudes of the questioners as those of the witnesses. Rev. Robert Vanderkiste confronted the following lengthy question from Parkes:
In the case of a mechanic who receives his wages on a Saturday night, if there were none of these public-houses staring him in the face and tempting him on his way home, and into which his companions could lead him - do you think if he came home with his wages in his pocket, there would be such a likelihood of his getting drunk in his own home, where his wife and children and probably some of his better friends would meet him - would there be anything like the probability of his getting drunk that there is at present when he cananot possibly reach his home without these houses staring him in the face and soothing his way to intemperance?¹

Vanderkiste, not surprisingly, shared Parkes' distaste for the temptations created by hotels. He also agreed with many of Parkes' other views on the drink traffic, as when he was asked whether he believed drunkenness led 'to almost every other vice', including prostitution, and whether he thought 'it would be a step in the right direction to abolish these licensed houses at all hazards'.² We have also noted that Parkes shared the Protestant values that lay behind the abolition of Sunday selling and the effort to maintain a divine Sabbath.

If conviction was insufficient to prompt Parkes to consider licensing reform then he surely appreciated the political necessity to act. Most sections of the press agreed that legislation to regulate the drink traffic was 'one of the urgent requirements of the day'.³ The system of granting licenses was seen to be especially unsatisfactory. Disquiet about unpaid licensing magistrates had first surfaced in the early 1870s. Criticism of the manner in which they carried out their function intensified in the following years.

¹ Select Committee into Intemperance (Progress Report), N.S.W.L.C., V. & P., 1854, vol.2, p.34.
² Ibid., p.34. ³ Sydney Mail, 8 May 1880.
Police officials openly declared their lack of confidence in the magistracy in evidence to the 1877 Select Committee on Sunday Trading. Inspector Robert Anderson complained that licenses had been granted by magistrates despite strong objections from police and Inspector Samuel Johnson believed that licensing should not be part of the responsibility of magistrates for licenses had been refused and then afterwards granted to unfit persons, some of whom, had been fined six or eight times in the year.

Allegations of misconduct in granting licenses fuelled the demands for reform. Magistrates, so the Herald claimed, were unsuited by 'nature or by education' for the business of licensing. Many had received their appointments from governments 'as a reward for their support at elections - the nominations being made by political agents'. Some magistrates were said to use their position as 'a tool to further private interests'. The Herald maintained that on licensing days it was 'pretty well known who will oppose the publicans and who will support them'. In fact the paper alleged that the bench was packed on these occasions. Solicitors had been known to pick up 'friendly' magistrates so they could attend a particular session.

Criticism of licensing magistrates climaxed in June 1880 when the hearing of Patrick Diamond's application for a publican's license caused a sensation. The incident provided firm evidence of the alleged misconduct on the part of magistrates. Diamond had partially

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5 Ibid., pp.21-22. 6 N.S.W.P.D., Series 1, 1881, vol.5, p.1149.
7 S.M.H., 14 April 1881.
8 Ibid., 26 April 1880 9 Ibid., 12 March 1881
erected an hotel in William st., Woolloomooloo when his case was heard on 8 June. Sub-Inspector Waters objected to the license being granted. He stated that the hotel was not yet completed to accommodate travellers and that 400 of the neighbourhood residents had petitioned against another hotel opening in the area. The 28 presiding magistrates were evenly split so they resolved to delay a final decision for a month.\(^{10}\)

Strangely, and in what was later described as a 'mysterious arrangement and packing process', a group of 24 magistrates unexpectedly assembled on the bench on 11 June, only three days after the initial hearing. Officials at the Water Police Court wondered what had drawn such a 'crowd' of magistrates to the court on a Friday 'when there was nothing important on the business paper'.\(^{11}\) Police had not been notified that the magistrates intended to re-hear Diamond's application. Indeed Sub-Inspector Waters protested that he had been 'taken by surprise'.\(^{12}\) Following a short hearing the magistrates unanimously agreed to approve Diamond's license. No details were to emerge explaining how this collection of 'friendly' magistrates had been persuaded to attend the court on 11 June. However, few observers doubted that their action contravened the spirit, if not the letter, of the law. The Attorney-General, Robert Wisdom, thought the application had been obtained 'in fraud of the Act'.\(^{13}\) The Principal Under-Secretary, Crichett Walker, in a stern


\(^{11}\) Ibid., p.3.

\(^{12}\) D.T., 12 June 1880.

\(^{13}\) 'Administration of Justice', op.cit., p.21.
letter to all magistrates, said that those involved in the 11 June hearing deserved 'unqualified condemnation'. Walker added that their judgement was 'calculated to seriously impair the confidence of the public in the Magistracy of the Colony'.

The incident incensed the various temperance organizations. A deputation, led by Assembly members John Davies and George Carter, discussed the matter with Parkes. The press too was angered. 'Diamond has got his license', the Herald protested, by an action which will stamp it as the worst case of corruption and trick that has ever occurred. It will prove to the dullest the worthlessness of the present Act.

The Telegraph believed the case showed the necessity to create Licensing Boards to supersede the work of the licensing magistrates.

The commitment Parkes doubtless felt about the need to reform the licensing laws was shared by prominent colleagues, nine of whom were dedicated teetotallers and members of various anti-drink societies. John Davies, the ministry's whip and a close political associate of Parkes, headed the list. Dr. A. Renwick acted as his Secretary for Mines while J. Roseby, G.A. Allen, A. Cameron, W. Davies, J. Greenwood and M. Melville were all active supporters of his ministry. But despite this backing, and a healthy parliamentary majority, licensing reform proved to be an extremely contentious issue. The Government found itself in a position where it had 'to please two masters'; the anti-drink campaigners who were

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14 Ibid., p.25  
15 Ibid., p.5.  
16 S.M.H., 20 November 1880.  
17 D.T., 12 June 1880.  
18 Ibid., 1 August 1880.
increasingly representing a populist movement and the L.V.A. which was recognised to be a powerful vested interest on matters affecting their trade. 19

Parkes introduced his first Licensing Bill in mid-1880. It was a lengthy measure covering 15 pages and consisting of 174 clauses. The bill was intended to deal with the licensing not only of publicans and wine and spirit merchants but, auctioneers, pawnbrokers and the owners of places of public amusement as well. Parkes told the house that the legislation was aimed at more strict regulation; to raise the character of persons engaged in the liquor trade; to secure better hotel premises; and, as far as it was possible, to prevent the sale of adulterated drink. 20 J.B. Olliffe, President of the L.V.A., had no quarrel with these general objectives. He told an L.V.A. meeting in May 1880 that 'there was great room for improvement in the trade.' 21 On a later occasion he acknowledged that public houses existed which were 'a disgrace to our boasted civilization, and a curse to the people'. 22

The establishment of Licensing Boards was the most innovative feature of the Licensing Bill. Parkes explained to the Assembly that it had been 'abundantly proved' that magistrates had not fulfilled their duty 'beneficially or satisfactorily to the public'. 23 In Sydney the government proposed that the new Board would form a court

19 S.M.H., 24 August 1880.
21 S.M.H., 11 May 1880.
22 Ibid., 19 May 1881.
23 N.S.W.P.D., loc.cit.
of jurisdiction to hear all applications, to grant and withhold licenses and to see generally to the administration of the licensing law. It was to consist of nine persons who were to be nominated by the government.

A vote was never taken on the bill. Following the adjournment of a lengthy second reading debate on 2 June it made no further progress in the house. On 23 June the Premier announced that the measure was to be withdrawn. In giving reasons for this step Parkes admitted that objections raised by members of the opposition, and the L.V.A. had convinced his government that the bill needed to be re-cast.24 These two groups certainly tried to highlight the potential hardship publicans would encounter. But the provisions contained in the amended bill, which Parkes introduced towards the end of the following year, showed that he had not taken much notice of the critics.

When the first Licensing Bill was discussed in the Assembly only a residual opposition was left after the coalition of Parkes and John Robertson, hitherto the leading rivals in the house. The depleted opposition was led by Michael FitzPatrick whose 'Irish mettle' kept him 'terrier-like at Parkes's heels'.25 It also contained David Buchanan who declared, in typical hyperbolic language that he would do his utmost to throw the bill out of the house.26 Henry Copeland was another of the bill's fierce critics who also sat with the opposition. It was to be expected that these opponents of the government would criticise the bill. Yet, these members were

24 Ibid., p.2934.  
26 N.S.W.P.D., op.cit. p.2597.
concerned about the likely discrimination publicans would encounter from the nominated Licensing Boards. Henry Copeland asked the house to consider the situation where a premier, or a majority of the house, were total abstainers. Appointments to the Boards would naturally be of a similar character 'the result of which would be that every license applied for would be refused'.

Publicans were similarly worried. Prior to the second reading debate the L.V.A. broke with its tradition of keeping out of public notice by deciding to hold a meeting in the Guild Hall. Two hundred people attended. J.B. Olliffe attacked the proposed Licensing Board:

> the devil they knew was better than the devil they did not know. The Board might work well or bad. It might consist of individuals entirely opposed to them, who would use every possible effort to suppress the liquor traffic.

Publicans did have reasonable cause to be anxious. The government had not specified any criterion for appointing Board members and the L.V.A. was only too aware of the extreme views held by anti-drink campaigners. The L.V.A. suggested to government that, instead of establishing Licensing Boards, they appoint a single judge to handle licensing matters. Publicans believed that a person with the requisite education and qualifications would be 'free from the influence of anyone who would be likely to approach him'. The L.V.A. meeting pledged publicans to 'oppose by all legitimate means' the enactment of the bill. A petition was sent to parliament complaining of the 'injurious effects' the measure would inflict on the trade and it set out suggested amendments.

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27 Ibid., p. 2647.  
28 S.M.H., 11 May 1880.  
A week after the withdrawal of the first Licensing Bill, and just before the close of the session, Parkes introduced a temporary restrictive licensing measure. The Liquor Licenses Suspensory Bill, which was enacted, was intended to prohibit the granting of any new licenses in the county of Cumberland (surrounding Sydney) unless special permission was obtained from the Colonial Secretary. It was to last until parliament passed a new licensing law. This measure satisfied John Davies' demand that the session should not close without parliament prohibiting the granting of new licenses, although it is not certain that he, and the other anti-drink supporters in the Ministry, influenced Parkes to introduce the temporary restrictive bill. Davies and his associates used the debate on the Suspensory Bill to urge that local option be included as part of future licensing reform. Petitions from church and temperance groups also called for the introduction of local option.

Prior to the adjournment of parliament, in July 1880, Michael FitzPatrick attempted to sum up the state of public opinion on the drink issue. He told the house that there was presently a struggle between two parties which he termed the 'water-drinkers,' referring to temperance advocates, and the 'long-sleevers', a term used to describe drinkers. (The name for a person who drank from a tall glass and who was thus a drinker.) The 'water-drinkers', FitzPatrick explained, 'have sworn to make men sober by law', while the 'long-sleevers' believed that men ought to be sober but that they

may drink if they choose. This latter group, FitzPatrick continued, represented the bulk of people who held moderate views on drinking but they were 'not so noisy as the others'.

The 1880 general elections, held in November, proved to be a turning point in the fortunes of licensing reform. The poll was conducted under the new Electoral Act which increased membership of the lower house from 75 to 108. The issues debated on the hustings ranged widely - railway development, land reform, taxation and education policy and Chinese immigration. But now, for the first time, Protestant anti-drink crusaders intervened directly in the political process and ensured that licensing had a prominent place among election issues.

In the early 1880s the anti-drink movement was still divided into a number of independent organizations. The most important were the Sons of Temperance, the New South Wales Alliance, the Independent Order of Good Templars and the Church of England Temperance Society. The Woman's Christian Temperance Union, formed in 1882, was yet to attain significant numbers. Temperance societies were also attached to local Protestant Churches. Together the various temperance societies represented a powerful force. The Sons of Temperance had a membership of 4,500 in the early '80s with a credit balance in excess of £21,000.33 John Davies, John Roseby and Francis Abigal (elected to the Assembly in November 1880 and a close associated of Parkes) were prominent members of this society.34 Davies and Roseby were also members of the New South Wales Alliance. The Templars had

32 N.S.W.P.D., op.cit. p.3178.
33 Sydney Mail, 31 July 1880. 34 S.M.H., 26 October 1880.
11,000 dedicated total abstainers who were committed to prohibiting the manufacture and sale of liquor.  

The temperance societies 'pulled together' at the election to test candidates' views on licensing reform. The tactic had its reward. In each electorate, both in Sydney and in the country, candidates were called upon to pledge their support for licensing reform and for local option. In Balmain, for example, the three candidates who polled best - J. Garrard, J. Taylor and A. Elkington - all spoke in favour of local option. At one meeting held in the School of Arts, Albert Elkington declared that 'reform in the licensing laws was greatly needed... The power [of licensing] should be taken out of the hands of magistrates' Taylor told a gathering of his supporters at Dick's Hotel that the local option principle, was 'the best, that could be adopted in the interests of all concerned'.

The election result in South Sydney demonstrates the importance of the drink issue. Of the nine candidates who contested the poll, two - J.B. Olliffe and Edward Horden, an alderman - were supporters of the drink trade. Olliffe's stance was well-known to electors. Horden was equally forthright in declaring that

the licensed victuallers, as a whole, were as worthy as any class of citizens in the State. He was too much of a Briton to see any... set of men, crushed - no matter what their trade was.

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35 Sydney Mail, 17 July 1880.
36 S.M.H., 26 January 1881.
37 Ibid., 12 November 1880.
38 Ibid., 13 November 1880.
39 Ibid., 4 November 1880.
These two candidates polled well behind the three who headed the list - J. Davies, G. Wilkers and G.L. Carter - all of whom had campaigned strongly in favour of local option. While the good results achieved by these men did not simply reflect their support for local option it was linked to the influence that Protestant issues, and especially education, exercised on the election. The press, however, recognised the effect temperance societies had in determining election results across the colony. The Sydney Mail, while acknowledging that the recent 'scandals' associated with the licensing system aided the anti-drink cause, nonetheless admitted that 'the temperance organisations have exerted a considerable amount of influence - more, probably, than at any previous general election'. The Maitland Mercury observed that, as a result of the elections, local option had 'strong support in the new Assembly. Nearly every candidate has expressed himself in its favour'. This was a significant achievement. Local option was, afterall, an initiative of the temperance movement. The fact that the societies had managed, through united effort, to coerce candidates into supporting the measure showed the power which the societies, operating as a reformist pressure group, could wield.

Parliament re-assembled on 5 July 1881 with the Parkes ministry in a commanding position. When the Governor opened the session he committed his ministry to giving 'a prominent place' to the 'liquor licensing question'. However, well chosen words were used to explain the government's intention to introduce local option:

40 Sydney Mail, 27 November 1880. 41 Ibid. 42 Maitland Mercury, 18 December 1880.
doubtful as the experiment of applying it here may be, a considerable amount of organized political support may be commanded here by consenting to try it.\(^43\)

On the hustings Parkes had said that he would attempt to frame legislation 'carefully... in view of all conflicting interests'.\(^44\)

In a few important respects his new Licensing Bill tried to balance the interests of the opposing forces on the drink traffic. But the attempt at compromise, especially on the important matter of local option, resulted only in raising the anger of both factions. In the outcome Parkes re-framed the measure to reflect, more closely, the wishes of the anti-drink campaigners.

The bill, introduced in the Assembly on 7 July, was another lengthy measure, consisting this time of 100 different clauses. There was no mistaking that most of its provisions were harsh imposts on the trade. District liquor inspectors, who were to monitor the quality of liquor sold, had the power of entry into hotels at any hour and the right to examine liquor in any room. Police were given similar unrestricted rights of entry. They were also at liberty to force their way into a public house if they encountered any delay or were refused. Fines were to be imposed on publicans for selling to already intoxicated persons although the bill did not define intoxication. Publicans were also required to keep a gas light burning outside their premises throughout the night, the only business house required to do so. The Act stipulated that a publican, convicted three times for infringements, would be disqualified from holding a license for three years. Finally, the

\(^{43}\) S.M.H., 6 July 1881.  \(^{44}\) Ibid., 10 November 1880.
ministry retained its earlier proposals to create nominated Licensing Boards and to institute a classification system for public houses to determine the license fee paid.

Most of these clauses reflected the interests of the anti-drink forces. However, two curious clauses reveal the ministry's effort not to put the publicans completely offside: one related to hours of trading and the other to local option. Liberal daily trading hours were set - from 6 am (although this had been altered from 4 am) to 12 pm. In addition only a limited form of local option was provided for. It was to apply only to new licenses and required that a municipal ballot must obtain a two-thirds majority to reject any new application.45

These few compromises did nothing to dampen the anger of the L.V.A. who were quick to demonstrate their objections to the bill. More importantly they took steps to make their protest more effective. Members showed a growing appreciation of the need to organize - like the Protestant anti-drink movement had - into an effective pressure group. The L.V.A. arranged a meeting on 18 July at the Royal Exchange Hotel where R.A. Watson, the Chairman, called upon hotel-keepers to 'stir themselves in the matter' and to use the influence 'which they possessed in the community' to block the bill.46

L.V.A. members gathered again on 15 August to discuss forming a licensed victuallers political organisation. This, publicans hoped, would enable them to take a 'prominent part in the choice of

45 D.T., 13 July 1881; S.M.H., 23 July 1881.
46 D.T., 19 July 1881.
representatives for Parliament'. Moreover, the Association founded a newspaper, the Licensed Victuallers Advocate, to further the interests of their trade and began making approaches to parliamentarians to act as their spokesmen in the Assembly.

The petition the L.V.A. sent to the Assembly raised objections to all sections of the bill. However, their criticism of local option was very timid. Although the principle that the public had a voice in licensing was a danger to publicans it was not a threat in its present form. Publicans shared, as the Telegraph commented,

> the same opinion as others - that under such a condition [a two-thirds majority] the principle of Local Option would never be established in any licensing district in the colony, a two-thirds vote in favour of anything or anybody being, according to all experience, a simple impossibility.

At this point, however, the L.V.A. could not match the influence of the anti-drink crusade. The latter was now a mass movement receiving widespread support. Between 30-40,000 people throughout the colony signed petitions organised by the temperance societies in the months before the Licensing Bill was passed. Strength of numbers was combined with the prominent contacts each of the societies had in the Assembly and the backing of religious journals. The temperance movement's diverse number of organizations was also used to good effect. It meant that public meetings, which each society held, attracted almost constant attention to the cause. If we can agree with Dr. Arthur Renwick's assessment that the three

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47 Ibid., 16 August 1881.
52 N.S.W.P.D., 1st Series, 1881, vol.6, p.1658.
great powers of the age were the platform, the press and the pulpit,\textsuperscript{53} we can better understand why the anti-drink movement extracted still further gains from the ministry on reform of the licensing laws. The mobilization of platform, press and pulpit were the basis of the anti-drink campaign. One additional aspect of their crusade should not be overlooked. Their mission to reform the licensing laws had a powerful appeal beyond the ranks of their own active supporters. 'They [campaigners] are accustomed', noted the Herald to beautify their orations by descriptions of the evils of intemperance, and to commend themselves by assurances of their regard for the public interest, thus implying that a concern for the public interest requires belief in local option.\textsuperscript{54}

It was the ineffectiveness of the local option provision which anti-drink crusaders most objected to. Rev. Kelynack told one temperance meeting that the principle should have been presented 'in a practicable and workable form'. Under the two-thirds majority clause the principle was, he protested, 'a delusion and a snare'.\textsuperscript{55}

Parkes evidently took seriously the complaints raised by the temperance movement for on 7 September he withdrew the bill, and, without giving adequate reason, introduced a revised version on the same day. The re-cast bill had three important additions to the earlier measure - public houses were to close at 11 pm instead of 12 pm each night; they were to remain shut throughout the colony on Sundays, and an eleven-twentieths majority was to replace the

\textsuperscript{53} Ibid., 1879-80, vol.3, p.2644.
\textsuperscript{54} S.M.H., 27 August 1881
\textsuperscript{55} Ibid., 22 August 1881.
two-thirds requirement in local option plebiscites. Protestant anti-drink campaigners had indeed been granted substantial concessions. The *Maitland Mercury* commented that the temperance members of Parliament were having 'too much of their own way in respect of the Licensing Bill'.

The second reading debate of the Licensing Bill (No.2) was a marathon event. Forty-seven major speeches were made occupying four entire nights of parliamentary proceedings. When printed these deliberations took up in excess of 220 pages. Parkes introduced the bill as an outstanding reform. He believed it would effect more change than legislation had previously had on any other subject. Committed temperance advocates were even more certain of its benefits. The *Protestant Standard* envisaged the dawning of a new era. The paper believed that, as a result of the Act, poverty would diminish; orphans would disappear; the 'general morality' of the people would increase and 'righteousness and religion [would] have better opportunity to bless mankind'.

To what extent did the 1882 Act meet the objectives which both its framers and the anti-drink lobby had placed in it? There was no further alteration to the principal clauses of the Act - those relating to Licensing Boards and to local option - until after the turn of the century. These and other provisions did not succeed in producing fewer public houses, better conducted houses, or a superior class of publican. To understand why this was so, we need to look more closely at the working of the Act.

56 *Maitland Mercury*, 15 October 1881.
58 *Protestant Standard*, 7 January 1882.
Improving the character of the drink trade was chiefly the responsibility of the Licensing Boards. When the Bill was debated in the Assembly, critics of the legislation reiterated their complaint that the Boards could be taken over by temperance sympathisers. Persons with connections in the drink trade were specifically barred from membership of the Boards. The fear that governments unsympathetic to the trade could appoint temperance men to the Boards was to be confirmed in July 1882 when Parkes appointed John Davies to the Licensing Court in Sydney. There was an understandably strong reaction to his appointment. The Express, a newspaper with Catholic affinities, argued that as he was a member of a 'political society' hostile to publicans, Davies was unfit 'to judge over those whom he is leagued with others to destroy'. Davies' appointment was even more offensive, the editor asserted, because of his recent public statements which had expressed 'the strongest animus against the publican body'. The L.V.A. organized a meeting of protest. They enlisted the support of three members of the Assembly — G.H. Reid, J.P. Garvan and Daniel O'Connor. But Davies had wide public support and influential contacts. Some 350 of his supporters arranged a counter meeting to that of the L.V.A.

It was not only the appointment of stray temperance men which called into question the impartiality of the new Licensing Boards. Alfred McFarland, a District Court Judge and Chairman of Quarter Sessions, claimed in a letter to the Drink Commission that men who had connections with the drink trade were in fact members of Licensing Boards in the country districts. He knew of one case where a spirit merchant was a member of a Licensing Board, and 'a

59 N.S.W.P.D., op.cit., p.1261. 60 Express, 29 July 1882. 61 D.T., 26 July 1882.
considerable number of instances in which persons who are by no means disinterested, are now found upon such boards'. McFarland believed that as a result,

wretched houses (in which there is no comfortable or even decent accommodation for travellers), and notoriously rowdy, or otherwise improper character, have been licensed, in the southern district - and are retained in their licenses. 62

However, there is no satisfactory evidence to suggest that, on the whole, the Licensing Boards were dominated by either the drink or temperance factions. John Macintosh, M.L.C. and a member of the Metropolitan Licensing Board, told the Drink Commission that under the pre-1882 system of licensing

publicans used to beat up Magistrates on the one side, and the abstainers used to beat them up on the other... I do not think that any of the Magistrates who now compose the Bench have a particle of feeling one way or the other - their only desire is to administer the law for the benefit of the public. 63

There is abundant evidence to illustrate that, in administering the new Licensing Act, magistrates were not successful in removing disreputable publicans or badly conducted public houses. Inspector Mackay informed the Drink Commission that very badly conducted 'drinking shanties' studded Darling Harbour, the inner city police division for which he was responsible. 64 In the early 1890s the Telegraph drew attention to the 'little drinking shops', which were so 'thickly distributed' over the city and which were unfit as places of public accommodation. 65 At the beginning of 1893 the Bulletin, which had little sympathy for the anti-drink crusade was nonetheless

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63 Ibid., p.99. 64 Ibid., p.35. 65 D.T., 23 June 1893.
concerned that the 'low grade city drinking shop', still needed to be urgently suppressed. These places, the Bulletin continued, were one-half house of ill-fame and one-half rendezvous for bullies, larrikins, and tenth-rate bruisers – the dirty little place which is approached by falling down a worn and dirty step, where the counter is sticky with ancient heel-taps, and there are defunct flies in the black and muddy 'colonial beer', and where a fat and frowsy barmaid and a pimpled landlord loom up against a cheerless vista of neglected bottles in the background.

The Bulletin had a very low opinion of many of the publicans who operated these sleazy premises. Their ranks included ex-boxers and policemen along with all manner of 'broken-down betting men' who could raise enough money 'to take on some unsavoury den suited to their unsavory instincts'. Sub-Inspector Atwill had a similarly low opinion of the character of publicans. He maintained that in Balmain and other parts of his district most of the men who took on public houses were 'not fit for business'.

The continuation of the 'pothouse scourge' showed that the law, as it was framed, was inadequate to deal with publicans who were determined to find means to avoid its regulations. Magistrates were not allowed, much to the disappointment of Inspector Anderson, 'full power to act according to their own discretion'. They were not empowered to disqualify a license without three convictions being recorded against the publican. Moreover, when convicting a publican, magistrates were required to act only on firm evidence, and not simply on police surmise. James Buchanan, a stipendiary magistrate and Chairman of the Metropolitan Licensing Board, explained to the Drink

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66 Bulletin, 4 March 1893. 67 Ibid., 20 October 1894.
69 D.T., 23 June 1893.
70 Intoxicating Drink Commission Inquiry, op.cit., p.17.
Commission the judicial procedures that the Board insisted upon:

There must be pretty conclusive evidence to warrant a conviction. The penalty is pretty severe; it is not only the fine which is inflicted, but it is a case against the publican, which is more dreaded than the fine itself. The Magistrates have therefore to exercise great prudence and discretion about the matter.71

Magistrates knew that if they convicted on flimsy evidence their decisions could be quashed, on appeal, by the Quarter Sessions.

Whittingdale Johnson was one of the licensing magistrates interviewed by the Drink Commission who complained about this situation. He said that on occasions he acted on information provided by officers of a 'high class' on whom he was certain he could rely. On appeal, however, the convictions had been quashed, for the Court of Quarter Sessions did not adopt a discriminatory approach to evidence given:

they believe evidence which we do not believe; that is to say, they take the evidence for the defence, while we ignore it if we are satisfied of the integrity of the witnesses for the prosecution.72

Publicans of bad repute had other survival routes besides appeals to the Court of Quarter Sessions. They devised several means to make it difficult for police to secure convictions. Beyond perjury in court and the deployment of 'touts' they could, according to Inspector Mackay, arrange for 'dummy licenses'. This method involved the publican in transferring his license to the name of another person just for the purpose of renewal.73 The practice was illegal but it enabled publicans, with multiple convictions, to remain in business. Thus, it is not surprising that the lower class of public house continued to operate.

71 Ibid., p.112. 72 Ibid., p.116. 73 Ibid., p.33.
The local option provisions contained in the 1882 Licensing Act were also widely regarded, and with good reason, to be a failure. The polls did not prove to be a safeguard against increase in the number of public houses. There are two inter-connected reasons for this. In the first place the plebiscites were characterised by considerable apathy on the part of eligible voters and secondly no mechanism was included in the Act to ensure that the vote was binding on magistrates when they administered licenses.

The procedure for local option ballots as laid down in the 1882 Act applied only to ratepayers in the city of Sydney and the municipalities. After the first plebiscite, which the Act stipulated had to be held 60 days after the Act came into force, future local option ballots were to be held every three years, with the election of aldermen. Voters were asked to answer 'Yes' or 'No' viz.

(1) Shall any new publicans' licenses be granted in respect of premises situate within that Ward or Municipality for the period of three years from this date?
(2) Shall any removals of publicans' licenses be granted in respect of premises situate within the Ward or Municipality for the period of the three years from this date?

Thus, local option was intended to contain the growth in public house numbers but it was not directed at reducing their number. Reduction could only be achieved by applying local option ballots to the renewal of existing licenses. However, this was prevented by the unsettled matter of publicans' rights to compensation.

An eleven-twentieths majority was required to prevent any new license applications being approved. The vote, however, was not binding on licensing authorities. They were only required 'to take judicial notice' of the ballots. The early local option polls

74 Intoxicating Drink Commission Inquiry, op.cit., p.57 (Report).
generally did record votes in favour of no increase but there is no
evidence that magistrates took much notice of these results partly
because of the low turn out of voters (see table 5). Between 1885 and
1891 hotel numbers in Sydney actually rose by 41. This relatively small
increase disguises a much larger one when the figures for the
metropolitan and suburban districts are separated. In the mid 1880s 522
hotels were located in the city with 298 in the suburbs.75 By 1891 the
number of hotels in the metropolitan district had fallen to 490 while in
the suburban areas the number had increased to 350. The decrease in the
number of city hotels had little to do with the local option vote as
licensing Inspector Lenthall testified. He explained the declining
number of city hotels chiefly to 'the sites being used for other
purposes'.76 The spread of population into the suburbs created a
demand for hotels which the licensing magistrates largely acceded to.
John McIntosh told the Drink Commission that as soon as 20 or 30 families
located themselves in a new suburb a public house was required for the
accommodation of the public.77 Licensing Inspector Lenthall claimed
that where magistrates did exercise discretion and refuse new license
applications, local option votes were a secondary consideration.78

Magistrates were not the only group to take little notice of local
option ballots. Indeed they responded much the same way as ratepayers
who were apathetic about the local option polls. 'I think the people pay
very little attention to it', Inspector General Fosbery told the Drink
Commission.79 The figures bear his statement out.

77 Intoxicating Drink Commission Inquiry, op.cit., p.103 (Minutes).
### Table 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>DISTRICT</th>
<th>NO. OF MUNICIPAL VOTERS</th>
<th>NO. OF VOTES CAST</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE</th>
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<td>1,040</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>25,863</td>
<td>7,878</td>
<td>30.4</td>
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<td>Country</td>
<td>31,415</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>64,214</td>
<td>18,035</td>
<td>28.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1885</td>
<td>City</td>
<td>7,963</td>
<td>3,105</td>
<td>38.9</td>
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<tr>
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<td>33,617</td>
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<td>Country</td>
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<td>10,079</td>
<td>27.7</td>
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<tr>
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<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>77,927</td>
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By the late 1890s the triennial local option vote was openly acknowledged as a 'farce' for its failure to 'excite any general public interest'.

The ballots produced one curious phenomenon - an alliance between advocates of temperance and publicans. The Drink Commission and the press noted that publicans were known to vote for restricting new licenses. The Telegraph once explained why the 'aggressive teetotallers' and the publicans were usually the only groups who bothered to vote.

The teetotallers vote against increasing the facilities for other people to buy drink, and the publicans ... vote just as enthusiastically to prevent others from being allowed to sell. One section aims at restricting the traffic, the other at conserving a monopoly.

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80 Truth, 14 February 1897; D.T., 13 February 1899.
81 Intoxicating Drink Commission Inquiry, op. cit., p. 59 (Report).
82 D.T., 13 February 1899.
The Drink Commission pronounced local option to be 'ineffective'.\(^{83}\) In its report to parliament the Commission therefore recommended that the franchise for local option be widened, so that those on the rolls for parliamentary elections should be the voters. The Commission pointed out that this proposal had the approval of nearly all the witnesses it examined and seemed 'to have both equity and common sense in its favour'.\(^{84}\) Commissioners, however, did not consider whether this extension, particularly if it were also applied to renewal of licenses, would actually be of much benefit in controlling the liquor traffic. William Sharp, a foreman in a city factory warned that such local option ballots would be determined by class affiliation. He believed that the vote of inhabitants of a 'better class district' would be likely to close the worst houses, but in the 'lower class', more populous districts it was conceivable that some of the most 'respectable' houses might be closed and the bad houses preserved.\(^{85}\)

Commissioners, despite their temperance sympathies, evidently did not have complete faith in local option as a means of controlling and eventually eliminating the drink trade. In their report they recommended that parliament fix a statutory number of public houses for every licensing district in the colony.\(^{86}\) This was the system which operated in Victoria. In 1885 Graham Berry's government had introduced legislation which set the statutory number of hotels at one for every 250 inhabitants of a district up to the first 1,000 and a further one for each 500 inhabitants over 1,000.\(^{87}\) The Victorian legislation also tied local option ballots to the statutory method. If the number of hotels in

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\(^{83}\) Intoxicating Drink Commission Inquiry, op.cit., p.64.  
\(^{84}\) Ibid.  
\(^{85}\) Ibid., p.381 (Minutes).  
\(^{86}\) Ibid., p.64 (Report).  
\(^{87}\) Ibid., p.59.
any district was below the statutory number it could, by determination of the electors, be increased to the statutory number, or to any number below that. Similarly, if the number of hotels in a district exceeded the statutory number local option ballots could be used to reduce the number to the statutory level. 88

The proposal put forward by the Drink Commission was more generous in allowing for the statutory number of public houses. For the City of Sydney the Commissioners suggested one liquor license be allowed for each 80 electors on the roll. That would, they calculated, reduce Sydney's hotel numbers from 500 to 400. However, the Victorian method would have only allowed 268 hotels in Sydney. 89 Although the statutory method was potentially an effective way to control the drink trade it was never adopted. Temperance advocates showed no enthusiasm for it because, unlike local option, it did not hold out hope that public houses might one day be abolished.

Thus, Parkes' Licensing Act, hailed as an outstanding reform, proved to be a great disappointment. It was shown to be ineffective in limiting public house numbers and in improving the character of those that already existed. Moreover, publicans and the drinking public devised means to evade many of its important regulations. But anti-drink activists did not lose faith in the efficiency of legislation to wipe from society the blights of drink and public houses.

Soon after the Licensing Act was passed the temperance movement took steps to further its role as a reformist political pressure group.

88 Ibid., pp.59-60.
89 Ibid., p.65.
Rev. F.B. Boyce was the principal figure behind the formation, at the close of 1882, of the Local Option League. Boyce was an Anglican minister, a committed evangelical and 'vigorous social reformer'. He sustained a long involvement in the anti-drink cause. Boyce was motivated by a deeply felt humanitarian concern for working people and the poor. The League aimed to unite the various Protestant temperance societies to present a 'solid political front'. According to Edward Knapp, the secretary of the League for most of the 1880s and 90s, the organization functioned as the 'Head Centre' or 'Political Executive' of the entire temperance movement in New South Wales. In the mid 1880s the League claimed to speak for 60,000 active members throughout the colony.

Prominent in the Local Option League were most of the familiar Protestant anti-drink campaigners of the past decade – Rev. Dr. Steel, Rev. W. Kelynack, J.H. Goodlet, P.R. Holdsworth, Dean Cowper, Alexander Hutchinson, John Roseby and John Davies. Supporters of the League regarded themselves as 'men of progress'. As Boyce told the first annual meeting of the League:

"Could those who love the social good of the people lay down their arms, and cry peace, while intemperance, the great enemy, was slaying its thousands."

The League functioned to press parliament, through the force of organized public opinion, to grant two additions to the 1882 Licensing Act. They wanted local option plebiscites to be extended from the

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91 S.M.H., 22 January 1884.
92 Truth, 30 November 1890.
93 Intoxicating Drink Commission Inquiry, op.cit., p.484 (Minutes).
94 D.T., 30 January 1883.
95 S.M.H., 22 January 1884.
minicipal to parliamentary voters. They also wanted local option to be applied to the renewal of licenses and not just applications for new ones. 96 These were controversial proposals and they heightened public awareness that prohibition was the ultimate objective of the crusade. Boyce was cautious and evasive about admitting this to the Drink Commission 97 but Edward Knapp was not reluctant. The following exchange took place between him and Alexander Oliver, the President of the Commission:

But I look upon your control as equivalent to prohibition. If the objects of the Local Option League are encompassed, surely it means prohibition, does it not? In my reading it does. It aims at that? Exactly. It could not be attained at one jump, but that is the ultimate object? Yes, I have no hesitation in saying that is the ultimate objective of the League. 98

Prohibition had never been the official policy of the League, but as Knapp admitted, the active leadership hoped that effective local option legislation would spread prohibition at the district level - first in areas favourable to the policy and afterwards in the more difficult areas where hotels were concentrated. When the League was formed members were optimistic that, given the opportunity, there were 50 districts in different parts of the colony which would veto any license. 99

The second contentious aspect of the League's programme centred on the organization's opposition to the idea that compensation be given to those publicans whose licenses might be cancelled in local option ballots. The League was opposed to compensation chiefly because, as Rev. Boyce expressed it, 'the license to carry on traffic in intoxicating liquors is a privilege granted to the holder, and not a right' to which

96 Intoxicating Drink Commission Inquiry, op.cit., p.484.
97 Ibid., p.218. 98 Ibid., p. 485.
99 S.M.H., 22 January 1884.
he had legal claim. But crusaders' antipathy to publicans as a class underlay this legal rationalization.

Comments made in the press illustrate that some in the community regarded the League's objectives as being extreme. The Herald, for example, believed that local optionists should be exposed as 'prohibitionists in disguise', and it maintained that many people were 'shocked' by the League's plan to close hotels without compensation to their owners. The Telegraph was also extremely critical of the League by the mid-1880s. The paper did not believe in local option as a means to reform the drink trade:

* it is manifestly intended to lead up to prohibition, which is an abridgment of the clear rights of self-controlled men: and most drinkers are moderate drinkers.*

On the other hand a significant section of the public rallied to endorse the League's objectives. By the beginning of 1885, 50,000 signatures had been forwarded to parliament urging the introduction of full local option.

In the early 1890s the League took additional steps aimed at enhancing the effectiveness of its role as a political pressure group. An organizing secretary was appointed to travel the country 'for the purpose of inaugurating and invigorating branches of the league'. At a conference in July 1890 the organization framed a 'test question' to circulate among future parliamentary candidates, asking them whether they were prepared to vote for the application of local option without compensation to all publicans licenses and for the extension of the right to vote on local option to parliamentary electors. In 1893 the

100 Intoxicating Drink Commission Inquiry, op.cit., p.223.
101 S.M.H., 5 February 1885.
102 Ibid., 6 October 1885.
103 D.T., 6 August 1885.
104 Ibid., 20 January 1885.
105 Ibid., 21 January 1890.
106 Ibid.
League went further, and decided to appoint electoral agents in every electorate.  

These steps did not bring the hoped for results. Neither Free Trade nor Protectionists governments of the 1880s and 90s would sponsor legislation embodying the organization's demands. In the early 1890s a bill was drawn up by the League and sponsored in the Assembly by John Kidd, a staunch Presbyterian who had been prominent in the temperance movement. Despite the tendency of the anti-drink cause to favour the Free Trade Party, Kidd supported the Protectionists. In 1891 he was appointed Attorney-General in George Dibbs' Protectionist Ministry. The bill Kidd agreed to sponsor on behalf of the League was clearly aimed at securing prohibition. It provided, among other things: that absolute prohibition could be enforced in any electorate by a majority of electors; that the number of licenses in any electorate might be reduced by any number on the vote of the majority of electors; and that a majority of electors in any electorate could forbid the granting of new licenses. The bill also proposed that if prohibition was carried it could not be repealed for five years, but that if it lost, local optionists might demand a second ballot in two years. A vote was never taken on the measure. Dibbs would have nothing to do with it and on 5 October 1893 he succeeded in having it ruled out of order on the grounds that it did not contain any government policy.

The form of legislation desired by the League was too extreme for all but a minority of sympathetic parliamentarians to risk their

107  Ibid., 31 January 1893.
109  Truth, 23 October 1893.
political fortunes on. The League's intransigent stance on compensation remained a stumbling block to the advancement of its cause. As the Telegraph once noted,

upon nomination day, with a few insignificant exceptions, the Parliamentary aspirants who think the local option vote is worth 'going for' at all stipulate compensation.110

If J.M. Toohey's comment to the Drink Commission was accurate there was considerable side-stepping of the licensing issue at election time. Toohey claimed that it was a 'well-known fact' that many candidates who pledged themselves in one part of a constituency to local optionists 'pledged themselves at the other end to the publican'.111 By the early 1890s the Assembly was clearly content to ignore the licensing issue. 'The Assembly opened quietly yesterday afternoon', the Herald commented on 28 September 1892,

a large number of petitions as usual, being presented for and against the Local Option Bill. Most of the Temperance Lodges in all parts of the country have petitioned in favour of the bill, and as a natural consequence, the Licensed Victuallers feel called upon to protest against it. Thus some 10 or 15 minutes is wasted every afternoon over the presentation of petitions, to which no one pays the slightest attention, and the bare mention of which suffices to set members chattering over their own affairs.112

The political impasse on licensing may well have continued indefinitely but, by 1890 the League began to realise that it had to give way on compensation.113 It took six years to change its policy publicly. In September 1896 a conference of temperance bodies, under the auspices of the League, agreed to adopt a policy of compensation over

110 D.T., 15 October 1885.
111 Intoxicating Drink Commission Inquiry, op.cit., p.265.
112 S.M.H., 28 September 1892.
113 D.T., 10 September 1896.
time for publicans who were forced to close. The Telegraph noted that this resolution 'should go far to unravel what has always been the real knot of the licensing question'.

But, on its own, compensation did not go far enough to entice political support for the anti-drink cause. In October 1896, while George Reid was Premier, Joseph Cook failed to get a bill providing for full local option with compensation to the second reading stage. After the turn of the century, however, changing circumstances within the social and political environment allowed the anti-drink movement to widen its popular appeal and, in 1905, to claim a substantial legislative victory. Principal among these changes were the granting of votes to women and the appeal of 'social morality' as a broadly based ideology. These changes culminated in the 1905 Licensing Act which, among other things, introduced a system of full local option. However, before I discuss these developments it is helpful to examine them within the context of patterns of drinking among different social groups.
So far I have focused on the social outlook of anti-drink crusaders and on their efforts to win restrictive legislation. This campaign cannot be fully appreciated unless it is placed in the context of the population's drinking habits. Just how wide-spread was drinking and what social forces underlay the habit?

In late nineteenth century there were, broadly, three categories of drinkers. There were the working men who chiefly patronised public houses; groups of middle class men who, when not drinking at home, formed the clientele of private drinking bars and lastly there were the habitual drinkers - the alcoholics who lived in the parks and lane-ways. Women did form an element in the alcoholic down and out community but they were not conspicuous in public houses or in private bars, except of course, as barmaids and prostitutes.

Each of the three groups functioned separately and can be regarded as distinct cultures. The type of liquor drunk by each group, together with the customs associated with drinking and the character of the drinking venues, differed markedly. These differences reflected the style of life enjoyed by each group. Temperance crusaders did not fully understand the character of the drink trade and hence they could not appreciate why restrictive legislation was difficult to enforce and what additional reforms might be required to curtail the appeal of drink and public houses.

We may gain some fascinating insights into the drinking habits of working men from evidence given by more than 40 of their number to the
Drink Commission. The comments offered by many reveal that liquor and public houses were part of an accepted pattern of daily life. Robert Riley, a porter, told the Commission that he visited hotels 'everyday of my life'. George Law, a cabman, said that he drank 'when I require it', at times, he admitted, to excess. J.C. Simpson, who was employed as a carpenter, explained that it was his habit to drink three glasses of ale each day. Enoch Talbot believed that the majority of his fellow bootmakers were drinkers. Henry Becket, a foreman labourer, said that the majority of coal-lumpers drank regularly. Charles Collins, a journeyman, and J.C. Simpson said the same about the men in their respective trades. Robert Melish, a draper's assistant, described in detail his attitude towards drinking which may well have been common among his fellow workers:

I myself have been used, ever since I can recollect, to have a glass of something when I felt inclined for it. I was brought up upon a farm in the old country, where cider was our beverage; I could help myself to it when I felt inclined. When I went out into the world afterwards if I felt inclined to take a glass of ale I have always taken it; I continue to do so up to the present time. If I were to go without it I think I should find the want of it.

John Ware, a stonemason, offered the Commission a glimpse of his Newtown neighbourhood. He said that a brewery, which had recently opened in the area, sold beer in two gallon jars and that they have plenty to call for it on Saturday afternoon. Of course the beer will not keep after Sunday. The head of the family, certainly, will not drink the whole of the two gallons, and I think

2 Ibid., p.425.  3 Ibid., p.463.  4 Ibid., p.383.
5 Ibid., p.401.
that the wives and elder children often get into the habit of taking liquor in this way.\textsuperscript{6}

Mr. J. Perry, President of the Association of Licensed Victuallers in the early 1870s, confirmed that many working people drank beer, instead of tea, with their meals. Indeed the 'jug-trade' was an important part of a publican's business. The \textit{Telegraph} once described the procedure in the early years of the twentieth century:

A jug is sent to be filled for dinner consumption, or the evening meal, when the breadwinner comes home after his day's work.\textsuperscript{7}

Children were most often sent to the local hotel on these occasions and this was no doubt a factor in their socialization into an environment of drinking. Henry Parkes believed this was the case. He thought it was a 'melancholy spectacle' to see small children sent out to purchase beer as this represented 'the first track to the public house door... to the rising generation'.\textsuperscript{8} Inspector-General Fosbery was similarly concerned.\textsuperscript{9}

The appeal of drinking among working people can also be illustrated by the structure of the trade. Anyone familiar with the location of public houses in Sydney was, as the \textit{Telegraph} pointed out, only too aware that they were grouped in clusters. Hotels were 'almost 'cheek by jowl'' in some parts of the city and scarce in others.\textsuperscript{10} The main city thoroughfares were notorious for their number of hotels. Public houses were also heavily concentrated in the residential areas of the inner-city

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{6} Ibid., p.478. \bibitem{7} \textit{D.T.}, 4 January 1906.
\bibitem{8} \textit{N.S.W.P.D.}, Series 1, 1881, vol.6, p.1661.
\bibitem{10} \textit{D.T.}, 15 July, 1890.
\end{thebibliography}
- the working men's suburbs of Balmain, Woolloomooloo, the Rocks, Newtown, Redfern and Surry Hills. Charles Paul, an employee with the Railway Department, was asked by the Drink Commission whether there were many hotels in his neighbourhood. He replied that there were 'plenty all around'; one about 40 feet from his front gate, another 60 feet from the side gate as well as another two in close proximity.

John Davidson, a wharf labourer, told Commissioners that many hotels were located at Miller's Point - two adjoined each other and there were four or five close together in another spot. Henry Ford, a foreman of coal-lumpers, believed there were too many hotels near the wharves where he lived. He listed the Lord Nelson, McBrides, the Hit or Miss and 'there is another next door to it of which I forget the name... there are three next door to each other at the end of Windmill Street'.

The Rocks area was also infamous for its hotels. In 1900 the area supported 29 publicans.

The concentration of hotels in areas where working people lived worried anti-drink crusaders. They maintained that workers were exposed to undue temptation of a kind the wealthier classes were spared. Prominent prohibitionist, D.G. Clark, stressed this point in an article in the Australian Workman entitled 'The Drink Question From a Labour Standpoint'. He emphasised that hotels did not exist 'among the aristocracy of Potts Point', but abounded at Miller's Point 'surrounding the houses of the workers'. The 'palatial mansions' at Double Bay, Clark continued, were practically free from 'grog shops' but about a dozen such places were located within a stone's throw of the Sailor's Home in Lower George Street.

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15 Australian Workman, 22 November 1890.
What sustained this clustering of hotels close to the dwellings of working people? One essential factor was an ingrained and widely spread attitude that alcohol was health-giving and a necessary adjunct to labour. Half a century of temperance preaching that liquor ruined a man's constitution had done little to erode this belief which, as Brian Harrison has shown, was characteristic of English workmen in the early nineteenth century. He writes that intoxicants were, far more than mere thirst-quenches. In the 1820s they were thought to impart physical stamina. On any occasion requiring extra energy, alcohol was employed.16

Robert Mellish told the Drink Commission that there was a good deal of physical exhaustion involved in handling the bundles of drapery goods at his work. A glass of beer was not only a good antidote for the hard work but furthermore he felt a 'better man than I should feel if I went without my glass of beer'.17 George Sayer, a wharf labourer also thought that liquor was particularly beneficial in curing the fatigue of a hard day's work.18 In fact many workers in strenuous occupations were dependent on liquor. Henry Ford, a foreman with Dalgety and Co., explained that coal lumpers commonly called at their local hotel on their way to work. 'They go in and get their glass', Ford related, but only rarely did they come to work intoxicated.19 Ford maintained that men who worked with their hands required a stimulant. There were 'many good workmen who take their glass of liquor'.20 Sailors had similar drinking habits. Many of this group also believed that liquor encouraged them to work harder.21

17 Intoxicating Drink Commission Inquiry, op.cit., p.401.
18 Ibid., p.397. 19 Ibid., p.407. 20 Ibid. 21 Ibid., p.453.
The 1882 Act prevented public houses from opening until 6 am. Formerly a publican could admit customers at 5 am. However, it was not uncommon for wharf labourers, iron-workers and market gardeners, many of whom set off for work around 5 am, to wake the publican on the way to work to get their early morning drink. Others slipped into an hotel by the side door, where the publican was ready to serve them. Inspector Waters knew that 'there are always two or three people hanging about the doors of some public houses of a morning long before they open'.

The Drink Commissioners briefly explored men's attitude to work to help explain their drinking habits, but workers were reluctant to have this aspect of their drinking habits probed too closely. Most reported that liquor was banned during working hours and that employers were known to dismiss heavy drinkers. Daniel O'Connor, who was one of the 400 employees of the manchester firm Anthony Horden and Sons, explained the firm's policy. 'Any person found bringing in liquor', O'Connor reported, 'or taking liquor during working hours is fined, and after several fines there is the penalty of instant dismissal'.

Despite the difficulty in obtaining information Commissioners were inclined to the view that those 'who are confined and have sedentary occupations are much more given to intemperance'. Enoch Talbot, for example, informed the Commission that most of his fellow bootmakers were drinkers and he agreed that this might be linked to the unpleasantness of the work. As he explained, 'you are in the one position until you come

22 Ibid., pp.264;409. 23 Ibid., p.25. 24 Ibid., p.398. 25 Ibid., p.358.
out, just in one small square up to dinner or tea.'

John Shearston, who, as Church of England missionary for seamen, was familiar with hotel life in the inner-city, added a relevant point when he told the Commission that hotels were commonly grouped around warehouses, flour mills, biscuit factories and the like. Robert Mellish offered a likely explanation: 'those who are in the habit of taking a glass are no sooner out of the place [work] than they go and have one [a drink].'  

Awareness of the influence of social environment on human behaviour gained ground from the early 1880s. The disturbance caused by larrikins, for example, prompted a thoughtful article dealing with the underlying causes of larrikinism in the *Sydney Quarterly Magazine*. The author discussed the 'miserable hovels... which breed little else but larrikinism', and he observed that, while the influence of environment on the formation of character varied from individual to individual, 'filth, lack of ventilation, and over-crowding are one and all evils which must militate against the growth of virtue'.

Some influential commentators applied the same conception of behaviour being linked to social environment to help explain the apparent incidence of heavy drinking among Sydney's poorest social groups. It had been established several times since the 1850s that liquor was commonly abused by inner-city slum dwellers. In 1851 a journalist from the *Herald* carried out a detailed investigation of poverty in Sydney. His findings were subsequently published in a series of ten articles, titled 'The

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Sanitary State of Sydney'. The author's inquiry took him to the inner-city districts of Woolloomooloo, Surry Hills and Redfern. The articles detailed, often in lurid fashion, the lack of water and sewage facilities, dilapidated and over-crowded housing and the existence of prostitution and drunkenness. The author believed that the 'increasing habits of drunkenness in the lower or labouring classes here, male and female - young and old', had to be seen in their social context:

   a crusade against public houses would be beginning at the wrong end of the question. They, like blotsches on the skin, are only 'the outward visible signs' of the corrupted inner man.

The author believed that drunkenness could only be tackled by destroying in people the appetite for strong drink. This could be best achieved 'by making their homes fit for human habitation'. His was not a view common to people concerned about drunkenness although it was shared by Edward Wise, a member of the Legislative Council, and a witness to the 1859 Select Committee on the Condition of the Working Classes in Sydney. He told Henry Parkes, who was a member of the Committee, that he had 'no hesitation' in attributing intemperance to 'the people being constantly shut up in close rooms, and being compelled to breathe impure air'.

   Had governments, and indeed temperance reformers, shown more interest in these observations efforts might have been made earlier towards slum clearance. In the 1870s the reports of the City and Suburban Sewage and Health Board confirmed the abuse of alcohol among slum dwellers. On their extensive tours of inspection Board members

30 S.M.H., 23 March 1851.

uncovered many shocking examples of human degradation. In Woolloomooloo Street, a group from the Board entered a house occupied by a fish vendor. They found the yard surrounding the house strewn with 'a lot of dead and stinking fish' and 'stagnant sewage'. Moving on into the house members came to a small room shut off from nearly all light. On a sofa lay a woman who was thoroughly drunk, in fact, 'so drunk that it was impossible to rouse her'. Seated in a chair beside her was a man 'of doubtful appearance, equally drunk'. Members attached to the Sewage and Health Board also discovered that the occupants of a 'weatherboard shanty' in Denison Ward were generally found fighting and drinking on Saturday night and Sunday morning. In fact Richard Wynne was one of the slum landlords who did nothing to improve his properties but who complained of his tenant's drunken brawls.

The districts covered by members of the Board housed the lowest paid workers together with the aged, the infirm and the idle. Many were areas of 'indescribable poverty and filth'; of overcrowded 'mean-looking' tenement buildings over which hung a foul atmosphere fed by industrial gases and stinking cesspits. In Miller's Point Board members came across a row of 'wretched wooden shanties' where in one house 'several drunken women were making a great uproar', and where in another, the occupants were 'clearly under the influence of liquor'.

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33 Ibid., p.70. 34 Ibid., p.9.
36 The Sydney City and Suburban Sewage and Health Board, op.cit., p.15-16.
Inspectors from the Board encountered one of the most deplorable instances of poverty and drunkenness in Abercrombie Lane, off George Street. The house was rented by a cab-driver, named Ryan, who supported a wife and three children on his earnings of 7s per week. The inspectors found both Ryan and his wife drunk:

the latter sitting on a box with a child in her arms; the mother and child quite naked. As we entered she drew up an old skirt from the floor and held it in front of her. These people were too stupified to give us any information... The empty bottle at their side told the whole story.37

Upstairs in Ryan's house were two drunken women asleep on a rotting mattress. In a neighbouring house inspectors came across another husband and wife who 'were both half drunk'.38

Burton Bradley, a member of the Board, offered an explanation for the scenes all had witnessed. He could easily imagine how, in the crowded lanes and courts, 'weary men obtain a poison sleep, rise depressed, [and] seek a stimulant'.39 On occasions inspectors had noted that the people they had visited had 'lost all respect for themselves', and that they had 'become demoralized'.40 These observations can help explain why drinking was such an integral feature in the lives of many working people.

The squalid slums of the inner-city largely remained into the 1880s and beyond, in spite of the newly created City of Sydney Improvement Board whose task it was to inspect and, where necessary, condemn dwellings. In the 1880s a variety of commentators explained the drinking

37 Ibid., p.44. 38 Ibid.
39 S.M.H., 13 June 1887.
40 The Sydney City and Suburban Sewage and Health Board, op.cit., pp.29,30.
habits of lower socio-economic groups by reference to the influence of social environment. An article in the Sydney Quarterly Magazine, for example, claimed that the 'tap-root' of intemperance was the sullied and polluted surroundings 'as masses of our workers live'.

Radicals maintained that a deprived living environment fostered dependence on alcohol. The Bulletin, for example, argued, on 20 October 1894, that the 'philosophy of drink and morphia... is the desire to forget something'. In the case of inner-city working people the Bulletin was certain that they desired escape from the 'injustice, poverty, misery and squalor' that surrounded many of their lives:

little, unkempt, fly-blown shops where sad-faced men and women try to eke out a precarious livelihood... and of decayed, moth-eaten cottages where the toiler lives, pent in by a battered ceiling, and a sunken floor, and four grime-encrusted walls.

The writer argued that 'an advance in the general social condition of the people' was necessary to diminish the reliance many had on liquor. Much the same view was expressed by Mrs. Summerfield, a socialist lecturer, who explained to one audience that drink, along with vice and crime, had their origins in poverty. She maintained that until destitution was removed undesirable forms of behaviour would continue.

Prominent members of the Protestant anti-drink crusade, including Bishop Barry and Rev. Dr. Boyce, were influenced by the ideas on social environment. But while these two spokesmen acknowledged that social conditions could not be ignored in the fight against drink they did not express the same commitment to this type of social reform. Bishop Barry,

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42 Bulletin, 28 April 1883. 43 Australian Workman, 28 May 1892.
not surprisingly, was secure in the belief that 'religious influence' remained 'the most powerful factor in the struggle against intemperance'. Barry was also aware, however, that the 'desire for drink is very largely due to the unwholesome physical conditions under which many classes in the community live'. Rev. Dr. Boyce, in his work The Drink Problem In Australia, dealt briefly with 'providing better dwellings for the labouring classes' as one 'aid to sobriety'. Anti-drink campaigners, however, did not press these views in public forums or in parliament. This is not surprising as the views on environment challenged the very basis of Protestant crusaders' social beliefs; that drink and public houses had to be suppressed because together they created poverty. Radicals and progressives had begun to argue the reverse - that poverty created the drinking. Thus, the influence of environment on behaviour was very much a secondary consideration for anti-drink campaigners. Activists, like Boyce, continued to assert that poverty in Sydney was largely due 'to the drunken habits of the working classes' who, instead of placing their money in savings banks, spent it in public houses.

Specific aspects of the life of working people also helped to foster habits of drinking. Perhaps the most important was the absence of any readily available alternative to liquor as a beverage. For the greater part of the nineteenth century water in Sydney was difficult to obtain and often polluted. The 'Sanitary Condition of Sydney' articles,

47 Truth, 24 May 1903.
published in the Herald in 1851, revealed the problems working people faced in obtaining supplies of water. With only one in every eight householders in the city connected to mains supplies, working class consumers had either to pay heavily for water to be delivered or to suffer the inconvenience of carting it back from water pumps:

Half the time of the poor is taken up in obtaining water from pumps, some times more than a quarter of a mile distant. At all hours of the day and night these pumps are at work; two and three o'clock in the morning, different parts of the neighbourhood are the scenes of water brawls, when the pumps are besieged in the struggles of the people for WATER.48

The quality of the water was generally very bad. In the mid 1870s water closets were found to have been directly connected to the water mains resulting in widespread water pollution. Reports on the quality of the water detailed the discovery of faeces and undigested food.49 After the turn of the century clean water was freely available in most homes. But temperance campaigners claimed that there were still insufficient facilities for obtaining drinking water in the streets and in other public places.50

Milk was of a similarly poor quality. Towards the end of 1890 the Herald, referring to a current investigation by the Metropolitan Board of Health into impure milk, commented that Sydney had had milk scares 'in abundance before' and that outbreaks of infectious disease had been traced to polluted supplies.51 Impure milk continued to be a problem in the late 1890s when it was confirmed that milk could be contaminated from cows suffering disease.52

49 Ibid., p.63. 50 N.S.W. Alliance Annual Report, 1914-15, p.16.
51 S.M.H., 20 October 1890. 52 D.T., 2 July 1897.
Soft drinks too were scarce, expensive and not overly palatable. Early in 1890 the *Bulletin* reported that a 'teetotal lady's historic prize of £1000 for a pleasant 'soft' drink to supersede alcohol is still unallocated'. It was not until the later 1890s that the sale of carbonated beverages grew appreciably. Just before the close of the century Rev. Dr. Boyce was pleased to note their growing popularity which, he believed, was due to the improved taste and variety of the drinks. But it is not certain that soft drinks came within reach of all, or most, working people. In the early years of the twentieth century lime-juice was reported to be too expensive to give to men harvesting to quench their thirsts. The unavailability of alternatives to liquor was an important matter as the *Bulletin* once remarked: 'One cause of drunkenness is probably the heat of our summers, which drive men to drink'.

It is not certain though that even if soft drinks had been cheap and widely available large numbers of working people would have preferred them to liquor. The Coffee Palace movement is instructive in this respect. The first coffee stall was set up in Sydney at the beginning of 1880. It, and subsequent stalls, were promoted by the Australian Coffee Palace Hotel Company which believed that there was a public need for 'a refreshing draught without temptation to inebriety'.

The first stall had a fold down front counter which made a convenient table for customers. In addition to coffee which was 'always

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53 *Sydney Mail*, 11 June 1881.  
54 *Bulletin*, 22 March 1890.  
55 D.T., 20 December 1898.  
56 *S.M.H.*, 19 August 1905.  
57 *Bulletin*, 22 March 1890.  
58 *Sydney Mail*, 17 April 1880.
fragrant and fresh', the stall sold food - sandwiches, sausages and saveloys. The Sydney Mail was enthusiastic about the idea. It believed that people, who were apt to turn into the first public house and take 'support' in alcoholic form, would be attracted instead by the 'mingled fragrance, [and] the air of comfort and cleanliness' offered by the stalls. But the Sydney Mail confessed that the stall had not been successful in drawing custom away from public houses. The paper remarked the coffee stall was patronised principally by 'provokingly respectable' people. In addition to the stalls, the Coffee Palace Company operated two hotels in Sydney - the Grand Central with 200 rooms and the Metropole with over 300. Although both commenced selling only non-intoxicating drinks, by 1893 each had obtained licenses to sell liquor. Towards the end of the century Truth reported that it was 'a well known fact' that every Coffee Palace in Sydney had been a financial failure until it received a liquor license and that temperance hotels had not been outstanding successes. The lack of success in the promotion of coffee drinking as a substitute for alcohol highlights the earlier comments on the value working men placed in liquor. It might also suggest that public houses were places of special importance to working people.

Habits of drinking among the working classes were encouraged by the social functions of the public house. Publicans, for example, allowed men to live under special circumstances on the premises. William

59 Ibid. 60 Ibid. 61 Ibid.


63 Truth, 23 October 1898.
Tea drinking was never promoted in a similar fashion to coffee. It is difficult to establish the popularity of tea drinking among working people from customs returns and there is little other available descriptive information on this beverage.
Atkinson, a seaman, informed the Drink Commission that a 'great many' men lived in hotels because it is convenient to them. All men cannot get employment, and when they are living in a public house they can run up four or five weeks' board. They could not do that in a private lodging.64

Atkinson went on to explain that this arrangement often worked to the mutual benefit of both parties. In return for bringing into the hotel 'as many customers as possible', some publicans would agree to 'knock off a percentage of the debt'.65

There is evidence too that the working man's public house was frequently the centre for prostitution to cater, especially, for Sydneys large contingent of visiting sailors. Thomas Davis, who was Secretary of the Seamen's Union, reported that prostitutes made hotels 'their regular place of resort'.66 John Shearston, the church missionary to seamen, reported the same practice. Seamen had frequently told him that in public-houses, when change is not forthcoming, the remark is often made: 'You can have the change upstairs', referring to the presence of women with whom the men might have communication.67

The appeal of the hotels was enhanced in other ways. John Shearston also explained that where public houses were located next-door to tobacconists, shaving saloons or eating houses, a relationship often existed between the two business houses. Doorways, constructed illegally, connected the public house and the affiliated business enabling men to get a shave or buy tobacco at the place where they drank. The system was also used to evade the 11 pm closing regulation, for the drinking customer could enter the affiliated business and go on

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64 Intoxicating Drink Commission Inquiry, op.cit. p.453 (Minutes).
65 Ibid., p.454. 66 Ibid., p.456. 67 Ibid.
through to the public house. In many country towns the hotel was 'a mere adjunct' to the general store or the butcher shop which were operated by the same man. 68

The evidence suggests that public houses continued to provide entertainment for working people, and thus demonstrates the continuing absence of alternative meeting places and facilities for informal social interaction in many working class communities. As late as 1916 Rev. A. Rivett, who operated a church mission, complained that the congested population living in Surry Hills had no public hall, library or school of arts. 69 The diversity of the 'entertainment' still provided by hotels is impressive, although unquantifiable. It is difficult, for example, to establish precisely the extent of game-playing and gambling on licensed premises. But police witnesses to the Drink Commission referred to many instances they had encountered. Sub-Inspector Atwill, for example, told how a coal-lumper's wife had complained to him that she had not seen her husband for more than a day and feared that he was in a nearby hotel gambling away his wages. Accompanied by another officer, Atwill visited the hotel arriving at about closing hour. The blinds were drawn over the windows and when the officers came in the publican ran around the bar and switched the lights off. Atwill was nonetheless able to establish that there were fifteen men in the house and that cards were scattered all about the tables. 70 Inspector Waters said that 'You may visit certain public-houses as often as you like on Sundays, and you will find dozens

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70 Intoxicating Drink Commission Inquiry, op.cit. p.41.(Minutes).
of people playing cards – three or four in one room, and five and six in another'. Workers complained that the police could do nothing to prevent this pastime for there was never evidence that cards were being played for money stakes.\(^\text{71}\)

It appears that games were also popular in working men's clubs. It is difficult to obtain precise details about these clubs. However, it is known that they became popular during the mid-1880s. Inspector Fosbery confirmed that they were established principally to allow working men to drink outside legally permitted hours.\(^\text{72}\) According to R.A. Watson, a publican, the clubs 'carry on all sorts of games'.\(^\text{73}\)

In the mid-1880s the Telegraph published an informative article on these 'bogus clubs'. According to the paper they were, by this time, 'thick as thieves in almost every part of the city'.\(^\text{74}\) The clubs were merely roughly furnished rooms patronised by people seeking 'drink and drouthy comrades... on Sundays, and within other prohibited hours'. Some clubs were opened in the vicinity of work places and 'not infrequently they are gambling as well as drinking dens'.\(^\text{75}\)

The patronage of public houses and working men's drinking clubs illustrates the popularity of drinking among working men. Women need to be discussed separately. Drinking was not an exclusively male occupation but there is little evidence to indicate how widely spread the habit was among women of the working classes.

It would appear that it was not uncommon for working class women to drink at home. Mr. J. Perry, President of the L.V.A. in 1870, stated

\(^{161}\) Ibid., p.28. \(^{162}\) Ibid., p.3. \(^{163}\) Ibid., p.312.
\(^{164}\) D.T., 4 September 1896. \(^{165}\) Ibid.
that mothers often sent their children out for groceries and asked them to call into the public house to purchase beer on their way back. J.M. Toohey maintained that it was common for women themselves to purchase liquor from the grocer when shopping. Some women were concerned about the drinking habits among their sex. The 'Mothers and Daughters' of Narellan, for example, petitioned parliament on the matter in 1871. These women were deeply sensible of the reproach that among their own sex there are unhappy examples of enslavement to the accursed spell of the demon drink, and they lament the ruin of hundreds of fallen sisters who, but for the accursed thing, might have continued innocent, virtuous, and happy.

We can be much more certain why women typically drank at home than we can about the extent of their drinking. Public houses were predominantly male institutions. This was also the case in other countries. Brian Harrison has described the British public house as a centre for male recreation, and Ruth Bordin has depicted the American saloon as 'almost exclusively a male institution', 'except for hangers-on like prostitutes'. In 1916 Edwin Stooke, then Secretary of the New South Wales Liquor Defence Union, aptly summed up the status of women in relation to drinking in public houses when he said 'women know nothing about hotels'.

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77 Intoxicating Drink Commission Inquiry, op.cit., p.262.
81 Sun, 11 June 1916.
One other aspect of patterns of drinking among working people needs to be examined. The quality of liquor sold in many working men's bars continued to be partly responsible for the incidence of drunkenness. The 1879 Adulteration of Food Act and the 1882 Licensing Act had together largely stamped out the worst forms of adulteration by the appointment of the state inspectors. It was their job to check the quality of liquors sold and, where infringements occurred, to oversee the conviction of publicans.

The responsibility for monitoring the quality of liquor sold in Sydney hotels fell on Sub-Inspector Walter Lenthall. He informed Superintendent Read in the mid-1890s that, while adulteration was not a major problem much of the liquor sold was of 'low quality... a new, raw, crude spirit, most intoxicating and stupefying'. Lenthall was convinced that this low class spirit caused most of the drunkenness among working people. 'Men stupefied with liquor', he explained to Read, are never seen about the clubs and first class hotels, whose frequenters often drink double as much first-class liquor as many an unfortunate drunkard and who gets the rubbish. Inspector-General Fosbery shared Lenthall's opinion, as did Mr. F. Bevill, Secretary of the U.L.V.A. in the mid 1890s.

Working men interviewed by the Drink Commission testified to the intoxicating power of the raw, crude spirit. John Davidson said that the quality of liquor varied according to the houses, but he had noticed cases in which men have become drunk after only one or two drinks. These

83 Ibid. 84 Ibid. 85 Ibid., 1894-95, vol.3, p.3.
were men who were in 'the habit of taking their drink'.\textsuperscript{86} John North, who was at one time a traveller for a wine and spirit merchant, told the Commission that he had seen men 'overcome' on one or two glasses, and 'yet who I am sure could take half-a-dozen of pure spirit'.\textsuperscript{87} Why did working men drink this inferior liquor? Many may not have been able to afford better quality drink while others may have enjoyed its stronger effects. But the comment offered by George Sayers, a wharf labourer, suggests, that some working men may have been unaware of its inferior quality. Sayers admitted that he was 'not much of a judge as to whether the liquor is good or bad, so long as it is wet'.\textsuperscript{88}

The Drink Commission established, in considerable detail, that the cheaper liquor had heightened intoxicating effects because it contained fusel oil. This was a general term for 'volatile oily liquids, of a nauseous fiery taste and smell',\textsuperscript{89} found in immature spirits. Both Bevill and Lenthall agreed that the existing licensing laws were inadequate to prevent the sale of this type of liquor. High duties encouraged its sale by tempting the publican to purchase a cheaper article. Wholesalers imported the inferior product from European countries and it was in this area that governments needed greater powers - to be able to prevent inferior liquor leaving the warehouse. Much of the beer brewed in the colony was of a similarly poor quality. The Drink Commission established that a 'pernicious substance' (amylic and its kindred alcohols) was widely found in beer.\textsuperscript{90} J.M. Toohey

\textsuperscript{86} Intoxicating Drink Commission Inquiry, op.cit., p.393.
\textsuperscript{87} Ibid., p.297.  \textsuperscript{88} Ibid., p.397.  \textsuperscript{89} Ibid., p.36 (Report).
\textsuperscript{90} Ibid., p.39.
reluctantly admitted that 'Of course it happens sometimes that bad beer is sent out from a brewery'. 91

The sale of poor quality beer and spirits was entrenched by the system of 'tied houses'. This was the term given to the ownership of hotels by the major brewery companies. In the latter 1880s 'insensate competition 'arose among the breweries to purchase hotel properties. Publicans were installed who were tied to the company by the repayment of mortgage loans. This arrangement restricted publicans to selling the brand of beer that was supplied to them. By the turn of the century 90% of hotels in Sydney were said to be owned and operated in this manner. 92 The Select Committee on Tied Houses interviewed a number of publicans all of whom testified to the poor quality of beer, especially, that was sent to them. Daniel Minehan, whose hotel in Bathurst Street was financed by Tooheys, described the beer as 'tart and discoloured. On one occasion when it got pretty low in the cask it was quite black'. 93 John Creamer, whose Cosmopolitan Hotel in the city was tied to the Australian Brewery Company, stated that 'the beer which they were supplying me with was absolutely bad'. 94 The Committee was told that Toohey's beer was discovered, by government analysts, to contain salicylic acid which was referred to as a 'poison'. Brewers in France and Germany faced prosecution if salicylic acid was found in their product. William Davies, the manager of Tooheys, explained why the acid was used:

91 Ibid., p.259 (Minutes).
92 Select Committee on Tied Houses, N.S.W.L.A., V. & P., 1901, vol.6, p.3 (Report).
93 Ibid., p.16 (Minutes). 94 Ibid., p.19.
In this climate I understand brewers have a difficulty in brewing without a preservative. The climate is so varied, and beer being a delicate product... it is considered necessary.\textsuperscript{95}

Under the law brewery companies were not liable for prosecution. It was the publican who sold impure liquor who faced conviction. In 1901 the Board of Health was forced to withdraw prosecutions it had prepared against breweries whose beer had been found to be adulterated with salicylic acid.\textsuperscript{96}

There are some similarities between the drinking customs of working people and those of middle class groups - the latter including government office workers, commercial and business men and sometimes more leisured 'gentlemen'. 'Shouting' was a custom 'common amongst all classes'.\textsuperscript{97}

The practice was believed to be more common in the colonies than among drinkers in the 'old country'.\textsuperscript{98} As the Telegraph also wrote,

'Shouting', in the Australian sense, is rare in England. A man will frequently ask you to have a drink, but he never thinks it strange or presses you if you decline. If one Londoner takes three or four others to 'shout' for them, there is no stupid obligation on the other four to 'shout' in their turn.\textsuperscript{99}

It is difficult to be sure whether 'shouting' was more common in Australia than elsewhere. It was a prominent feature of drinking customs in the colonies and seemed to complement the conviviality and companionship frequently sought in public houses. Richard Snell, a car cleaner with the Tramway Department, explained to the Drink Commission how the custom operated:

\begin{enumerate}
\item[Ibid., p.73.]
\item[D.T., 29 August 1901.]
\item[Intoxicating Drink Commission Inquiry, op.cit., p.262; D.T., 2 September 1901.]
\item[Intoxicating Drink Commission Inquiry, op.cit., p.380.]
\item[D.T., 28 March 1914 reprinted in Grit, 9 April 1914.]
\end{enumerate}
Perhaps half-a-dozen chaps go into a public house; one treats the lot, and another does the same, and so it goes round ... One will say, 'Fill them up again', and another says the same, and they drink it off so quickly that they are almost tipsy before they come out of the place.100

The custom of 'shouting' was also common among brewery travellers who were in the habit of 'shouting' the bar on selling rounds. This practice was particularly welcomed by regular drinkers who became familiar with the times and routes of the brewery company travellers.101

Temperance activists did not draw particular attention to the habit of 'shouting'. Their neglect angered Rev. C.O.L. Riley who, during the course of the Commonwealth Select Committee on Intoxicating Liquor which was established in the midst of World War One, criticised temperance 'extremists': 'They want absolute prohibition, and nothing else'.102

The Committee's task was to inquire into the effect of liquor on Australian soldiers and the practice of 'shouting' was widely perceived by the officers interviewed as a principal cause of drunkenness.103

Although the Committee recommended that the habit be outlawed, their suggestion was never adopted. Certainly, a ban on 'shouting' would have proved impossible to police.

Illegal Sunday drinking was also common among both working and middle class drinkers. In the mid-1890s the Telegraph estimated that over 90% of city hotels sold regularly on Sundays showing, the paper believed, that the 'strength of the public thirst is... superior to the

100 Intoxicating Drink Commission Inquiry, op.cit., p.373.
101 Truth, 26 August 1894.
103 Ibid., pp.7,8.
strength of the law'. It also illustrates how deeply ingrained habits of drinking were. The massive evasion of the Sunday drinking law was just one part of mounting community disregard for sabbatarian restrictions. Throughout the 1890s a range of recreational activities including eating out, seaside trips, evening concerts and sporting events became ever-more popular Sunday diversions.

Drinking in hotels on Sundays was clearly part of the social recreation many in the community desired. Some degree of class differentiation characterised Sunday drinking, as a journalist from Truth discovered in the mid-1890s. He emphasised that hotels which traded on Sundays were 'of various kinds'. The reporter described a 'typical' high class hotel - a 'stuccoed, balconied building of many stories built in the boom time'. On Sundays the private door of this hotel was left open but the customer needed to be known or enter with someone who was. The Sunday drinker then joined a dozen or so 'well-dressed' men. Some lived in the neighbourhood and dropped into the hotel to meet with acquaintances whom they had not had a chance to see through the week. Others were there for no other reasons than they wanted to drink:

All these men could afford to lay in Sunday stocks... but many of them are single men living in lodgings, where such a course of proceedings would not be desirable.

Hotels of the above description, the reporter continued, were not the kind frequented by working men on Sundays. But the procedure for admission to the hotels they frequented was equally elaborate, requiring

Three taps, with an interval of about five seconds between each tap ... Then follows the inspection of the applicant - generally conducted from behind a curtain.

104 D.T., 22 October 1896. 105 Ibid., 10 July 1897.
The opportunity to socialise was also one of the chief attractions of the hotel on Sundays for working men. They enjoyed a drink, a pipe and 'the subjects of the week'.

The persistence of Sunday drinking indicates that a large section of the public would have favoured an alteration to the 1882 Act. As it stood, the law had little, or no impact, in preventing Sunday drinking. The public treated violation 'as an insignificant offence' and, consequently, informing on publicans was not common. Several attempts were made during the latter half of the 1890s to both relax the prohibition on Sunday drinking and to allow a greater range of recreational activities. Henry Copeland, one of the chief sponsors of the Sunday Laws Amendment Bill, stressed the necessity 'to bring the law in accord with public opinion'. However, until the turn of the century libertarians were outnumbered in their efforts to overturn sabbatarianism. The obstacle to changing the law was a deeply felt attitude among the majority of parliamentarians some of whom (B.R. Wise and E. O'Sullivan, for example) held otherwise progressive views, that the puritanical Sabbath was an important symbol marking a 'respect for religion', and the 'ideas of our ancestors'. Most members felt that sufficient concessions had already been granted to those who wished to follow a 'continental' Sunday. George Reid's opinion is representative. He stated that while he was not always sympathetic to the Sabbatarian view he had 'a profound reverence for the institution' and that he would 'not lightly lay my hand upon it'.

110 Ibid., 1894-95, vol.72, pp.307;322. 111 Ibid., p.312.
Preserving Sundays with a Protestant character was thus a matter of tradition, that was difficult to break with. The cost of preserving Sunday laws, however, was to accustom people to 'an atmosphere of illegality'.

In spite of these common features, however, middle class drinking habits differed markedly from those associated with hotels in working class areas. By the late 1880s a significant section of the drink trade was geared to cater for 'respectable' drinkers. Much of it was operated in contravention of the Licensing Act and was connected with prostitution.

Drinking among middle class groups centred on private bars which rapidly increased in number after the enactment of the Licensing Bill. The Drink Commission clearly stated that these bars were 'nothing but a fraudulent extension or expansion of a publican's license' for they were separated 'from that portion of the building devoted to legitimate trading'. The police were powerless to remove them. The women who sub-let the bars arranged with the hotelier for the receipt of rent to be made out as wages. In this way it could appear to the licensing authorities that the women were employed as barmaids. Cases were reported where publicans and female lessees had perjured themselves in court to avoid prosecution.

The Drink Commission calculated that 94 private bars operated in Sydney. Their number is difficult to establish in the 1890s but there is no reason to doubt the Telegraph when it claimed in 1892, that 'the

112 D.T., 15 November 1899.
113 Intoxicating Drink Commission Inquiry, op.cit., p.84 (Report).
114 Ibid., p.112 (Minutes). 115 D.T., 17 July 1890.
116 Intoxicating Drink Commission Inquiry, op.cit., p.84 (Report).
private bar flourishes in the land'. In 1890 the Local Option League calculated that 124 private bars were located in Sydney hotels. The purpose of these bars was to enable anyone who did not care to mingle with the common throng to obtain a drink with more privacy and under somewhat better conditions than the public bar afforded.

The practice in most public bars was 'small profits and quick returns'. Public bars usually retailed liquor for 3d. per glass and much of this, as we have noted, was of inferior quality. The wealthier classes desired better quality liquor and more refined surroundings.

Two distinct types of private bar existed - those located on the ground floor of hotels and those found upstairs. The ground floor type were the more numerous. James Tonkin, a publican, explained to members of the Legislative Assembly that they functioned as places where 'gentlemen' could obtain a better class of liquor and take this refreshment without having to mix 'with all classes of society'. Business men and politicians were among those for whom ground floor private bars 'may be kept select'. In Sydney, as well as in other large centres of population, persons of this sort often resorted to the private bar of a public house 'for the purposes of transacting business'. J.B. Olliffe confirmed that these bars were a 'great convenience to the merchants and commercial men'.

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117 D.T., 22 August 1892. 118 S.M.H., 31 July 1890.
119 D.T., 25 August 1892. 120 S.M.H., 4 October 1877.
122 Ibid., p.1393. 123 Ibid., p.1389.
124 Intoxicating Drink Commission Inquiry, op.cit., p.283 (Minutes).
Upstairs private bars had a different character although the social background of the clientele was similar. Most of the available information about upstairs private bars links them with prostitution. Indeed, it appears that they functioned specifically for this purpose. However there is no evidence, in the form of convictions, to confirm this connection. While the 1882 Licensing Act gave police power to prosecute publicans if they allowed 'common prostitutes' on their premises police complained that it was 'impossible to get convictions, owing to the difficulty of proving the persons in the bars to be prostitutes'.

The upstairs bar was intended to ensure the utmost privacy. A reporter from the Herald discovered that to 'get upstairs, and into the right room upstairs, is not... always an easy matter'. Once inside, the visitor was struck by 'the most paltry' display of liquor. In fact, it was a common practice for some bottles to be filled with coloured water just to 'make a show'. Women paid extremely high rents for these bars which heightened suspicion that prostitution was the means by which the leases were paid. One publican later informed the authorities the women lessees could not pay the rent for the premises, nor the price which they have to pay for the liquor, by confining themselves to legitimate business.

In 1890 and again in 1892 the Telegraph published a series of articles, based on extensive investigation, on private bars. The accounts given of the upstairs bars were designed to show that their

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125 D.T., 22 August 1892. 126 S.M.H., 4 October 1887. 
127 Ibid. 128 D.T., 17 July 1890. 
129 Select Committee on Tied Houses, op.cit., p.4 (Minutes).
chief function was organised prostitution for the 'respectable' classes. The author of the 1890 series interviewed the 'barmaid' of one private bar who informed him that she paid $5 per week in rent. She received liquor from the publican at the same price he sold it to his customers. 'Business was somewhat slack', the author reported the barmaid as telling him,

but she considered she did pretty well. She had her 'own gentlemen friends' who came to see her, and she spoke of one ... in a manner which sufficiently indicated the relations between them. She has a 'lady-assistant' with her in the business... From the conversation generally and the demeanor of the women there was no room left for doubt as to her extra vocation.\(^\text{130}\)

One of the articles written in 1892 described the private barmaid's clientele as being recruited from the civil service and commercial offices with 'stray representatives' from various professions and businesses. These 'Johnnies' were distinguishable by their dress and 'the fixed habit they have of chewing the knobs of their canes'.\(^\text{131}\)

Several years later Truth conducted its own investigation and repeated the observations published by the Telegraph. Truth, less concerned about discretion, described the patrons of these bars as 'prosperous middle-aged and old men, fathers of families, seeking 'infinite variety', as 'A CURE FOR THE MONOTONY OF MONOGAMY'.\(^\text{132}\) In addition to the pleasures offered by barmaids upstairs private bars sometimes provided billiard rooms and facilities for card playing.\(^\text{133}\)

The raffish life-style represented by private bars is a sharp contrast to the world of the chronic or habitual drinkers; people who

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130 D.T., 17 July 1890.  
131 Ibid., 23 August 1892  
132 Truth, 9 June 1901.  
133 S.M.H., 4 October 1887.
today would be labelled alcoholics. The existence of an 'inebriate class' was first widely discussed by the Drink Commission but, neither members of the Commission nor the witnesses they interviewed, offered a means to identify this group of drinkers. Even the terms contemporaries used to describe them - habitual, drunkard, inebriate and dipsomanic - are loose definitions. Nevertheless contemporaries knew who these terms applied to. Alexander Oliver, the President of the Drink Commission, described the habitual drinker as 'the man who becomes a regular sot, loses his situation, and is then picked up in the streets and sent to gaol'.

John Long, a workman interviewed by the Commission, gave some vivid descriptions of this group. He was asked whether chronic drinkers ever turned over 'a new leaf'. Long replied that they did not begin anew, because liquor seemed to have a hold on them which they could not shake off:

I was speaking to a man ... only the other day, and he said, 'Long, only for lifting my right hand so much, I would have been with you today'. That man was given many chances but he would not alter.

Chronic drinkers formed the lowest socio-economic group in the community. They were part of 'outcast' Sydney whose ranks included the unemployed, vagrants, 'loafers' and petty criminals; people who by choice, or more likely circumstances, lived outside the accepted social conventions. Robert Hunter, a progressive American reformer, investigated the lives of members of this community at the turn of the century. Hunter combined radical political views and a strong social

134 Intoxicating Drink Commission Inquiry, op.cit., p.387 (Minutes).
135 Ibid., p.369.
conscience and he believed that most of the poor and vagrants were socially created. He wrote that in all large cities in America and abroad there were streets, courts and alleys where a class of people lived who had lost all self respect and ambition,

who rarely, if ever, work, who are aimless and drifting, who like drink, who have no thought for their children, and who live more or less contentedly on rubbish and alms.\(^{136}\)

Hunter's description fits the alcoholic down and outs who were a constant, if submerged, part of Sydney life during the nineteenth century and beyond.

The Drink Commission estimated that there was a 'floating population' of more than 3000 habitual drunkards in the metropolitan district alone.\(^{137}\) At best, this figure was an informed guess which relied upon the statements of a few police officers. No-one knew precisely how many chronic drinkers lived among 'outcast' Sydney. It is more certain that this group continued to swell the list of arrests for drunkenness. Inspector Waters told the Drink Commission that there were many old offenders in the apprehensions for drunkenness, 'some of them brought in perhaps once a week'.\(^{138}\) Whittingdale Johnson, a stipendiary magistrate, also remembered the same old faces coming up again and again - 'they go to gaol for seven days and then they come back again'.\(^{139}\)

Harold Mclean, Comptroller-General of Prisons, told the Drink Commission that no-one really knew how chronic drinkers lived.\(^{140}\) Nevertheless it is possible to piece together the glimpses that a few 'respectable' observers had made into the world on 'skid row'. There is


\(^{137}\) Intoxicating Drink Commission Inquiry, op.cit., p.49 (Report).

\(^{138}\) Ibid., p.23 (Minutes).  

\(^{139}\) Ibid., p.118.  

\(^{140}\) Ibid., p.144.
little doubt that chronic drinkers were kept alive by charity, scrounging and prison. When the means were not available to buy drink, habituals begged for it. 'The men who ask you for 6d. for their bed', Sub Inspector Atwill, told the Drink Commission, 'spend it with the publican ... they sleep in the Domain; they manage to get money somehow'. Desperate drinkers could rely on the custom among some publicans of giving away pints of 'swipes' first thing each morning. This consisted of the leavings of the previous night or the frothy beer pulled from the tap first thing in the morning. Colonial brewed beer was amongst the cheapest liquor habitual drinkers could purchase. Tooth's 'stringy' beer retailed for 2d. a pint in the late 1880s and because of its inferior quality it was drunk, according to Inspector Lenthall, principally by 'men who do nothing but drink - complete soakers'. Methylated spirits does not seem to have been commonly drunk until after the turn of the century.

The favoured haunts of habitual drinkers were the parks and gardens of the inner city. The Domain, Hyde Park and Belmore Park sheltered the drunkard. Ragged, unkempt, uncared for, he lies huddled up in a heap near fence or tree and when raised, staggers wildly a few dozen yards and then falling, slumbers again.

Throughout the later nineteenth century the parks and gardens remained unlit. Lights were first turned on in Hyde Park, for example, in November 1905. The darkness enabled down and out drinkers to sleep undisturbed by the police. Green Park in Wexford Street, lying between St. Vincent's Hospital and Darlinghurst Gaol was another 'regular haunt

141 D.T., 14 July 1893
142 Intoxicating Drink Commission Inquiry op.cit., p.81 (Minutes).
143 S.M.H., 10 January 1891.
of the scum of the city'. At the end of 1890 a reporter from Truth visited the park where he encountered several drunken women, one of whom clung to a bottle of colonial beer and 'when she held it to her lips ... her pleasure at the caress was evident and ardent'. Another of the women sat down and emptied her flagon. Then her head sank on her chest; slowly she swayed to and fro a couple of times, and then tumbled off the seat.144

Among the 'dead beat' drinkers of the inner-city were some men described as 'professional' who had seen 'better days'. To the acute observer, dissipation could not hide from their faces 'a look of gentility'.145 These were people who had decided to drift on the fringes of society where drink was 'their only comfort'.146 Mr. Spencer Beaney, a ship's chandler and temperance worker, believed that there were 'many men who if they have any loss may indulge in drink for a time'.147 These people, along with others of the 'outcast' community could be found in the cheap and seedy lodging houses of the inner-city. By the start of 1893 500 of these lodging houses were located in Sydney.148 They continued to house the poorest social groups - low paid workmen, 'loafers', broken-down tradesmen and dissipated professionals.149 Despite the shocking revelations contained in The Select Committee into Common Lodging Houses in the mid-1870s governments had done nothing to regulate these establishments. In the early 1890s a

144 Truth, 16 November 1890. 145 Ibid., 8 May 1892.
146 Ibid.
147 Intoxicating Drink Commission Inquiry, op.cit., p.422 (Minutes).
149 Ibid., p.4.
journalist from *Truth* described a stay in one of these establishments: Mother Daley's Doss House was distinguished by dirty windows and blinds and an unsavoury-looking card in one window advertising rooms to let. Mother Daley's appearance summed up the character of the establishment. She was dressed in an old print wrapper and a filthy apron and a pair of 'very old and mouldy looking' men's boots. 150

In the streets and alley-ways of the inner-city, chronic drinkers could be found among the socially down trodden. Inspector Anderson told the Drink Commission about aging prostitutes who were 'frequently drunk, and lying about the streets and parks, a great many of them suffering from veneral disease'. 151 These women presented a tragic sight as Inspector Anderson related. He had recently seen two men dragging a drunken woman down Druitt Street towards the wharves with 'eight young fellows following behind them'. It is little wonder that these aging and diseased prostitutes drank heavily after their sexual encounters. Anderson, in his most graphic description, told the Commission of an old, diseased and drunken prostitute he met in the streets one night. 'It occurred to me', he said,

that she was diseased. I spoke to her and she confirmed my suspicion... I said 'You surely do not mean to say that you go out with men when you are in that condition'. She replied 'I have been with seven men-of-war's men tonight. I would have more if I could get them'. 152

Police figures show that the daily average of 'Habitual Drunkards' in Sydney Gaol at any one time were made up of relatively even numbers of

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150 *Truth*, 29 May 1892.
151 Intoxicating Drink Commission Inquiry, op.cit., p.475 (Minutes).
152 Ibid.
men and women. In 1885, for example, 290 were males and 232 were females. 153

Women living in 'outcast' Sydney were the concern of the Sydney Rescue Work Society and especially its Women's Crusade section. The society was founded in 1882 by George Ardill, a Baptist evangelist and temperance worker who began rescue work for destitute and homeless women. 154 During the 1890s women found by the police drunk or unable to support themselves were sometimes taken to the Open All Night Refuge. This institution was severely criticised by the 1899 Royal Commission on Public Charities which found the Refuge 'squalid' in appearance and uninterested in the women's reformation. 155

There is little additional available evidence to help identify Sydney's alcoholic 'outcast' community. Whether they included many of the aging sick, the long-term unemployed or the unemployable is no longer clear. But that these, or people with similar backgrounds, were lumped in among the 'inebriate class' is suggested from the following figures. These indicate that aging illiterates were a significant component of those arrested for drunkenness. In 1880, 1,796 persons were arrested for drunkenness who could neither read nor write; 491 could read only; 16,431 could read and write; while 59 were described as having a 'superior' education. Of this number 3,408 were 50 years and over. 156

153 Ibid., p.511.
155 Royal Commission on Public Charities, op.cit., p.xviii.
Of course these figures do not reveal the extent of alcoholism among wealthier social groups who, for reasons described in an earlier chapter, were less likely to be arrested for drunkenness. There is little information about chronic drinking among people with means. Those from the poorer social classes had little alternative but to live in the streets and parks which only encouraged the view that habitual drunkenness was a lower-class phenomenon. Joseph Panton, for example, Metropolitan Police Magistrate in Melbourne, told an inquiry into Habitual Drunkards in 1899 that this group of drinkers consisted mainly of labourers, sailor-men, a few 'broken-down' educated men, and 'loafers'. Women habituals were mostly 'poor creatures' and prostitutes, with 'an occasional dipsomaniac of a better class'.

The community of 'outcast' chronic drinkers did have recourse to a variety of support systems but all were unsatisfactory for dealing with their condition. The Soup Kitchen continued to provide meals for the destitute. Among the people who frequented it were some known to be 'addicted to drink'. The Soup Kitchen was located in Kent Street, Sydney. The house was surrounded by a verandah and shaded by Moreton Bay fig trees. At 12.30 each afternoon the hungry drifted down with a ticket given by a subscriber to the institution. A very basic meal was served, consisting of a basin of soup, a plate of meat and a slice of bread which had been reduced to 'ship's biscuit condition' by drying it out in the

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158 The Sydney City and Suburban Sewage and Health Board, N.S.W.L.A., V.&P., 1875–76. vol.5, p.23.
sun. The bread was intended to be unpalatable to prevent a rush of demand on it.\textsuperscript{159} The People's Palace, run by the Salvation Army had, by the late 1890s, a special room set aside for the reception of intoxicated men needing shelter.\textsuperscript{160} However at any one time the police watch-house and prison probably housed the greatest number of Sydney's chronic drinkers. Dr. Maurice O'Connor, visiting surgeon at Darlinghurst Gaol, submitted the following figures to the Drink Commission:

\begin{table}
\centering
\caption{Cases of arrests for drunkenness, Darlinghurst Gaol}
\begin{tabular}{lcc}
\hline
YEAR & Total No of Prisoners received into Gaol & Under medical treatment suffering from the effects of drink & Under treatment for delirium tremens and included in previous column. \\
\hline
1880 & 4,976 & 622 & 424 \\
1881 & 6,156 & 990 & 607 \\
1882 & 4,701 & 852 & 376 \\
1883 & 4,639 & 894 & 207 \\
1884 & 5,449 & 746 & 136 \\
1885 & 5,869 & 1,050 & 138 \\
1886(June) & 2,476 & 492 & 69 \\
\hline
TOTAL & 34,266 & 5,686 & 1,957 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{table}


The Governor of Darlinghurst, John Read, was undoubtedly correct in saying that gaol was simply a hospital for chronic drinkers - 'a means of prolonging their lives'. As Read described it they were brought in from

\textsuperscript{159} \textit{Sydney Mail}, 15 April 1882.

\textsuperscript{160} Royal Commission on Public Charities, \textit{op.cit.}, p.xxvi.
the Domain or the city gutters and for several days they were fed and cleansed. If it were not for these facilities 'they would not live long'.

Darlinghurst was an unsatisfactory place to cope with chronic drinkers. In the first place the system of jailing drunkards was based on a premise - repression by direct punishment - which the Drink Commissioners roundly condemned. W.F. Addison, a stipendiary magistrate, described to the Commission the degrading process of arresting and charging drunks. The offenders were marched under police escort through the streets from the cells at No. 4 Police Station to the Water Police Court 'like so many felons'. Addison believed that treating them in this manner

like criminals of the worst class, tends to degrade them... [it] humiliates the offenders themselves, while it has no deterrent effect upon the bystanders who form the audience.

Chronic drinkers suffered further degradation in gaol. Repeated offenders who were sentenced to three and sometimes six months hard labour were treated like other criminals - their heads were shaved and the fit worked at dragging barrows of stones while the less physically capable picked oakum. Harold Mclean, Comptroller-General of Prisons, explained to the Drink Commission that drunkards were clothed in the 'half worn-out garments of the longer-sentenced prisoners, which would otherwise be destroyed'.

Gaol was not a suitable place to treat chronic drinkers medically. Not only did it lack the proper facilities but the system of short term

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161 Intoxicating Drink Commission Inquiry, op.cit., p.150 (Minutes).
162 Ibid., p.49 (Report).
163 Ibid., p.147 (Minutes); D.T., 13 October 1883.
164 Intoxicating Drink Commission Inquiry, op.cit., p.144.
sentencing obstructed the drunkard's recovery. As Read explained to the Drink Commission:

Sometimes the delirium tremens is breaking out at the time when they are going out ... The delirium is generally at its worst stage about the fourth day; but many of them have to be discharged in two days; they get apprehended again and they are brought back; it is folly to send them [to gaol] for two days in bad cases.\textsuperscript{165}

By the 1880s medical understanding of alcoholism as a disease had advanced substantially. Dr. Frederick Manning who, since 1879 had acted as Inspector-General of Insane, maintained his professional interest in the matter and gave evidence to the Drink Commission. Manning maintained that numbers of habitual drinkers could be treated successfully if a proper institution were established and if inmates could stay from between three to six months.\textsuperscript{166} Many other informed witnesses supported the creation of an inebriates' asylum. In their report Commissioners recommended that government funds be set aside for such a purpose. In outlining their reasons Commissioners wrote that neither local option nor legislative prohibition could 'relieve a community like ours of its large contingent of drunkards'.\textsuperscript{167} It is noteworthy that at this time a Victorian Report on Habitual Drunkards also called upon government to provide facilities for medical treatment. The authors of the report argued that 'Dipsomania requires careful and judicious treatment', and that so long as the sale of liquor was permitted 'it should be the duty of the Government to provide some means of treatment for those who unfortunately succumb to its temptations'.\textsuperscript{168}

\textsuperscript{165} Ibid., p.152. \textsuperscript{166} Ibid., p.169. \textsuperscript{167} Ibid., p.55 (Report). \textsuperscript{168} Report... Habitual Drunkards, op.cit., p.5.
No government, however, followed up these recommendations in the succeeding decade. During the early 1890s public outcry on behalf of 'Our Neglected Drunkards' was considerable. Part of this sympathy rested on a growing appreciation of alcoholism as a disease which was acknowledged in the press and by a number of magistrates. One particularly horrendous case came to public attention at the end of 1893. The Telegraph reported the 100th appearance before court for drunkenness of one citizen 'afflicted with the drink crave'. In reluctantly passing sentence on the man the presiding magistrate remarked that he

was the victim of a disease that made him more fit for an asylum than a gaol, where his treatment during one hundred incarcerations appeared to have made his case the more hopeless.

Government indifference did not prevent a small group of philanthropists from establishing, in July 1892, Echo Farm, a retreat for male alcoholics at Middle Harbour, Sydney. Patients came and stayed voluntarily, usually for an eight week period. They were required to pay for treatment, according to their means but a small number of 'poor outcast waifs' were admitted free of charge. The treatment offered by the institution was designed to encourage men to lead purposeful lives. A programme of physical strengthening was combined with out-door and educational recreations. After the first year of operation the managers of Echo Farm reported pleasing results for the few dozen men in their charge.

The same success did not attend the W.C.T.U. whose members raised funds for an inebriate's home for women which they opened in December

169 D.T., 30 July 1892; Truth 25 February 1894.
170 D.T., 30 July 1892. 171 Ibid., 7 December 1893.
172 Ibid., 24 April 1893; 30 September 1893.
1895. Notwithstanding the fact that every effort was made to make the place known, the home was forced to close not long after opening. The Union could not have intended the institution for the destitute, for inmates were required to pay a fee of £1.1s per week for treatment. The Union did not believe that this 'low rate' was responsible for its failure to attract patients. Rather, it maintained that 'so long as it is a matter of personal willingness no woman will be persuaded to go into an inebriate home'.

Governments, no doubt, would have preferred philanthropic organizations like Echo Farm and the W.C.T.U. to have been responsible for caring for alcoholics. Certainly government was reluctant to intervene, even after the turn of the century, when Dr. John Creed, M.L.C., made 'persistent and humane' efforts to encourage the See government to take an important initiative. Creed had long maintained that institutions to 'scientifically' treat habitual drinkers were necessary. The See government responded by setting aside a sum of money for the establishment of buildings, on Rabbit and Milson Islands in the Hawkesbury River, where inebriates could be treated medically. The project came to an early standstill and was eventually scrapped in 1906. Financial considerations and uncertainty about 'the class of persons to be admitted', prompted the reversal of policy.

In the period leading up to this decision there were strong recommendations made to the Carruther's government by Captain


Neitenstein, the Comptroller-General of Prisons, for effective preventative action to be taken against the continual flow of habitual drinkers in and out of the prison system. The plan agreed upon by Neitenstein and government ministers was to convert part of Darlinghurst Gaol into a treatment centre for chronic drinkers. Generally the programme was welcomed as a worthwhile social reform. 176 This praise, however, ignored certain draconian features of the scheme, for it was clear from the outset that

*The class to be dealt with ... will naturally be different from those people who never come before the Courts, and are treated in the ordinary private homes.* 177

The scheme was based on legislation passed in 1900 but never enforced whereby magistrates were empowered to detain habitual drunks picked up in the parks and alleys. Prior to the Darlinghurst scheme there had been no institution to which cases could be sent. The newly created scheme provided for the forcible incarceration, for a period of up to one year, of men and women convicted for drunkenness at least three times in the previous twelve months. No-one questioned the desirability of infringing liberties in this manner or whether the scheme would confirm, in some minds, that habitual drinking was indeed a crime and not a disease. Opinion was silent too on the fact that the scheme was intended to operate partly on fear. Captain Neitenstein explained that it was hoped that the long period of detention would induce some 'to pull themselves together for fear of being locked up for twelve months'. 178

176 Ibid., 13 August 1907; *Australian Star*, 13 August 1907.
177 D.T., 13 August 1907. 178 Ibid., 2 March 1907.
Yet, on the surface at least, prolonged detention did offer some of these unfortunates the chance of reclamation. They were housed in a separate wing of the gaol where some effort was made to create an atmosphere conducive to reform. Iron bars and bolts were reduced to a minimum and windows were enlarged to allow maximum sunlight.179 Medical treatment, including attention to the 'mental aspect of the case', was the main feature of the scheme.180

Early reports from prison authorities spoke enthusiastically about the results of the relatively small number of habituals sent for treatment.181 But by 1910 confidence had waned. 'It would be idle to suggest', W.M. Macfarlane, then Comptroller-General, wrote, that the scheme is doing more than providing for the medical requirement and detention of a number of chronic drunkards who, for the most part, are mentally and physically enfeebled.182

Habitual drunks, especially those living in destitution on the streets, remained a visible reminder of the social problems caused by liquor. Their continuing presence helped sustain the anti-drink cause. To the converted the alcohol-ridden down-and-outs were clear proof of the evils of liquor especially its relationship to poverty and prostitution. The example that such unfortunate people provided helped sustain the certainty in crusaders that liquor ruined traditional social and moral values. Yet, it must be acknowledged that the temperance movement did little for the alcoholic 'outcast' community. Had activists applied only a part of their organizing talents and their ability to generate

179 Ibid., 3 August 1907. 180 Ibid., 5 March 1907.
publicity in the cause of humane treatment for this group, reforms may well have been achieved. However, anti-drink crusaders were too firmly wedded to their belief in restrictive legislation. James W. Hunt, Chairman of the Victorian Alliance, summed up the attitude of the movement when he said that his remedy for dealing with habitual drunkards was 'to keep the drink away from them, by giving people power to close places where drink is sold'.

We have seen that drinking and public houses were entrenched forms of social enjoyment. Samuel Mitchell told the South Australian House of Assembly in 1908 that

> It would take much argument to persuade the general public that all drink was harmful. Was there a real substitute for the glass of beer, which would be enjoyed by the man mixing concrete in the street on a hot day in February, or the man in the blacksmith's shop?... he had not heard of it. The combined efforts of the temperance people had not produced a beverage to equal a glass of beer.

The popularity of drinking was also aptly described by J.B. Olliffe. In May 1884 he challenged the New South Wales Legislative Assembly to recognise that it had tried to make people sober by legislation but that it failed in this endeavour:

> The workman going early to his labour insists upon his early morning dram, and he has it in spite of you. The belated traveller, the theatre and concert goer, and the night bird slake their thirst before retiring... and you are powerless to prevent them. They laugh at your act[s] of Parliament which simply worries, annoys, and harrases people.

It is difficult to deny the veracity of Olliffe's statement and yet the era of the anti-drink movement's most outstanding successes lay after the turn of the century.

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183 Report... Habitual Drunkards, op.cit., p.25.
184 South Australia P.D., H of A, 1908, p.756.
CHAPTER SEVEN

THE TRIUMPH OF LIQUOR REFORM? THE 1905 ACT

By the turn of the century the debate on liquor reform had continued vigorously for three decades. Twenty years had passed, however, since the anti-drink movement had won substantial legislation. The years of unfulfilled hope had not discouraged crusaders from their commitment to full local option together with a range of additional restrictions upon the trade. It says a great deal for the movement's idealism that commitment could be maintained for so long without achieving legislative success. Commitment was vital to maintaining the organizational structure of the movement, centring on the Local Option League, which worked to direct public and political support for the movement's policies. In 1905, however, the efforts of campaigners were rewarded with the passage of the Licensing Amendment Bill sponsored by the Carruthers' Liberal government. This measure was the most comprehensive effort yet made to apply the policies of the anti-drink movement to the control of the drink trade. The Act introduced full local option by enabling parliamentary electors to vote to terminate all public house licenses without compensation to their owners. The legislation also implemented a range of harsh penalties on publicans and drinkers which were intended to curb drinking by pushing it further into the realm of anti-social, or deviant, behaviour.

The success of liquor reform in this period has to be considered in a broad social and political context taking account, in particular, of the 'social morality' movement and of the enfranchisement of women. These two factors created a climate favouring liquor reform.
After the turn of the century conservative groups including Protestant churchmen, the daily press and the professions expressed concern about the hedonistic trends in contemporary society. The pressure exerted by these groups for the appointment, in August 1903, of the Royal Commission into the Decline of the Birth Rate provides the clearest manifestation of the social attitudes prevailing in 'respectable society'. Neville Hicks' study of the work of this Commission has shown that professionals, businessmen and clergy, from whom the Commissioners themselves, and most of the witnesses, were drawn, regarded population growth as a fundamental prerequisite of national and economic strength. Nonetheless, the birth rate had been declining steadily since the 1890s. If allowed to continue the decline would undermine society by destroying 'the family as a training ground in individual morality and as a bastion for social morality'.

The majority of witnesses to the Royal Commission supported the Commissioners' belief that 'moral' issues lay behind the calamitous decline in the rate of population increase. These included a weakening in religious values which had bred a tolerance for the use of contraceptive methods; the lack of regard for the sanctity of marriage; and an ever increasing desire on the part of parents 'to have more social pleasure'.

1 N. Hicks, 'This Sin and Scandal'. Australia's Population Debate 1891-1911, Canberra, 1978, p.xvi.
2 Ibid., p.29.
Following the release of the Report of the Commission evangelical groups were inspired to focus on the ideal of 'social morality'. The work of the Evangelical Council, the Temperance and Morals Committee of the Methodist Church, the Public Morals Association and the Sydney Branch of the International Reform Bureau were directed towards preserving 'a purer public and social life', which meant, they said, 'the highest standards of family life' for, as Rev. Ronald M'Intyre reminded the 24th annual meeting of the Young Women's Christian Association in 1904, it was the family which provided 'national strength'.

The social climate after the turn of the century was thus characterised by a desire, primarily among conservative, middle class Protestant groups, to re-assert their faith in traditional Christian values. This had long been the concern of anti-drink activists and they were now favoured with a receptive climate of opinion. Rev. Dr. F.B. Boyce and his fellow crusaders emphasised that drink 'cruelly wrecked thousands of homes' by trapping increasing numbers of women and taking them away from the home - 'the first and chief concern of their Christian activity', and by causing poverty and divorce.

A programme for social reform based upon the ideals of 'social morality' gained wide appeal in the lead up to the 1904 state election. This reform programme positively endorsed the maintenance of family life and promoted prohibitive legislation to remove social pastimes which threatened this ideal. The women's suffrage movement was influential in popularising this programme.

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4 S.M.H., 29 February 1904. 5 D.T., 3 June 1907.
6 S.M.H., 24 August 1904.
7 D.T., 4 September 1905; S.M.H., 28 August 1904, 5 October 1905.
Ian Tyrrell has argued that the Australian WCTU 'was one of the first groups to organize middle class women in social reform and to introduce them to the world of politics.' However the organization was not the first to involve women in temperance work. Elizabeth Windshuttle has shown that women were deeply involved in the first wave of temperance which swept the eastern Australian colonies from the 1830s. She writes that

Women responded by subscribing to the movement or by joining the numerous societies in town and country. In 1841 the Temperance Advocate noted that 30 of the 50 members of the Windsor Temperance Society were women. Women fell into the role of fundraisers at their ubiquitous bazaars.

Much of the work undertaken to involve women in the WCTU was carried out by American representatives of the organization and especially Jessie Ackerman who arrived in Australia in the winter of 1889. The American travellers to the colonies brought with them American concepts of organizing women into the temperance crusade. The WCTU was established as a highly structured organization, pioneering the development of 'departments' of work and the appointment of 'superintendents' at every level of the organization to supervise each specialised department of work.

The motivation of women in joining the WCTU is an issue which several writers have commented upon. Although it is not my intention to examine this aspect of the WCTU in New South Wales, the observations of other writers offer useful insights. Anthea Hyslop, writing about Victorian WCTU members, comments that

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10 I. Tyrrell, op. cit., p. 288.
11 Ibid., p. 291.
Their obviously Christian inspiration and ardent piety suggest that the members of the WCTU ... regarded their temperance gospel as part and parcel of the tenets of Christianity.  

Elsewhere, Hyslop points out that, in taking up the cause of temperance, women were prompted by 'a noticeably feminist outlook.' She writes that because drunkenness 'often caused hardship for wives and families, the temperance movement held particular appeal for women and tended also to stimulate feminist thinking.' This point is also stressed by Patricia Grimshaw in respect of the New Zealand organization:

For the women, the drink question ... aroused a feminist response, for at its base lay a real element in the subjection of woman. It was so often a wife who suffered at the hands of a drunken husband, yet she had virtually no legal redress in a society with unequal divorce laws, where the duty of a woman to subject herself to her husband was still widely up-held.  

Women anti-drink crusaders contended that 'pure legislation cannot proceed from impure men'. Reform of the liquor laws involved women members of the WCTU in campaigning for the vote. In different Australian colonies, and in New Zealand, the WCTU campaigned for the vote as a means to other ends. As Phillida Bunkle has written:

By ensuring the election of moral men, the women's vote would be the means of the 'coming of Christ into the laws of the Nation.'

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14 Ibid.
16 Quoted in A. Hyslop, op. cit., p. 52.
Women began campaigning for the vote in New South Wales in the early 1890s and achieved their objective in 1902. For several years afterwards women's groups continued to inform women on issues and on the use of their vote. From the outset male political circles showed little active hostility, of the kind Brian Harrison has written of in British politics, in extending the vote to women. However, women's organizations had to counter a conservative apprehension that they would become 'unsexed' or 'abandon their homes' if granted the franchise. An equal, if not more important task, was to arouse the interest of the mass of women. The contemporary publicist and campaigner for women's franchise, Jessie Ackermann, explained that the bulk of women were not greatly interested in politics because:

heavy burdens resting upon them in this new land, as mothers, wives, home-makers, and house-keepers, keep them to the grind of burdensome routine work.

The support women's groups expressed for social legislation to protect family life was instrumental in countering conservative male apprehension. Indeed the range of women's organizations actively seeking the franchise presented women as a conservative force; one which would uphold the traditional view of their sex typified in the comment of Rev. Ronald M'Intyre who said that the community's 'social morality took its stand from the women'.

The W.C.T.U. was especially influential in securing votes for women in New South Wales. The Union was formed in 1882 following its

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18 B. Harrison, Separate Spheres The Opposition To Women's Suffrage In Britain, London, 1978.

19 D.T., 5 June 1900.


21 S.M.H., 28 August 1904.
foundation in America in the mid-1870s. The membership of the organization reflected the Protestant character of the anti-drink movement. The original committee was made up of prominent members of Sydney's Protestant churches.²² The first President of the Union, Mrs. J. Roseby, was the wife of John Roseby a Protestant politician and philanthropist, and had been associated with her husband in different areas of social work.²³ She was a member of the Congregational churches at Marrickville and Pitt Street and was keen to organize the 'motherhood of this State ... to bring about the removal of those evils associated with intemperance'.²⁴ Mrs. Roseby was succeeded by Euphemia Bowes in 1885. She was the wife of Rev. John Bowes, a Wesleyan minister, and was proudly remembered as never having gone far 'without the Word of God being ready'.²⁵ Mrs. J. Nolan took over as President in 1893. She too, was the wife of a well-known Methodist minister - Rev. J.A. Nolan. In her home life, Mrs. Nolan was the ideal wife and mother. She did not shrink from her public duty because the claims of a large family had to be met.²⁶ Dedication was one of the hallmarks of membership of the Union. Public houses were regularly visited where letters were delivered to publicans imploring them 'to renounce their destructive trade' and urging barmaids 'to seek an honest living elsewhere'.²⁷ The case of Mrs. Harrison Lee, one of the temperance lecturers attached to the W.C.T.U., well demonstrates the commitment the Union brought to the battle against

²³ 'Brief Character Sketches', Ibid., p.79.
²⁴ Ibid.
²⁵ Ibid., pp.80-81.
²⁶ Ibid., p.83.
²⁷ D.T., 31 March 1894.
the liquor traffic. She believed that the traffic lay 'at the root of other social evils' and with its removal will come peace, contentment and what she called 'national righteousness'. A journalist from the Telegraph discovered that Mrs. Harrison Lee had 'the stamp of earnestness in her face' and that she greeted a visitor warmly but with 'a fierce, relentless grip'. She had taken her message to platform meetings throughout Australia.

Harrison Lee was an enthusiastic campaigner for women's suffrage. She, like other members of the Union, was convinced that the misery arising from the evils of strong drink mainly affected women, children and home life, and would never be put down until the ballot was placed in the hands of women. The Union began active campaigning for the suffrage during the presidency of Euphemia Bowes. Abstract notions about the rights of women were not what moved Mrs. Bowes. Her interest in the franchise, she told members of the 1891 W.C.T.U. Convention, was to deal through it "a fatal blow to the monster Drink". It is difficult to assess the importance of the Union in gaining women the vote. Its own claims were naturally extreme, but there is no doubt that it provided important leadership in the campaign. In addition the chief propaganda centre in the campaign was its Women's Franchise Department, which had been established at the 1891 convention. W.C.T.U. speakers carried the argument for the vote to suburban and country temperance meetings where

28 Ibid., 8 November 1898. 29 Ibid.
32 Ibid., pp.66-67. 33 Ibid., p.53.
resolutions were passed and petitions signed. Jessie Ackermann, however, tried to place the Union's work in perspective when she wrote that while the Union was a force, 'it never created what might be termed a public demand for the franchise'.\(^{34}\) The W.C.T.U. was, afterall, only one of several organizations striving to arouse the interest of women in the franchise.

Women achieved the vote in 1902. Afterwards, the range of groups which had participated in the campaign continued educating women on political issues. These Groups were all enthusiastic supporters of anti-liquor and anti-gambling legislation. Rose Scott was described as the 'leading woman suffragist'.\(^{35}\) She claimed to have become a convert and an enthusiast to the cause of women's rights after reading John Stuart Mill's _Subjection of Women_.\(^ {36}\) She consecrated the Woman's Suffrage League (later re-named the Women's Political Education League) to the cause of 'social morality'. In 1903 Rose Scott informed the _Telegraph_ that women needed the vote in order to protect our boys and girls from becoming immoral, or drunkards, or gamblers by rendering it easier for them to do right and harder for them to do wrong.\(^ {37}\)

At the end of 1903 the League invited Dr. Richard Arthur, M.L.A. and Protestant temperance enthusiast to address a meeting. He urged the

\(^{34}\) J. Ackermann, op.cit., p.155.  
\(^{35}\) _D.T._, 16 September 1903.  
\(^{37}\) _D.T._, 16 September 1903.
women to make full local option 'their battlecry at the [state]
election'.

The Women's Liberal League, led by Molyneaux Parkes, functioned as
an organizational support group for the parliamentary Liberal party. The
League was committed to full local option as part of liquor reform and
called as well for other legislation 'calculated to minimise social
evils'. The League endorsed traditional assumptions about the role
of women. Its rival was the Women's Progressive Association, acclaimed
as the most 'radical' of the suffragist groups. The Association's
President was the energetic Belle Golding who encouraged members to press
for the removal of legal and occupational discrimination against women.
This objective, however, did not intrude upon the Association's keen
support for 'social morality'. Belle Golding told a journalist from the
Telegraph that local option without compensation was one of the
Association's chief planks, and added that:

'We should also like to prevent grocers and fruiterers from selling
wine and spirits. Many women who would not for worlds be seen in
hotels will sit drinking in a fruit shop. As for the regular wine
shop, - well they are altogether too bad to discuss'.

The ideal of women's political and moral power was shared by other
sections of the women's political movement. The organizing committee of
the Political Labour League of New South Wales urged female voters 'to be
ture to their womanhood, wifehood, and motherhood', and called upon them
to use their vote for the 'moral health of the family'. Lady
Rawson's address to the first National Council of Women in October 1904

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38 Australian Worker, 7 November 1903.
39 D.T., 26 May 1903. 40 Australian Worker, 10 October 1903.
41 D.T., 23 September 1903. 42 Ibid., 13 November 1906.
emphasised that 'home life... was the foundation of a nation's strength and happiness', adding that

There were many evils which women had to face, and they must strive to bring such pressure on the rulers ... which would ultimately help to make the world a purer and brighter one.\(^{43}\)

The daily press and temperance workers were among the advocates of 'social morality' who welcomed, particularly in the lead up to the 1904 state elections, the extension of the vote to women. Rev. Dr. Boyce expressed an opinion common to anti-drink crusaders when, full of optimism, he addressed a meeting of the New South Wales Alliance and said that now women had the vote 'the Alliance would win hands down'.\(^{44}\) The *Telegraph* had a similar view. It remarked that the women's vote would be felt in shaping 'social questions':

> It will be cast with emphasis on the temperance side of the scale... It will be favourable to such legislation as that purporting to repress gambling, and in general be consistently, perhaps aggressively, moral.\(^{45}\)

The editor of the *Sydney Mail* agreed. On the eve of the 1904 state elections he noted that the temperance question was receiving greater prominence 'now that the women have a vote'.\(^{46}\) Indeed the *Mail*, along with the other dailies, explained a dramatic fall in the value of brewery shares, which occurred at the beginning of 1904, 'consequent in part on a fever of temperance legislation influenced by women voters'.\(^{47}\)

Although there is no direct evidence for the accuracy of this explanation it was likely a reaction to the growing calls for liquor reform based

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\(^{43}\) S.M.H., 15 October 1904.

\(^{44}\) *Australian Star*, 19 February 1904.

\(^{45}\) D.T., 29 December 1906. \(^{46}\) *Sydney Mail*, 27 January 1904.

\(^{47}\) Ibid., 29 January 1904; *Australian Star*, 20 January 1904.
upon local option without compensation. Women were not only expected to embrace this campaign, but did in fact indicate enthusiastic support.

'Social morality' was the ideal that J.H. Carruthers and the Liberal party publicly represented. Indeed Carruthers won the July 1904 elections with 'an alliance of Liberalism, temperance and Protestantism'. There are also indications that Carruthers benefited from women exercising the vote for the first time. Once elected Carruthers framed legislation aimed at eradicating 'social evils' including drinking, gambling, opium use and prostitution.

Before he assumed the premiership Carruthers had enjoyed a long and distinguished parliamentary career. He was first elected to the Assembly in 1887 on a platform of free trade and social reform which included support for local option. Carruthers served in Henry Parkes' last ministry and later held ministerial office under Reid. While in opposition during the early years of the twentieth century he had helped form the Liberal party which was largely created from the free trade group in parliament. The new party supported by its organisational wing, the Liberal Reform Association, was strongly anti-socialist. It represented an alternative social and political ideology, around a disciplined party structure, to the much feared socialist doctrines of the Labor party. C.H. Northcott, one-time tutor in sociology with the Sydney Workers' Educational Association, pointed to the differences between the two major parties. The Liberal party, he wrote, differed

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49 Ibid., p.575.
50 P. Loveday et.al., The Emergence of the Australian Party System, Sydney, 1977, p.226.
from Labor 'in recognizing the rights of individuals and in enforcing their responsibilities and obligations'. The Liberals, Northcott continued, sought the 'cultivation of a high standard of individuality' and proposed the cure of social evils and the removal of social grievances by 'root remedies'. This philosophy naturally endeared the party to middle-class social reform campaigners. Indeed, it has been established that the temperance societies developed a close relationship with the Liberal party in the campaign to the state elections; a relationship which saw Carruthers and Boyce together addressing the converted on liquor reform. Following the elections Charles Wade, the new Attorney-General, confirmed that the government had been returned 'by a large body of people who held strong views on the temperance question'.

It appears likely that the women's vote favoured Carruthers. Although he had opposed the Women's Franchise Bill in 1902 he was alive to its implications. In the months leading up to the elections some newspapers acknowledged that the Liberal leader was 'out strongly after the woman voter'. Carruthers did in fact openly seek women voters and he promoted liquor reform as one means to attract their support. The 'Liberal Manifesto' declared that his party was in favour of social

54 Ibid., 1902, vol.6, pp.1253-54.
reforms 'to protect women and children'. The Manifesto took an uncompromising stand on the liquor trade: 'we believe that the number of hotels... do not contribute to the happiness of the homes of the people'. The Liberal party Manifesto made a concluding appeal to mothers and wives

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to\ \text{vote\ to\ save\ your\ homes\ and\ your\ children...\ so\ that\ by\ good}\ \text{laws\ and\ by\ good\ government\ there\ may\ be\ less\ temptation\ to\ evil,}\ \text{and\ better\ opportunities\ for\ good\ in\ the\ way\ of\ the\ growing\ generation.}^{56}
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At the beginning of its second year in office the Liberal government moved against what Carruthers described as 'the two great curses of the country' - drinking and gambling.\(^{57}\) This activity prompted John Norton's *Truth* to step up its campaign of ridicule against the 'wowsers' whose influence, the paper maintained, was responsible for turning 'harmless pleasures' into 'sins' requiring legislative ban.\(^{58}\) These were the years in which Norton's paper popularised the term 'wowser'. In a feature article *Truth* described such people as acting under hypocritical pretence of promoting morality and Christianity, they seek firstly to force upon normal minds their unhealthy, sombre, and narrow religious views, and worse still ways of living... with the consequent curtailment of the personal liberties, actions, amusements, and enjoyments of the people.\(^{59}\)

Norton's view of 'wowsers' has gained some currency in historical writing.\(^{60}\) However it does not take sufficiently seriously the appeal of 'social morality' as a reform programme. As we have noted the ideals for which this programme stood were widely supported by conservative-minded groups, especially Protestant organizations and the Liberal party.

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Women's groups were enthusiastic about it, as was one faction within the Labor party which will be examined later.

In *Truth* Norton stamped all 'wowsers' as being of the same kind. In a feature article - 'What's A 'Wowser'?', written in 1907, the group was characterised as people who denounced 'music, dancing, theatricals, wine, tobacco, sport, and Sunday recreations as 'sinful' in their nature'. Yet no such uniformity of opinion existed within the 'social morality' movement. Methodists especially did seek to ban those entertainments mentioned but they won little public or political support. The failure of Methodists to outlaw dancing illustrates well how the concerns of 'wowserism' and 'social morality' could diverge at certain points.

From the late nineteenth century dancing became evermore popular. An adventurous element was creeping in as well. 'Dolly the Danseuse', for example, was a popular visitor to Sydney in mid 1905 whose 'Hula Hula Kick' and 'Hootchie-Kootchie Carol' drew crowds. But the bulk of the public simply participated in traditional styles. Indeed Sydney people were claimed to be 'passionately' devoted to dancing. Outwardly, committed evangelicals based their campaign against this form of entertainment on the prejudicial effect they believed it had on the moral values of young men and women. But this concern was suffused with the fear, as one 'lady church worker' explained, that dancing detracted 'attention from religious thoughts'. Local Methodist church groups

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tried to close dance halls. At the beginning of 1904, for example, the Leichhardt Methodist Church sought the cancellation of three dance hall licenses in that suburb. Their request was rejected by the Council which drew upon police statements that they had received no complaints about the dancing saloons, which in fact 'appear to have been well conducted'.

Those within the 'social morality' movement who held extreme views on such matters as dancing and surf bathing best fit Norton's description of 'wowsers'. The attitudes of this minority group had not kept pace with changing social norms. While their views would have been readily received in the nineteenth century they were increasingly out of place in the more permissive climate of the early twentieth century. The mainstream of the 'social morality' movement focused attention not on these peripheral matters, but on the ills seen as most threatening to the maintenance of family life and hence of national strength. Government ministers, speaking on the gambling and liquor bills, provide a clear indication of the social concerns which prompted legislation on these, and other matters. Charles Wade, when introducing the gambling bill, remarked that

Over and over again the tale is told and reported in the newspapers, of ... men who have in their homes, wives and children, who deliberately ... left their homes and spent hours... in these gambling saloons, quite content to enjoy the life of idle expectation... to the entire neglect of their wives and children... To those at home... our hearts always go out because we realize that when the man goes wrong those who suffer are the wives and children at home.

Wade added that gambling encouraged 'idle, thriftless, reckless, and selfish' characteristics which stimulated a desire to avoid all work.

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66 Ibid., 19 January 1904.
'Such a class of man', he solemnly concluded, 'in course of time, would be the downfall of New South Wales'. Wade's view had been reported many times in the press. Writing in mid-1905, for example, the Star headlined an article 'The Abomination of Gambling', and pointed to the 'great outcry' being raised against the habit. Two-up schools and lotteries were said to be flourishing in Sydney and caused concern to several local councils which 'waxed warm' on the need to eradicate 'the evil'.

An anti-liquor law was seen by the Liberal ministry as fundamental to the preservation of family life. Wade addressed the New South Wales Alliance just before introducing the Liquor Bill into the Assembly where he explained that

when they were told day by day of deserted homes and broken fortunes, it became them to take some practical step to stem the flowing tide of alcohol.

James Hogue, the Minister for Public Instruction, told the same meeting that reform of the liquor traffic was the 'foundation of all social reform' and until this 'one great obstacle' was removed 'all other efforts on behalf of all other social reforms would be futile'.

Norton showed, in his remarks on the Liquor Bill in parliament, that he had a sympathetic understanding of this conception of social reform. He told colleagues of his dedication to 'the moral reform of the community' and described drink as 'a curse and a canker' to the 'social and moral condition of the people'. Norton's parliamentary comments

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68 Australian Star, 6 July 1905. 69 Ibid., 15 August 1905.
70 D.T., 2 May 1905. 71 Ibid.
suggest that his signed editorials lampooning the bill to 'Ban Poor Boozers' were merely an attempt to create popular journalism. 73 The Act was not, as Norton wrote, prompted by a 'selfish, savage and unChristlike spirit', 74 but, instead, it represented a high point in anti-drink as a populist movement and a pinnacle in the belief that legislation was an effective way of ending unacceptable aspects of social life.

The Licensing Amendment Bill received overwhelming support in the Legislative Assembly with 53 members voting in its favour. Only fourteen members opposed the second reading debate. Most were Labor members along with a few independent Liberals. The Act extended local option voting to parliamentary elections allowing them to decide three separate questions: whether the number of public house licences should be continued; whether the number of licenses should be reduced (the exact number to be determined afterwards by a special sitting of the Licensing Court); and whether all licenses in an electorate should be cancelled. A majority of three-fifths of the voters could carry local prohibition.

The Act allowed police and magistrates to deal with publicans and drinkers in a draconian way. Under previous law it had been the responsibility of police to prove wrong doing on the part of a publican, but police had long complained that this made convictions difficult to obtain. The new Act made hotel-keepers responsible for proving innocence of any charges laid. All drinkers found on licensed premises during unlawful hours were forced, under the threat of arrest, to satisfy police that they were not in search of liquor. Publicans were not permitted to sell to already intoxicated persons, to full blooded aboriginals, to

73 Truth, 25 June 1909. 74 Ibid.
prostitutes, or to persons under eighteen years of age. Minors (under 14) were henceforth barred from entry to licensed premises. The Act also stipulated that a publican could have only one bar on his premises unless he obtained special permission and paid additional heavy charges. The prime aim of these provisions was to eradicate the private bar trade. The Act also re-stated the existing restrictions on Sunday trading to all but bona fide lodgers and stipulated strict enforcement and heavy fines for breaches of these regulations. 75

The Liquor Amendment Act represented a determined assault on existing patterns of drinking. Long-serving anti-drink campaigners certainly believed that a great victory had been won. Rev. Dr. Boyce exalted that crusaders now had 'nearly all we need'. 76 He told the Telegraph that the measure would pave the way for prohibition on the sale of liquor 'in each electorate in the whole country'. 77 Publicans, understandably, did not welcome the measure. The increased restrictions and penalties it prescribed, together with the extended provisions for local option made it seem a new, 'grim reality'. 78

The Carruthers' government secured the passage of the bill relatively unhampered. The Protectionist party suffered heavy defeats at the elections in 1902 and 1904 which left the Labor party, growing steadily in number, the major opposition group at the time the bill was presented. The press sometimes made the claim that the 'Labor party and the liquor interest are one'. 79 But no such firm relationship existed, 75 Act no. 40, 1905. 76 D.T., 11 December 1905. 77 Ibid. 78 Ibid., 30 August 1905. 79 S.M.H., 20 July 1904.
especially in 1905. As the Telegraph once correctly observed:

The caucus contains members whose views on the liquor question ... runs the whole gamut from the aggressive teetotaller to the actual publican.  

The Labor party, because of its divided attitude on liquor reform, was unable to offer any constructive criticism of the measure. The vote on the second reading debate saw an open split in Labor ranks on the bill. Eight members of the party lined up with the government in support of the bill and eight members voted against it proceeding. This split reflected different attitudes within the party to the process of social reform. The faction supporting the bill included party leader James McGowen, Alfred Edden, John Estell, and Albert Gardiner, all of whom were committed Protestants and temperance activists. They were sympathetic to the ideas on reform held by the 'social morality' movement. McGowen, for example, once proclaimed that if 'everyman in the community were like me there would never have been a public house'. Publicans, he went on, have inflicted 'so much ruin to the community'.

The opposing faction within the party were secularists who, like W.A. Holman, emphasised the role of social amelioration in reducing the 'evils' of the liquor traffic. This group also regarded publicans as part of the labour movement - 'men (and women) who have sprung from the soil, true children of the working classes'. A.J. Kelly, an ex-wharf labourer and publican, was one of this group who saw liquor in class terms. He explained to the house that his role in opposing the bill was

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80 D.T., 9 October 1905.
82 Ibid., p.2585.
83 D.T., 21 September 1905.
not to 'advocate the cause of the brewer, but of the poor struggling publican'. Kelly also fiercely upheld the principle of the 'poor man's beer as a sacred thing, and robbery of it sacrilege'.

Labor policy, or rather the abandon of it, reflected these differing views. The platform rejected local option in favour of state option by which the party proposed to hold a single plebiscite on prohibition throughout New South Wales. But this resolution, as opponents of the party emphasised, would not be carried by the public and its effect would be to block other anti-drink measures. The proposal nonetheless, satisfied the pro- and anti-drink factions by giving the simultaneous impression that the party was concerned about the liquor traffic but that it had no great faith in drastic legislative remedies.

The matter of compensation to publicans whose premises might be closed in local option ballots, the first of which was to be held concurrently with the 1907 state elections, was also a source of disunity within the party. Labor had developed a compromise policy, that the question of compensation should be submitted to a referendum, but the debate on the Liquor Bill opened up divisions again. Kelly argued that the government's failure to provide a compensation clause in the bill meant 'nothing less than confiscation and robbery of what these people have put in business'. The McGowen group, however, sided with the government to reject the call for compensation. They did so firstly on what they saw as a matter of principle - that as publicans were the cause of so much misery in the community they were undeserving of compensation. Secondly, the argument was advanced, quite soundly, that

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the major beneficiaries of compensation would, in many cases be wealthy brewery companies. Under the system of 'tied houses', they, not the publican, owned the lease. The Telegraph summed up Labor's liquor policy as designed

to get over such electioneering difficulties as arise when prohibitionists and publicans stand as members of the same party pledged to vote on questions affecting the life of a Government as one man. 87

The effects of the 1905 Act are difficult to assess. Statistics are of little real help for the annual reports of the Licensing Inspector do not specify the nature of all convictions under the Act. Thus, it is not possible to construct accurate patterns on the types of drink offences which were commonly prosecuted throughout the state. Moreover, and to repeat a point made earlier, convictions for drunkenness, Sunday trading or other chargeable offences, taken in isolation, are of limited value. They do not reveal anything about the people who committed the offences and their attitude to drinking and the law.

Fortunately there is another way of explaining the significant changes that were brought to the character of the drink trade by the 1905 Act. The popular press - Truth, Australian Star, and Daily Telegraph - reported, and often extensively, the proceedings of the Licensing Court. This material provides valuable insights into the social impact of the Act. It is clear from this information that the measure not only failed to fulfil the expectations of its framers, but that it fostered the sub-cultural and criminal aspects of drinking which the 1882 Act had stimulated.

It should be stated at the outset that police and magistrates attempted to enforce vigorously the new Act and dealt severely with

87 D.T., 20 October 1905.
offenders. As Justice Cohen told the counsel acting for one drink offender "'Under the new Act prosecutions were of much more importance than before'". He went on to add: "'No doubt the law is very stringent, but properly so.'". 88

Police supervision of hotels, and the stiff penalties imposed upon publicans found selling during prohibited hours, reduced illegal drinking in public houses. 'In almost every bar', in the early days after the Act was implemented, were 'conspicuous requests' from publicans that customers finish drinking by 11 pm. It was noticeable, the Telegraph observed, 'at that hour doors were promptly closed, and a few minutes later lights were turned out'. 89 In 1908 Truth reported that legal trading hours were still being strictly enforced: 'The hotels are now under such close police surveillance, that a publican is compelled to be particularly cautious'. 90 Belinda Fraser, licensee of the Stanmore Hotel, Newtown, paid the penalty for not observing adequate caution. Senior-sergeant William Skinner and Constable Macintosh had been watching the establishment from behind a fence across the street on a Sunday. From this vantage point they noticed a man marching 'aimlessly up and down in front of the hotel'. The licensee appeared on the balcony of the hotel to signal his entry by a side passage. 91

Publicans were aware that, if brought before the Licensing authorities, they would be dealt with harshly and that excuses would not be accepted. The case of Sarah Austin, landlady of the Star Hotel in Miller's Point, illustrates the temper of the law. Sergeant Macourt

88 Australian Star, 1 March 1906.
89 D.T., 2 January 1906. 90 Truth, 1 March 1908.
explained at her hearing that he had passed Austin's establishment at 11.15 pm one night and noticed that the bar was lit. He peered through the window to observe 'a man talking to the landlady'. On entering, he searched the premises and found a man in Mrs. Austin's bed 'with his clothes on boots and all'. Sarah Austin explained to the court that the man was a lodger who had, that night, asked if she could provide him with accommodation. The magistrate dismissed her explanation and fined her £3.6s plus costs. Two similar cases highlight the crackdown on publicans through the imposition of 'heavy fines'. Robert Dehnert, licensee of the Emu Hotel, Regent Street, was fined £5 for serving during prohibited hours and John Hyde of the Federal City Hotel, Bathurst Street, received a £10 penalty for having 'wilfully' delayed police admission to his hotel. The Star noticed in 1908 that scrutiny of hotel operations, combined with reported convictions of drinkers and publicans, 'have in many cases produced financial hardship' in the trade.

The clamp-down on illegal trading hours brought some destructive influences in its wake. There is evidence that Sydney's alcoholic community suffered greatly by the closure of hotels on Sundays in particular. It is difficult to prove that this group of drinkers resorted to drinking methylated spirits as a direct consequence of the restrictions imposed upon the trade by the Act, but it was probably an important factor in the rise of this form of drinking. Alcoholics required access to a ready supply of cheap liquor. With hotels closed on

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92 *Australian Star*, 21 February 1906.
93 Ibid., 13 February 1906.
94 Ibid.
95 Ibid., 27 April, 1908.
Sundays and at 11 pm and attended by close supervision, their access to regular supplies of alcohol was thus restricted. Sly-grog outlets, described later, were an unlikely alternate source for high prices were charged.

The Star maintained in 1908 that methylated spirits drinking was 'undoubtedly on the increase'. The same opinion was held by Mr. F. Wright who discussed the matter in an address to the Dental Association of New South Wales in the same year. He spoke about the dangers of drinking the spirit, drawing attention to the fact that it produced paralysis of the optic nerve causing temporary, and sometimes permanent blindness. Truth was also concerned about the trend towards, and the dangers of, drinking methylated spirits. The paper reported

'One nobbyr of methylated spirit has the effect of six nobblers of the strongest whisky', said an old hardened soak, when questioned on the subject by our representative.

In fact methylated spirits was 65 degrees overproof, and not surprisingly, the appearance of a man 'in horrors' from drinking it was said to 'baffle description'.

Truth was outraged that this form of drinking represented a 'new epidemic of intoxication':

every Sunday, dirty derelict women are to be found in the parks, and elsewhere, who are supplied with methylated spirit, which they are either drinking themselves or disposing of to men or women as bad as themselves.

On one occasion the Star described a morning's batch of eight methylated spirit drinkers. Police had come upon one group, consisting of two men and a woman, in Hyde Park, while three men and two women were discovered

96 Ibid., 6 April 1908. 97 Ibid., 1 May 1908.
98 Truth, 1 March 1908. 99 Ibid. 100 Ibid; 12 April 1908.
wandering the streets of Darlinghurst 'hugging bottles'. That morning they looked 'abject specimens of misery when they were taken out of the cells to face the magistrates'. The press criticised the chemist shops for knowingly supplying a product 'not intended for human consumption'. The spirit could be purchased for 6d. a pint, without hindrance, from Sunday trading chemist shops who ostensibly kept stocks for people's spirit lamps.

Where the 1905 Act failed most obviously was in its inability to reduce hotel numbers and to weed out in particular the more disreputable establishments. Local option had been intended to achieve this end. But although the first ballot, held in 1907, did pave the way for a small reduction in hotel numbers, the returns indicate that the anti-drink vote failed to secure a majority in the inner-city areas where the least reputable establishments were also located.

The 1907 local option poll was the occasion of a sustained battle between the pro- and anti-drink forces. The temperance movement threw all its effort into a highly organized and energetic campaign for the 'no-licence' (local prohibition) option. Rev. Dr. Boyce and his fellow crusaders, inspired by their long-held conviction that a close relationship existed between the facilities for drinking and drunkenness, presented the campaign as 'one of great moment'. The New South Wales Alliance, still the largest of the temperance societies, was well supported by the 'hundreds of temperance societies and lodges scattered throughout the State [which] were more or less on the warpath'.

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101 Australian Star, 6 April 1908. 102 Ibid.; Truth, 12 April 1908.
103 Truth, 1 March 1908. 104 Australian Star, 2 May 1906.
105 D.T., 11 September 1906.
'no-licence' campaign meeting arranged by the Sydney branch of the Sons and Daughters of Temperance gives some insight into the fervour with which thousands of anti-drink campaigners approached their task. The November 1906 meeting featured several 'interesting' addresses and musical items including a recital of the 'No-License Vote Song' written by Alfred Allen, ex-M.L.A., and sung by Miss. Ruby Issacs. The 'great feature' of the evening was a grand display of pictures showing a strong contrast, sobriety v. drunkenness, giving the audience an opportunity of judging ... the effects of drink.

Active support in the campaign was also given by Protestant churches many of which set aside the last Sunday before the September 1907 poll as a 'special day of prayer' for the success of the 'no-license' vote.

Publicans regarded the local option campaign as a serious challenge. In the year leading up to the plebiscite steps were taken to develop a unified organization. The several liquor bodies, comprising the Brewer's Association, the Aerated Water and Cordial Manufacturer's Association, the Licensed Victualler's Association, the Sydney Bonded Store's Association, the Master Carrier's Association and the Sydney Bottle Manufacturer's Association, came together to form the Liquor Trades Defence Union. The Telegraph noted that this organization represented 'unprecedented unity for the impending battle'. The Union, which soon became a 'powerful political machine', actively tried to control the votes of the 31,000 employees in the state and

106 Australian Star, 8 November 1906.
107 D.T., 6 September 1907.
108 D.T., 6 March 1907. 109 Truth, 17 March 1907.
110 D.T., 27 February 1906.
to press upon the public its views on the importance of the trade. The Union stressed the number of employees who earned their living by the trade and the revenue government derived from it, amounting in 1904-5, to a staggering £4m.111

Following the poll both the anti-drink movement and the liquor trade expressed satisfaction with the result. Both highlighted the class bias of the voting, seen clearly in the results below. J.J. Power, President of the U.L.V.A. was gratified that the 'no-license' option had not been carried in any electorate, and was especially pleased with the outcome in the working class districts. He assessed the result accurately when he said that 'in every district where there is a congestion of hotels ... continuation has been carried'. Power explained in more detail that

in the electorate of the working man, who makes the public-house his club, and uses the hotel all the time, the vote, even where the hotels are in excess, as compared with other electorates, has been for continuation. In the aristocratic localities of Gordon, Petersham, and Ashfield, on the other hand, where the rich man has his club and his cellar, and the hotel is no convenience to him, he and his wife have voted reduction. This proves that the worker in the cities is in favour of the hotel, and that the men and women who support no-licensing are those that never use the hotel.112

Boyce expressed similar delight with the result. He pointed to a comfortable majority of electorates which had voted in favour of reduction and noted, with satisfaction, the support registered for the 'no-license' option. In Sydney this approached 70,000 votes but was found predominantly in the wealthier suburban electorates. Boyce was disappointed that 'the slum areas over-rode the votes in the better parts'.113

111 Ibid.
112 Ibid., 12 September 1907.
113 Ibid., 11 September 1907.
### TABLE NO. 7

**SELECTED RETURNS FOR THE 1907 LOCAL OPTION POLL**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Electorate</th>
<th>Votes Cast</th>
<th>Licenses in 1907</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No. on Roll</td>
<td>Continuance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>8978</td>
<td>2874</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balmain</td>
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<td>2517</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darling H</td>
<td>7190</td>
<td>2692</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glebe</td>
<td>9319</td>
<td>2968</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pyrmont</td>
<td>7073</td>
<td>2405</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surry Hills</td>
<td>9056</td>
<td>3141</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**METROPOLITAN**

<table>
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<th>Electorate</th>
<th>Votes Cast</th>
<th>Licenses in 1907</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No. on Roll</td>
<td>Continuance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashfield</td>
<td>9670</td>
<td>2247</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gordon</td>
<td>9729</td>
<td>2482</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lane Cove</td>
<td>10335</td>
<td>2186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Petersham</td>
<td>9011</td>
<td>1413</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St George</td>
<td>10564</td>
<td>2486</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SUBURBAN**


It would be wrong, however, to interpret the results of the local option poll by sweeping generalizations about the social composition of particular electorates. For the figures show that there was strong support for reduction in public house numbers together with a substantial vote for 'no-license' in working class districts. Although the results of local option ballots do not reveal the support of specific social groups, the evidence suggests that the anti-drink campaign found devotees among some working class women, for reasons already outlined, and also from 'respectable' working men.

In a recent review of the traditions of respectability in British labour history, Brian Harrison has noted that 'its implications for morality assumed increasing significance, and eventually came to describe
a life-style which could be observed at all social levels'. He describes the life-style of working class respectability as centring on self-improvement; excelling in one's craft and self-education. Respectability also involved thrift, a close-knit family life and the acquisition of property. British historians have acknowledged that 'the concept of respectability deeply influenced nineteenth-century working people' but they disagree about its social location and time-span. Australian historians have not shown a similar interest in this phenomenon and, in the absence of detailed research, it is difficult to be precise about its influence on working people. However, its existence cannot be overlooked.

A life-style of temperance was one of the central qualities distinguishing the respectable working man. Sobriety aided thrifty living and helped to achieve self-improvement. These desired qualities were expressed by some of the working men interviewed by the Drink Commission. W.J. Gray, employed by Mort's Dock and Engineering Company, was one of several mechanics at his factory who were total abstainers. He did not believe in 'Sabbath-trading in anyway whatever'. Nor did he believe in going to the theatre. 'As a Christian man', he said, 'I do not believe in them'. Gray added that men who shunned drinking and public houses 'generally attend the School of Arts, the debating clubs and drawing classes at night'. James Macnee, an engine fitter at Morts, was also a total abstainer. He said that there was 'a worthy

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115 Ibid.
chief of the good templars' at work but that he only had a small following. Macnee supported local option.117 Charles Smith, a benchman in a factory, told the Commission that he had voted in favour of local option.118

A temperance life-style did not necessarily involve working men in membership of a society. Edwin Cock, who worked in the despatch and parcel delivery office at Farmers and Company, revealed that he had been a total abstainer for 38 years but that he was not connected with any temperance organization:

they are too straight-laced for me. When I first came here [from England] I appeared on the Temperance platform, and they carried on to such an extent that I told them my friends at Home would put them down as raving madmen.119

Henry Charlesworth, a machine sawyer, was a total abstainer but declared 'I have not signed anything and do not believe in societies'. However, other working men were active members of temperance societies. Charles Paul, a railway station master, had been associated with the Total Abstinence Society for nineteen years; Richard Giles, a joiner, was a member of the Independent Order of Rechabites; and Daniel O'Connor, a counter assistant, was a member of the Sons of Temperance.

The working men who described themselves as non-drinkers to the Commission were mostly skilled workers. It may be, however, that this sample of men is too small to be representative but it is likely that respectability was most prized among this group. Skilled workers had more opportunities for self-improvement and advancement than their unskilled workmates. Some of the skilled men interviewed did reveal a pride in their craft which they believed was inconsistent with drinking.

Henry Charlesworth explained that a 'moderate drinker cannot do the same amount of work as a sober man'. Richard Giles said that he had lost no time through sickness and that he had found 'those who have taken drink have lost a great deal of time'.

Home ownership was also within reach of skilled workers. It appears that this acted as an incentive to abstinence. John Akrill, an engineer, informed the Drink Commission that:

working men are trying to get houses of their own, and they cannot drink and pay the extra money for houses ... There are a large number of working men where I live at Balmain who own houses, and these men will vote for local option in order to protect their property.

Phillip Pemperton, a sawyer, also believed that home ownership encouraged men to become temperate and to take an interest in their wives and families. Henry Charlesworth accounted for his abstinence partly because he was 'more domesticated'. Conversely, Henry Ford, who was a foreman among coal-lumpers, explained that nearly all his men were living under landlords and that he never heard them talk of establishing homes.

Temperance ideals were represented and fought for among trade union activists. The Executive Committee of the Victorian Bootmakers' Union, for example, discussed in 1896 the desirability of supplying liquor for a social function which female operatives had decided to organize. The female unionists intended bringing the food to their concert evening but asked the union if it would provide the liquor. Following a long discussion the union decided that 'no intoxicating Drink should come into

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the Hall'. In 1903 the Bootmakers were divided over the Carlton Brewery's presentation of a replica of the Eight Hours Monument to the Victoria Trades Hall Council. The union debated whether the Council should receive the presentation and a motion was finally carried to send a letter of protest to the Trades Hall Council for receiving the replica.

The 1907 local option poll, together with the greater stringency with which police and magistrates dealt with 'undesirable hotels' and applications for new licenses, did bring about some reduction in hotel numbers. Between 1905-08 the number of public houses in the Metropolitan Licensing District fell by 51 - from 745 to 694. But this small reduction in the number of outlets for liquor was offset by the rise of the sly-grog trade and by the patronage given to wine bars and by both legalized, and still illegal, clubs.

Wine bars grew in popularity during the 1890s and following the 1905 Licensing Act, which abolished most of the private bar trade, wine bars became centres for prostitution. It would appear from the small number of cases which came before the court involving these establishments that the police did not scrutinise their operations as closely as hotels. The government did, however, respond to public outcry that the condition of Sydney 'in regard to the social evil [prostitution] is appalling'.

In 1908 parliament enacted the Police Offences Bill which, under the

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126 Victorian Operative Bootmakers Union, General Meeting Minutes, 22 June 1903, ANU Archives of Business and Labour T5/1/5.
127 Ibid., 17 August 1903.
129 Australian Star, 18 June 1908.
threat of arrest and punishment, aimed at regulating the use of opium and the soliciting for prostitution. Formerly, as Attorney-General Wade explained to the Assembly, the law in relation to prostitutes applied only to loitering which had created difficulties for the police in securing convictions.\textsuperscript{130}

Many of the city's 300 odd wine bars were favoured haunts for prostitutes. 'At their doors' a journalist from the Star discovered in March 1908,

there are generally found during the evening hours, creatures of paint and ghastly smiles, who lisp affectionate invitation to male passers by, young and old.\textsuperscript{131}

The anti-soliciting measure introduced by the government only encouraged more surreptitious activity. Wine bars commonly had mysterious 'private rooms' at the rear where clients could be directed by licensees who, like many in the private bar trade, were women.\textsuperscript{132} Police and licensing inspectors admitted that they were powerless to control prostitution arranged in this way.\textsuperscript{133} If the observation of Truth was correct, legislation was not the appropriate means to eradicate prostitution. The paper wrote that there were many women who found themselves 'thrown by misfortune into a frightening whirlpool of poverty and suffering' in which it appeared to them that 'harlotry' was the only means of temporary escape.\textsuperscript{134}

Clubs continued to be a favoured drinking resort. Under the 1905 Act they were required to register their activity in order to sell liquor legitimately. Forty-odd sporting and social clubs immediately took this

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{130} N.S.W.P.D., 2nd Series, 1908, vol.31, p.1619. \\
\textsuperscript{131} Australian Star, 23 March 1908. \textsuperscript{132} Ibid., 22 April, 1908. \\
\textsuperscript{133} Ibid. \textsuperscript{134} Truth, 18 November 1908.
\end{flushleft}
opportunity in Sydney, but an indeterminate number shunned the law. A letter to the Telegraph by 'Watchman', outlining his experiences with illegal drinking clubs is illustrative. He wrote that on many occasions during week nights, after having firmly been told to leave an hotel,

*I, with others, wended my way to one or other of these places, where we have drunk and made merry to any hour we pleased... On one Sunday night in one of the so-called clubs to which I was introduced there were assembled about 20 members, and about 100 'friends' enjoying a smoke concert, and the bar all the time doing a roaring trade.\(^\text{135}\)

The greatest challenge to the Licensing Act, however, came from the sly-grog trade. It burgeoned after 1905 and changed much of the character of drinking by spawning a sub-cultural and criminal element, located particularly in the inner-city. The sly-grog trade was operated and patronized chiefly by working people who were prepared to pursue their habits regardless of the law.

Police authorities did not draw particular attention to the existence of sly-grogging in their annual reports to parliament. The only official recognition given before 1910 to this illegal trade was made in a brief statement by A.R. Sherwood, a police superintendent, who noted a great increase in the number of convictions between the year 1904-05 (31 cases) and 1906-07 (106 cases).\(^\text{136}\) It is impossible to determine accurately how widespread the trade was but the evidence suggests that the police only managed to convict a small number of operators.

The press openly acknowledged the burgeoning trade in sly-grog. At the beginning of 1908 the Star remarked that the 'pernicious practice is

\(^{135}\) D.T., 24 January 1906.

increasing'. The Telegraph commented that 'hundreds of thousands' of workers desired their Sunday liquor; it 'can be well understood why people go in for the sly-grog selling business'.

Police found it difficult to match the 'skilful tactics' of those who operated the trade, but the cases the authorities did manage to bring before the courts highlight the essential characteristics of the trade. Those operating it were usually entrepreneurial working people, like Henry Summers, a labourer, fined £50 for selling whisky and brandy without a license in Hay Street in January 1908. Typically, the trade was based around the patronage of a local neighbourhood, and it was especially active on Sundays. Sly-grog sellers could make useful additions to their incomes. In fact,

Often a decent kind of man or woman will be engaged in this business because they want money, and sly-grogging seems, like gambling, a bit risky, but a quick way of getting it.

A bottle of beer which retailed for 6d. in an hotel was commonly sold by the sly-grog seller for 2s and sometimes more. Single women were not infrequently illegal sellers. The case of one elderly woman reported by the Star at the beginning of 1907 is illustrative. The woman concerned kept a boarding house and the senior police sergeant who apprehended her described to the Court how he entered her house in Phillip Street where he found the defendant and a man seated in the front room drinking beer. There were two empty bottles on the table in front of the man. Witness asked him who had supplied him with the drink and he

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137 Australian Star, 4 January 1908.
138 D.T., 3 January 1908.
139 Australian Star, 14 April 1908.
140 Grit, 9 January 1908.
pointed to the defendant ... The woman did not deny it. He also stated that he had paid her 5s a bottle for it.

The woman received a £50 fine as did Margaret Barnes who sold whisky without a license. She explained at her hearing that she had been out of work for four months and living apart from her husband. A fine of £50 was commonly imposed for sly-grog sellers which illustrates both the seriousness with which the authorities viewed the trade and the risks sellers were prepared to take.

The Telegraph once remarked that 'a big percentage' of sly-grog sellers could not be run to earth, simply through the barricade of spies they erected, and which the police in many cases admitted their impotence to break through.

Indeed outlying scouts, also known as 'touts', were a known means of carrying the news of illegal venues to 'thirsty souls'. Some sly-grog venues were simply rough, unfurnished and otherwise disused houses or equally disguised places such as 'livery stables, to reach which ladders have to be climbed'.

Police were forced to develop a series of sophisticated techniques to flush out offenders. The employment of police spies, or 'pimps' as they were referred to, was widespread and bitterly resented. One solicitor, defending his client, explained that two 'pimps' came round and practically induced the offence... [he] said that it was notorious that these 'pimps' made money by trapping people and getting rewards.

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141 Australian Star, 7 January 1907. 142 Ibid., 22 May 1907.
143 D.T., 3 January 1908. 144 Australian Star, 12 May 1908.
145 D.T., 3 January 1908.
146 Australian Star, 26 February 1908.
Truth also commented upon the use of 'pimps', condemning them as 'hard up, scalawag fellows who are glad to do anything because of their state of poverty.  

Police also used marked coins to trap offenders. Specially marked 2s pieces were given to sellers by disguised policemen or 'pimps' which could be used as evidence against persons apprehended. These combined techniques were used to arrest William Roberts. Constable P.S. Leonard, who was in charge of this prosecution, sent Mark Darcy, a disguised 'probationary copper' to Roberts' house accompanied by a woman described by Truth as a 'charming lady pimp'. She paid Roberts with marked coins which were later found on him and used as evidence.

The period 1905-10 was marked by the enactment of several measures to regulate social behaviour. There is no evidence that the acts to repress habits of drinking, gambling, prostitution or opium use achieved their objective. In fact the information suggests that large numbers of people were prepared to tread a criminal path to satisfy their desire for these pleasures. While the anti-gambling legislation, for example, did close the betting shops which openly traded in the city, illegal activities, especially 'two-up' flourished.

As a result of restrictive legislation government, instead of being able to maintain some control over these indulgences, forced them underground where a network of illegal activity allowed public access and a large measure of protection from the police. Sly-grog sellers were part of this sub-cultural world as were opium smugglers, illegal bookmakers and prostitutes' agents.

147 Truth, 1 August 1909.

148 Ibid., 14 March 1909.

149 D.T., 6 December 1906; 27 February 1907.
This sub-cultural environment was composed predominantly, although not exclusively, of working people. Wealthier social classes desiring the pleasures of liquor, prostitutes or gambling had greater recourse to private arrangements. More importantly, however, their lives were not as rooted in these forms of social indulgence as were those of working people. Consequently more shared the ideals of those who framed the laws. This fact is revealed in Table 7 which shows up a strong correlation between a high vote for 'no-license' in the suburban electorates, which contained far fewer public houses, than the metropolitan district where the vote for 'no-license' was a much smaller percentage of the total vote.

Victoria enacted substantially different legislation to New South Wales in 1906. The outstanding provisions of the Act dealt with the reduction of licenses, the establishment of a special compensation fund and provided for the registration of clubs. Instead of entrusting the reduction of public house numbers to the local option vote, the Victorian legislation handed this task to a Licensing Reduction Board. The 1906 Act provided that, after a 10 year reduction period, triennial local option polls should be held to determine whether further reductions should be effected. During 1907-16 the Licenses Reduction Board closed 154 hotels for a compensation of £540,851. The compensation fund created by the Act was built up by annual contributions from the owner and licensee. The Victorian legislation had greater practical effect but it did not offer the chance, so welcomed by the anti-drink movement in New South Wales, of imposing prohibition in local areas.

The promoters of the anti-liquor legislation in New South Wales had been so blinded by their reforming zeal that they failed to appreciate how deeply entrenched patterns of drinking were, especially among working
people, and how difficult they would be to eradicate simply by draconian legislation. The Star commented in 1908 that

The people of the city showed by an overwhelming majority that they wanted reasonable facilities for obtaining drink than now existed... if they could not get drink in the ordinary way, they would make desperate efforts to get it.150

The Star concluded with a reminder to social reformers: 'If laws do not command men's respect, they would not observe them'. It was a message that anti-drink crusaders paid no heed to, for circumstances generated by war were to give them a final opportunity to promote even more restrictive legislation.

150 Australian Star, 5 March 1908.
CHAPTER EIGHT

SIX O'CLOCK CLOSING - THE FINAL VICTORY

During the first half of 1916, in the midst of war, a campaign was waged to decide by referendum the closing time of public houses. On 10 June the people of New South Wales voted overwhelmingly in favour of shutting hotels at six pm. This was the hour advocated by the anti-drink movement.

TABLE 8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Referendum Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Six o'clock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seven o'clock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eight o'clock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nine o'clock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ten o'clock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eleven O'clock</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Absolute majority for six o'clock, 129,533

Source: Australian Worker, 15 June 1916.

The victory represented a climax to the popular appeal of the anti-drink movement and its vision of social reform. Never before had the movement combined such vigour and adept organization to achieve reform.

New South Wales was one of several Australian states to enact, by referendum, six o'clock closing during World War One. Walter Phillips, in his article 'Six O'Clock Swill...', provides a good survey of the campaigns in the principal states of New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia. But since the focus here is exclusively on New South Wales in what follows my emphases, when seeking to explain the referendum and its success, are different from - though not in disagreement with - Phillips's.

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In the decade after the enactment of the 1905 Liquor Bill the New South Wales Alliance, which had taken over from the Local Option League (now that that objective had been won) as the central organizing body of the temperance movement, concentrated on winning support for the 'no-license' campaign at local option polls. These were held simultaneously with state elections in 1907, 1910, and 1913. Rev. Dr. F.B. Boyce made no secret of the fact that the Alliance hoped to 'close every public house in New South Wales' by persuading voters to outlaw hotel licenses in each electorate.\(^2\) The Alliance had steadily moved to a more open declaration of prohibition as its ultimate goal. The official anti-drink newspaper, *Grit*, edited by R.B.S. Hammond, prominently displayed prohibitionist ideals.\(^3\)

The results of the local option polls were very different from the expectations harbouried by the Alliance. In the three polls held before 1916, not one electorate carried 'no-license' and support for the option of reducing licenses steadily declined.

**TABLE 9**
Results of Local Option Polls

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No. Electorates Voting Reduction</th>
<th>No. Hotel Licenses Terminated</th>
<th>No. Wine Licenses Terminated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1907</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>293</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1913</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


\(^2\) *Australian Star*, 1 May 1906.

\(^3\) *Grit*, 26 November 1914.
In 1923 the Minister for Justice and enthusiastic anti-drink supporter, T.J. Ley, explained to the Assembly that,

under local option the only hope for prohibitionists was in the direction of reduction, and all that could be done was practically achieved after the 1913 vote.4

Indeed in the wake of the 1910 poll elements within the anti-drink movement had begun to question the wisdom of pursuing the 'no-license' campaign. Mr. Cuncliffe-Jones, for example, told a session of the Congregational Union that attention should be transferred to the aim of closing public houses earlier.5 *Grit* also aired early closing as a 'remedy' for the 'evils' of the drink traffic.6 Support for six o'clock closing was galvanised when delegates to the Australasian Temperance Conference met in Adelaide in March 1914. During conference sessions delegates discussed the ineffectiveness of local option as a means of removing public houses.7 Anti-drink campaigners in New South Wales increasingly realised that prohibition could not be secured under the 3/5 majority required to carry 'no-license' in each electorate.

Moreover, the results of the polls illustrated, as Boyce observed in 1910, that crusaders "'had captured the outposts, but not the citadels'".8 Boyce was referring to a pattern of voting, first apparent in 1907 and confirmed in the two subsequent polls, by which support for 'reduction' and 'no-license' was strongest in the wealthier suburban districts.

Delegates to the 1914 Temperance Conference voted to adopt six pm closing as official policy. The New South Wales Alliance strengthened

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5 D.T., 19 October 1910. 6 *Grit*, 18 May 1911.
this commitment at their annual convention held in May 1914. Later, the State Council of the Alliance petitioned the Attorney-General, R.D. Hall, on the matter. At the convention J.W. Hetherington's motion was carried unanimously:

That this Conference views with alarm the increase in drunkenness among young men, and considers that the long hours the bars are open tend largely to produce this result. It urges Parliament to apply the same principle of earlier closing to the liquor traffic as already applied to other businesses, and to provide for a referendum to determine the hours of selling.9

Hetherington's motion alluded to the chief reason which underpinned the Alliance's call for six o'clock closing. To promoters of the measure, it was not to be a temporary war-time regulation, but a permanent social reform. Rev. P.J. Stephen, addressing a crowded Town Hall meeting organized by the Alliance, told the gathering that the most 'dangerous' hours for drinking in hotels were between 6 pm and 11 pm. 'If they could eliminate these hours' he declared, 'they would eliminate some of the worst abuses in the city'.10 Archbishop Wright expanded upon the social benefits that would accrue from earlier closing. He drew upon the ideals of the 'social morality' movement to explain to a sympathetic audience, just before polling day, that if six o'clock closing was carried it would encourage 'the restoration of family life'. The Archbishop believed that fathers, compulsorily driven from public houses at night, would re-gain 'his post as head of the home from which he had daily abdicated'.11 William Creagh, a member of the Alliance Executive Committee, wrote in Grit that:

The home is man's natural social centre, and the bar has usurped its place, and nothing will give an impetus to home life as closing the bars.12

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9 Grit, 28 May 1914. 10 D.T., 2 March 1916.
11 Ibid., 8 June 1916. 12 Grit, 4 November 1915.
The vision of social reform was upper-most in Boyce's mind. His 'A Dozen Reasons' for six o'clock closing stressed the social injury inflicted by drink. Boyce sketched a familiar picture but his views were now tailored to suit the six o'clock campaign. It was the drinking after six pm, he argued which led to most wife-beating; encouraged 'loose and dissolute women' to hover around hotels bringing about their 'ruin'; and caused most of the poverty which infested the slum areas of Sydney.\(^{13}\) The Alliance expressed continual concern about the 'mass of social wreckage' that lay behind the convictions for drunkenness.\(^{14}\)

In his thesis on the impact of World War One in New South Wales, Dan Coward has shown that the fear of venereal disease was linked to the success of the six o'clock closing campaign. Public anxiety about the spread of the disease began with reports that soldiers returning from Egypt had contracted it and that some had been discharged from the army without being cured.\(^{15}\)

By the end of 1915 a growing number of people believed that alcohol and late night hotel trading helped spread venereal disease. Concerned people argued that 'immoral' behaviour occurred most frequently in the evening hours, that drunkenness induced excessive immorality, and that immorality greatly increased the risk of infection.\(^{16}\)

Anti-drink campaigners urged the public to vote for six o'clock closing on the basis that it would help eradicate the 'red plague'.\(^ {17}\) However,

\(^{13}\) Grit, 13 April 1916.


\(^{16}\) Ibid., p. 172.

\(^{17}\) Ibid., p.192.
it was only one of a range of issues behind the success of the six o'clock vote. Boyce, for example, placed the eradication of venereal disease as the fourth priority in his 'A Dozen Reasons' for voting for six o'clock closing.\(^{18}\)

Apart from the fear of venereal disease, there was little that was new in the social attitudes which moved anti-drink activists to advocate six o'clock closing. They had by this time a long tradition of seeing their task as that of social reform which would have particular benefit to the lives of working people. Shifting the attention away from the campaign for 'no-license' to early closing was a means to continue the struggle for social reform. Campaigners knew that the climate of war would aid their efforts. 'The war now raging', the Alliance's Annual Report for 1914-1915 began,

> has brought into remarkable prominence the liquor problem... The struggle for National efficiency has compelled the attention of Statesmen and Military leaders, who recognize alcohol as the most potent cause of inefficiency.\(^{19}\)

Boyce reminded supporters in mid-1915 that 'War was a great reformer.'\(^{20}\)

The Alliance was keenly aware that if six o'clock closing was adopted it would threaten the survival of much of the drink trade.\(^ {21}\) Early closing would eliminate a favoured custom. 'At no time', wrote one six o'clock campaigner for the *Herald*.

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\(^{18}\) *Grit*, 13 April 1916.


\(^{20}\) *Grit*, 13 May 1915.

is the temptation more alluring to enter the hotels than in the evening. After the day's manual or mental work is over the feeling 'I am free' suggests itself to many.  

Publicans confirmed the importance of the 'night trade' to their survival. One explained to the *Telegraph* that many hotels in Sydney, both in the city and suburbs, depended heavily on the trading that took place after six o'clock. The publican described the day trade as normally being quiet whereas 'the night business is rush all the way through'. These facts were appreciated by Alliance members. Rev. J. Bathgate, for example, told a six o'clock meeting in the Leichhardt Mission Hall that the 'six o'clock thrust would be swift and certain, with a promise of a death-blow later'.

W.A. Holman, leader of the Labor government which had been in office since June 1913, did not share as mentioned in the previous chapter, the anti-drink movement's conception of social reform. Throughout the referendum campaign Holman maintained that it was 'a superficial issue' and that the permanent handling of the drink traffic called for 'much more profound consideration'. Holman did not elaborate on what that consideration might entail, but, significantly, he was contemptuous of the connection which had been established between temperance forces and the Liberal party. Why then did Holman allow a referendum to be held?

A serious riot among soldiers at the Liverpool military training camp was the catalyst which persuaded the Labor government to hold a referendum on closing hours. The riot, which took place on 14 February, involved soldiers in a day-time spree of nearby hotels which caused considerable damage to property. The incident fuelled public outrage and

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22 *S.M.H.*, 6 May 1916.  
24 Ibid., 5 June 1916.  
25 Ibid., 12 June 1916.  
26 *S.M.H.*, 3 November 1915.
the call grew louder that some curtailment in the availability of liquor was necessary. The Liverpool riot came in the wake of similar disturbances in Melbourne and formed part of a concern, expressed by military authorities and the daily press that liquor was not only hindering recruiting but also sapping the health and discipline of the Australian forces. Following the Liverpool riot the Minister for Defence, Senator Pearce, used federal powers to temporarily close public houses at six pm. At the end of February Holman announced the government's intention to hold a referendum.

Holman's defensive reaction needs to be seen in a wider context than the Liverpool riot alone. In the twelve months prior to the disturbance among soldiers, anti-drink campaigners had made a sustained and successful effort to arouse public demand for a referendum on six o'clock closing. Never before had representatives of such a wide spectrum of public opinion clamoured on behalf of liquor reform. It was the unequivocal demonstration of community feeling which forms the important background to Holman's reluctant decision to proceed with a referendum. The New South Wales Alliance was in the fore-front of organising protest activity. Enthusiastic support also came from groups representing women, workers, businessmen and the church.

The Alliance formally opened its campaign with a 'monster' meeting in the Sydney Town Hall on 3 May 1915. Such gatherings, along with deputations and petitions to government had long been standard techniques of anti-drink agitation. Their effectiveness at this time was heightened by concerted effort at organization. The anti-drink campaign's official organ, Crit, illustrates the determination of members to organize a campaign of mass support. 'Organize Meetings everywhere', ran a heading in June 1915. The article offered useful advice to sympathisers on how to arrange the most effective meetings.
interview the local ministers or prominent laymen. Secure the formation of a committee. Arrange a public meeting in the public hall. Ask the mayor to preside. Invite the member for the district to be present. Get other well-known public men of various political opinions to speak.

It was envisaged that the meetings would conclude with a motion supporting six o'clock closing which would be forwarded to the Premier.

Suburbs and towns throughout the state responded in spirited fashion and along the lines suggested. The Town Hall, Canterbury, for example, was crowded on the evening of 28 May to hear local identity Walter Bentley deliver an address in favour of six o'clock closing. The meeting was chaired by Alderman G.F. Hocking and the large supporting platform included ministers of all denominations and many 'influential 'local citizens.' Alderman J.A. Dibble, President of the Newtown branch of the Alliance, presided at an 'overcrowded' meeting on the night of 29 May to hear Mrs. Harrison Lee speak in favour of early closing 'in the cause of humanity'. She was followed by a local doctor whose stirring words warned of the physical dangers of alcohol. The Mayor of Ashfield consented to convene a six o'clock closing meeting to which the Member for the district, William Robson, agreed to be present to move the resolution. In one week in November 1915 33 meetings in support of six o'clock closing were held in the city and suburbs. The Alliance was similarly active in promoting meetings in many country areas. In June 1915, for example, James Marion, the General Secretary of the Alliance, conducted a 'highly successful' series of meetings on the North Coast of New South Wales. He suggested that an organizing secretary be

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27 Grit, 3 June 1915. 28 D.T., 29 May 1916.
29 Ibid., 30 May 1916. 30 Grit, 10 June 1915.
31 Ibid, 4 November 1915. 32 Ibid.; and 10 June 1915.
appointed for the district. Arthur Toombes took on the task enthusiastically and, with the aid of a motor car, travelled throughout the area.  

The Alliance added impetus to all gatherings by arranging their participation in a state-wide petition to parliament. Forms for the petition were dispatched to local committees and to all clergy in the state in mid-June 1915. The Alliance aimed to collect the largest number of signatures ever sent to the New South Wales parliament. Their objective was realized. At the end of August 1915 a procession, one-third of a mile long, accompanied the petition, containing 145,117 signatures, on its way from the Town Hall to Parliament House. Banners inscribed with 'Close the liquor bars at 6 pm' and 'alcohol is against the Empire' were carried by women and hung from motor cars.

Groups which actively participated in the Alliance's campaign included Protestant churches, women's groups, but particularly the specially formed National Women's Movement for closing bars at 6 pm; an anti-drink element within the labour movement, the views of which were shared by the Australian Worker; and the National Citizen's Association, composed primarily of businessmen. The role of these groups will be discussed in more detail in relation to the second phase of the six o'clock campaign which centered on winning support for the referendum vote.

In the first phase of the campaign the Alliance set out to mobilize public opinion to convince the Labor government to hold a referendum. The Alliance believed that a show of force would be necessary. The

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34 Grit, 26 August 1915.
Holman cabinet had a reputation, among Alliance members, as 'whole-hogged liquor supporters'. Indeed Labor Attorney-General, D.R. Hall, had told an Alliance deputation that

the first step towards temperance reform must rest largely upon the ability of those who believe in this reform, to make their voice heard.

The Alliance had grounds for distrusting Labor. Even though the relationship between the party and the liquor trade is difficult to determine precisely there are reasons for believing the ties were now stronger than they had been a decade earlier. Understandably publicans feared additional Liberal sponsored legislation aimed at further curtailment of their operations and it appears that this concern drove the trade to increase its support for the Labor party. Gordon Childe notes that the liquor trade was one of several groups who were gradually attracted to Labor's side. H.V. Evatt, in his biography of Holman, also acknowledges the influence of the liquor trade in the party. Referring to Holman's reluctant decision to provide for a referendum Evatt comments that 'Holman decided that he could not hastily abandon an interest which had given valuable support to the Labour Party'.

Within the Labour movement, however, allegiance to the principles of temperance also remained strong. In fact Holman was subjected to considerable pressure from an organized element within the labour movement demanding a referendum on closing hours. Delegates to the Labor

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36 Quoted in N.S.W. Alliance, op.cit., p.10.
Conference, held in April 1915, passed a resolution calling on the government to close hotels at six pm. J.P. Mackenzie, speaking in support of the motion, explained the anti-drink faction within the Labor party

wanted to improve the social condition of the people both during the day when at work and also at night. Drink was the greatest enemy of the working man, who wasted their (sic) time, strength, and money in hotels. 39

At the beginning of February 1916 a pressure group was formed within the movement to help give effect to the Labor platform endorsing six o'clock closing. The Workers' Anti-Liquor league operated within the ranks of trade unionists and Labor League members. 40 Immediately after its formation the Sun reported that 'membership is rapidly growing and they have been offered widespread support'. 41 Some of the League's officials co-operated with the Alliance in arranging and speaking at public meetings. 42

Despite mounting pressure Holman had shown no sign of giving way to calls for a referendum before his sudden announcement at the end of February. The Parramatta by-election, held a few days before the Liverpool riot, served as a convincing demonstration of the strength of public feeling favouring early closing which the anti-drink forces had been actively mobilizing. The issue of early closing featured prominently in the election. This is not surprising, given the connections of the Liberal candidate. Albert Bruntnell was a Methodist, an active member of Protestant organizations and had served as organizing secretary of the New South Wales Alliance between 1904-09. 43

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39 Australian Worker, 22 April 1915. 40 Grit, 17 February 1916.
41 Sun, 4 February 1916. 42 D.T., 2 March 1916.
opponent, Frank Walford, came under fire from anti-drink campaigners for failing to commit himself to an anti-drink platform. Holman later acknowledged the effect of Labor's defeat. Speaking to the Assembly on the Liquor Referendum Bill in March 1916 he remarked:

until a few months ago I held the view that there was no demand for a reduction in the hours [of hotels]. I am now satisfied that there is such a demand ... and that demand has been expressed in a constitutional way through the Parramatta election.

The point to be stressed here, however, is the role played by the anti-drink forces, and particularly the Alliance, in mobilizing that opinion in favour of early closing of which both the Parramatta by-election and the anger generated by the Liverpool riot were the clearest expressions.

The results of the six o'clock referendum were a triumph for the anti-liquor movement. Seventy-nine out of the 90 electorates in the state declared for six o'clock. What were the reasons for this striking success? Was it simply the war-time atmosphere of self-sacrifice and the need for efficiency, or are there more penetrating questions to be asked about the nature of the campaign run by the anti-drink movement, headed by the Alliance, and the appeal of its social reform ideas?

There is no doubt that the climate of war favoured the six o'clock cause. This was especially the case as campaigners could exploit patriotism and sacrifice to bolster their call for early closing of hotels. Albert Bruntnell, speaking on six o'clock closing at St. Stephen's Church Sydney, explained that the public were asking men to give up their all and lay down their lives, and it was not too much to ask the democracy of this country to join in the sacrifice, and give up a few hours' fuddling at night.

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44 Sun, 28 January 1916.
46 D.T., 13 May 1916.
Rev. A. Rivett of the Devonshire Street Mission, claimed that anti-drink activists had no desire to "exploit the military situation in the interests of liquor reform". However, this is exactly what the anti-drink movement did and the tactic was effective. Most six o'clock rhetoric blended the need for war-time sacrifice with the ideals of social reform. A meeting at the Britannia Theatre, for example, passed a resolution declaring that "six o'clock closing is in the best interests of the Empire, State and home". The twin appeal to 'patriotism and moral enthusiasm' as Dr. Long, Bishop of Bathurst, expressed it, was calculated to win support from a wide audience.

Elements in the anti-drink movement seized upon the notion of national efficiency to bolster their call for public houses to be closed at six pm. As Michael Roe has written, the much-vaunted goal of efficiency formed part of the 'new consciousness' of the early 20th century. It was a product of Progressive-Fabian thought, the advocates of which maintained that when the physical and mental efforts of mankind were maximised, mankind 'could break through to a new intensity of achievement and power'. The heart of the doctrine was related to the 'notion of improved public health blended with aspirations towards racial perfection and physical excellence.'

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47 Ibid., 5 June 1916.
48 Ibid.
49 Grit, 15 June 1916.
51 Ibid., p. 183.
52 Ibid., p. 184.
The war years encourage the wider adoption of efficiency which was not lost on anti-drink campaigners. Grit reported in October 1915:

The final day of the 'Efficiency of Economy' campaign in Martin Place was devoted to the Drink Question. Dr. Arthur presided, and pointed out that in Australia 17,000 tons of sugar were destroyed in making beer.53

A Mrs Vickery addressed the National Council of Women the theme of her talk being that expenditure on drink constituted "Waste of Efficiency".54 This activity prompted Grit to comment in an editorial that,

Just now the word 'efficiency' is the catch word of the hour, it looms very big in all temperance talks, it is said to be the test of nations: those who have it are great; those who haven't it are not so great.55

This appeal to efficiency does not mark anti-drink campaigners as progressives in the context which Roe discussed the advocates of this view. Progressives had a much wider and more dynamic world view than did anti-drink campaigners who, far from being associated with a 'new consciousness', were increasingly the representatives of a fading world view.

Although both groups saw their efforts being directed at change and reform the ideological contexts of both differed sharply. Progressivism rested on 'professional-bureaucratic expertise ready to transform the health and welfare of the world'.56 This involved the establishment of new state structures such as the Commonwealth Department of Health. The anti-drink campaign, on the other hand, represented a popular cause, and one which saw the ills of society in narrow, conservative terms.

53 Grit, 21 October 1915.
54 Ibid., 1 July 1915.
55 Ibid., 27 May 1915.
56 M. Roe. op. cit., p. 184.
A diverse range of community groups rallied behind the six o'clock closing campaign. To most the measure represented an important social reform. The Protestant churches took an active part in the referendum campaign. Indeed it marked the return of many clergy to active participation in a liquor reform movement which had waned during the local option polls. The Alliance was aware that church support was essential to a successful result. The activities and attitudes of the church at the local level are well-illustrated by the example of North Sydney. Regular meetings in support of six o'clock closing were held throughout the locality. On the night of 28 May two large after-church meetings were held; one in the Protestant Hall, Crow's Nest, where Rev. S.J. Hoban delivered a 'forcible address' and the other was held in the Central Hall where Rev. Horace Crotty spoke about 'the duty of the churches to deal with hygienic and social reform'.

Women's groups were energetically involved in the fight to close hotels at six pm. The Alliance recognized that female support was crucial to the successful outcome of the vote. James Marion told the Adelaide Temperance Conference the Alliance had been 'greatly disappointed' with the women's vote in the local option polls. Throughout the referendum campaign women voters were encouraged by the Alliance, the daily press and women's groups to vote for six pm

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57 Adelaide Advertiser, 26 March 1914.

58 D.T., 29 May 1916.

59 Adelaide Advertiser, 26 March 1914.
closing in the interests of family life.

In February 1916 the Women's National Movement for six o'clock closing was formed. Branches were established in most suburbs in Sydney and, as the Telegraph noted, the movement contested the issue vigorously. The appeal to women was based primarily on the argument that early closing would preserve family life:

'Give the wives and children of heavy drinkers a chance of having Dad home sober and kind to spend happy evenings', is urged by eloquent members of the movement, and arguments of this description, they anticipate, will influence many a woman's vote on the day of polling.

The editor of the women's page of the Australian Worker was also keen to convince women that they had a responsibility to vote for six o'clock closing. The editor believed that money compulsorily saved from liquor would mean the easier payment of family bills and better care for children. The Alliance also impressed upon women their responsibility to help eradicate the evils of drink for it was the accepted duty of mothers to form 'right habits' in children.

Women who found themselves victims of their husband's drinking habits had a deeply felt commitment to curtail the liquor traffic. Throughout the history of the anti-drink movement, their experiences were not infrequently set out in letters to newspapers or reported in divorce case proceedings. G.W.F. Addison, a

60 D.T., 30 May 1916.  
61 D.T., 30 May 1916.  
62 Australian Worker, 30 March 1916.  
63 Grit, 27 November 1913.
stipendiary magistrate had highlighted the special problems encountered by women when asked by the Drink Commission whether complaints has been made to him 'by wives as to the drunken habits of husbands'. Addison replied that he and his fellow magistrates had 'such cases every day'. One woman wrote, in support of six o'clock closing, that the fellowship and 'shouting' which accompanied drinking in hotels was a frequent cause for her husband never coming home. Another stood up at the end of a public meeting, and after apologising for not being a capable speaker, moved the audience with the story of her husband who poisoned himself while under the influence of liquor leaving her with four small children. Sadly, it is impossible to determine the number of women who were ill-treated by their drunken husbands but it is likely to have been a common enough feature particularly in working class neighbourhoods.

We do not have the evidence to show the effect of the women's vote. However, a firm impression emerged from the poll that women had been instrumental in carrying the six o'clock option vote. The Sun noted that:

To a woman they voted 6 o'clock... Their verdict is plain - any chance they have of reducing man's opportunity to drink will be utilised to the full. The liquor trade party was afraid of the women all the time.

The paper noted that around the polling booths representatives from the Women's National movement were seen with small children at their side, busily handing out pamphlets. In fact many women were seen working hard

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65 Sun, 28 May 1916.
66 Sun, 11 June 1916.
67 Ibid., 21 May 1916.
in the cause of early closing 'who never before had the temerity to take part in any public movement'. According to the Sun some women were so anxious to record their vote that, when asked for their names, they were capable only of replying "Six o' clock! I want to vote six o' clock.".  

The Telegraph made similar observations. Its correspondent wrote that 'the women on Saturday seemed to vote solidly for six o' clock'. The journalist noted, in particular, the observation of a U.L.V.A. officer who, while touring the booths to see how the vote was progressing, 'awoke to the remarkable effort of the women folk, and in it saw the prospect of disaster'. The Telegraph was certain that the remarkable six o' clock vote represented 'women in revolt'.

It is possible that these impressions exaggerated the role of women in the referendum. Because of the prior publicity given to the importance of the women's vote to the outcome, the commentators mentioned may have been influenced by the expectation that women would vote solidly for six pm. Conversely the fact that this expectation had been implanted in women by the earlier link with the women's suffragette movement, may have prompted numbers of women to vote for six o' clock closing. It is likely that the latter was the case. Traditionally women did not drink in public houses and over several years they had been encouraged to view their political role as upholding family life and 'social morality'.

In the 1916 campaign the anti-drink cause gained, for the first time, active support from labour. I have already mentioned the Workers' Anti-Liquor League. The Alliance maintained that this organization had

68 Ibid.
69 Ibid.
70 D.T., 12 June 1916.
'far-reaching' influence in industrial circles although there is no independent assessment of its role. During the referendum campaign readers of the Australian Worker were subjected to intense propaganda on the issue. Indeed the Alliance believed that:

Too much credit cannot be given to the 'Worker' for stirring articles and striking cartoons, several of which were reproduced and widely circulated.

The Worker had not supported the Alliance in the local option ballots; indeed on occasions the paper openly condemned so-called wowsers. After the 1915 Labor Conference, however, the editor seized upon the principles of social reform which had inspired the insertion of the six o'clock closing plank. Henceforth the editor emphasised that liquor reform was an issue of concern to working people:

There is enough of the brewer's dope poured down the necks of the working class to dull its brains and make it an easier victim for the dastardly thieves who rifle its pockets, who rob it of the fruits of its labour while those who produce the wealth are subjected to the indignities and deprivations of poverty.

The Worker was sympathetic for the victims of drink:

'Unhappy mothers, mourning for their drunken sons; haggard wives, listening for the staggering steps of drunken husbands, frightened children, cowering from the fury of drunken fathers.

The Worker however, differed from mainstream anti-drink thought. The paper maintained that poverty caused workers to abuse liquor and not the reverse and that the 'Labor Movement, in battling to abolish poverty, is BOUND TO CLASH WITH THE BREWING INTERESTS'.

The anti-drink movement thus encapsulated the main sections of public opinion by offering the twin ideals of social reform and patriotism.

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71 N.S.W. Alliance Annual Report, 1916-17, p.5.
72 Ibid.
73 Australian Worker, 5 October 1910.
74 Ibid., 27 April 1916.
75 Ibid., 13 March 1916.
This is an obvious explanation for the resounding vote in favour of six o'clock. There were some curious aspects to the vote which help to highlight the role of some of the groups discussed.

As was the case with local option, social class goes a long way to explaining the district-by-district variations in the pattern of early closing voting in 1916. A sample analysis of the results in different electorates suggest that the wealthy suburban areas voted solidly for six while the inner-city, predominantly working class areas, voted mainly for nine pm; the hour advocated by publicans. The inner-city electorates, of which there were eight, were areas where, as a reporter from the *Telegraph* discovered,

> it is not the practice of the objects of the 'dry' movement to smile pleasantly upon its advocate ... in the neighbourhood of some of the less salubriously-situated polling booths the six o'clock stalwarts were often faced with situations that called for ready resource and at times a good deal of personal courage.76

The drink trade canvassed widely for nine pm thinking that this time would have a greater chance of winning than would eleven pm. The trade expected to poll well in the inner-city area but some of the returns showed surprisingly narrow margins. In Alexandria less than 500 votes separated nine pm from six pm and a similarly small margin favoured the later hour in Redfern. There were other localities, close to the city, where hotels were widely patronised by working people but which nonetheless returned a vote for six pm. J.T. Donnison, President of the L.V.A., acknowledged that the trade had been confident of large majorities in the electorates of Balmain, Glebe, Leichhardt, Newtown, Paddington and Rozelle and he expressed surprise that support had not been forthcoming.77 It is likely that this lower than expected support for nine pm reflected the influence, in particular, of women voters and workers newly drawn to anti-liquor ideals.

76 D.T., 12 June 1916. 77 Ibid.
The drink trade had also been confident of winning support in country electorates where it was widely believed that closing hotels at night would result in country towns becoming 'unsocial and unpleasant places to live'. In Tamworth publicans spared no effort to secure votes. They ferried people to the booths in cars bearing conspicuous figure 9s and manned tables outside. The trade's estimate of a 2 to 1 majority in favour of the later hour was shattered not long after counting began. The final result saw 2837 people vote for six pm and 2035 for nine pm. A similar pattern occurred in country districts throughout New South Wales. Only three electorates gave majorities for the publicans' preferred hour.

The achievement of a victory for six o'clock requires a closer examination of the actual campaign run by the Alliance. Several elements can be identified as contributing to most successful campaigns run by reformist pressure groups. Two of the most important are leadership and the development of the means to capture and reflect public opinion. Both of these elements flow from effective organization. A.E. Dingle in his study of the United Kingdom Alliance has highlighted the 'close connection between the internal structure and operation of a pressure group and the kind of campaign it mounts'.

The Alliance was well-structured to embrace all groups concerned about liquor reform. Its constitution vested power in a state council to which temperance societies or lodges, religious denominations, or any kindred Society working in the interests of Temperance reform were able to send representatives. Financial support to the Alliance reflected

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78 Tamworth Daily Observer, 10 June 1916.
80 N.S.W. Alliance Annual Report, 1914-15, p.32.
the range of organizations which were sympathetic to its campaign. These included the Church of Christ, Church of England, Congregational Union, Presbyterian and Methodist Churches, New South Wales Tract Society, Independent Order of Good Templars, Independent Order of Rechabites, Society of Friends, W.C.T.U., Women's National movement and Sons of Temperance.

Paul McHugh has highlighted the importance of leadership to reform movements in his study of the British campaign against the Contagious Diseases Acts and the role of its leader, Josephine Butler. A.E. Dingle also draws attention to this point. To conduct its referendum campaign the New South Wales Alliance was fortunate to have the most capable spokesmen it had ever possessed. The hierarchy were adept at organization and were effective publicists. Most importantly, they provided the six o'clock closing cause with the inspiration that flows from total commitment.

Rev. Dr. F.B. Boyce was still President of the Alliance at the time of the referendum, although he retired from that post immediately afterwards. I have already mentioned the nexus between his evangelicalism and his commitment to social reform. This connection was sharpened by his experiences with the poor in his Redfern parish. During the 1890s Boyce had played an active part in slum clearance and in the struggle to achieve old-age pensions. Temperance, however, remained his chief concern subscribing, as he did, to the view that indulgence in liquor was a major cause of poverty.

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81 Ibid., and 1915-16.
Boyce was described by one anti-drink sympathiser as not being "a platform force" but a "splendid general". By 1916 Boyce was widely known and respected for his community work and, in his capacity as public figurehead of the anti-drink movement, he was always prominent at public meetings and a leader of deputations and petitions. His chief talent as a publicist lay in writing tracts. He published several books and many pamphlets about his involvement in social issues, and his 'A Dozen Reasons' for six o'clock closing acted as a reference point during the campaign. Boyce was revered as President of the Alliance. Indeed when he announced his intention of retiring at the beginning of 1916 'every member of the Council felt that the Alliance would suffer an almost irreparable loss' and Boyce yielded to the unanimous vote of the Executive and stayed on to lead the campaign for a six o'clock vote in the referendum. Boyce's parting words to the Alliance on his retirement highlighted his conviction that his 40 year struggle against the liquor traffic had been in the cause of humanity.

The Vice-President of the New South Wales Alliance, and its rising personality, was Rev. R.B.S. Hammond. He was described by colleagues as a 'dyna. mof Temperance enthusiasm'. Hammond was born in Melbourne where he played football with the Essendon Club and studied for the priesthood. He was ordained in 1896. Like Boyce, Hammond was an evangelical. After moving to Sydney in 1899 he became organizing missioner for the Mission Zone Fund of the Church Society. This work took him into the congested inner-city areas and bred a familiarity with

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86 Ibid., 1916-17, p.13.
the social problems of low-paid workers. Between 1909-18 he was rector of St. Simons and St. Judes Churches in Surry Hills. Hammond gained first hand experience of the ravages inflicted by alcohol from his regular visits to the 'drunks yard' at Central Police Court. In 1908 he set up, in a disused warehouse in Newtown, his first Hammond Hotel to rehabilitate some of Sydney's destitute. Contemporaries noted that Hammond evinced 'a deep conviction' that social wrongs could always be corrected and justice achieved 'by persistent attack and dogged perseverance'.

In addition to his parish work Hammond edited the temperance journal Grit. This paper was the medium through which the Alliance kept in touch with its supporters and provided them with useful information on organization and tactics. Hammond is credited with having possessed 'a commanding presence' and 'compelling oratory', which he displayed at both street corner meetings and large rallies.

Considerable credit for the effectiveness of the campaign run by the Alliance was due to its General-Secretary, James Marion. He was the son of a South Australian bush worker who earned his early living as a navvy before moving to Sydney where he became involved with Hammond in social work. In 1913 he was appointed General-Secretary of the Alliance and before the six o'clock campaign was run in New South Wales Marion gained valuable organizational experience in the South Australian and Tasmanian campaigns. The Executive of the Early Closing of Liquor Bars of South Australia acknowledged Marion's 'aptitude and energy in organizing work'. He was inbued with 'grim earnestness' and his sense of dedication to the cause of liquor reform is revealed in comments he made to the Sun:

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92 Ibid., 1916-17, p.14.
'We go out into the street and get right up against the men and women we cannot reach otherwise. There are thousands of people who during the hours that they are not working ... literally live in the street ... Such people read little, they cannot be canvassed in their homes, and so at the street corner we get them'.

Marion was acknowledged to be 'an organizing and publicity expert'. He and Hammond together handled arrangements for the campaign. Both had been through local option campaigns together from which they gained experience in implementing innovative ideas. In the campaign for six o'clock they combined a range of techniques designed to attract mass support. In fact the Alliance was credited with being in the fore-front of developing 'modern electioneering'.

Public meetings, addressed by prominent speakers, remained the basis around which the Alliance promoted the anti-drink cause. Such occasions had obvious advantages - large crowds could be attracted and the proceedings would appear in the following day's press. As the campaign progressed so did the regularity of meetings. A week before the referendum, and with 'a view to retaining public interest', the Alliance organized open-air meetings in many suburban centres, demonstrations in the parks on the Sunday, and evening church rallies.

In the course of the campaign Marion arranged 175 speakers to attend both local and larger meetings. Some guest speakers were brought from inter-state and New Zealand. There was an art to being an effective temperance orator which the likes of Marion and Hammond had refined. Marion, who was praised for his 'ability to handle the crowd', once explained that the temperance issue "invariably draws out the

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The reason, he said, was that the man opposed to temperance reform and fond of his beer possessed all the qualities that made up "a smart heckler". But temperance speakers had become skilled in dealing with such individuals and treating them, as Marion explained,

with indifference unless an opportunity opens in which to score off the heckler, and then every care is taken to do it nicely, without any display of feeling or temper. Should, however, a heckler become abusive, he may expect all oratorical castigation that is delivered with all the skill and force of the speaker.

Experienced temperance speakers also appreciated the need to entertain their audiences. They had 'cultivated the art of repartee' and enhanced audience interest by sprinkling 'home grown humour' throughout their addresses.

A significant feature of the Alliance campaign was the implementation of techniques of electioneering designed to attract the widest possible support. Campaigners distributed one million leaflets and 11,000 posters. The Alliance set great store by the propaganda value of posters. 'The display of thirty huge posters', Hammond wrote in Grit, '30ft. by 10ft., on city and suburban hoardings has attracted great attention'. In many instances the posters were deliberately placed near to liquor advertisements or opposite hotels. Hammond believed that for a publican 'to sit out on his balcony and have a thirty-foot poster staring him in the face is not a pleasant experience'.

The Alliance realized that the referendum required an overall majority in favour of six pm and not necessarily majorities in every electorate as demanded by local option polls. To achieve this overall majority the Alliance covered the entire state with a network of organization to facilitate the mobilization of voters. By May 1916

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98 Sun, 21 May 1916. 99 Ibid. 100 Grit, 25 November 1915.
committees were functioning. These committees had the responsibility of overseeing smaller sub-committees which were to supervise each polling booth.\textsuperscript{101} This network enabled the distribution of leaflets and posters on a large scale and also made possible house to house canvassing. 'Every house', Grit exhorted local committee members, 'should be canvassed; electors shown how to vote, and arrangements made to bring voters to the poll'.\textsuperscript{102} Instructions were given to canvassers on the best approaches to pursue with electors.\textsuperscript{103}

Such a far-reaching campaign was obviously expensive to conduct and the committee structure mentioned was also responsible for fund-raising. The members of the Alliance relied principally upon donations, which they exploited by arguing that their cause was a peoples' movement in contrast to that of the liquor trade, depicted as an unscrupulous vested interest group. Funds raised by the Alliance were considerable. James Marion claimed, for example, that in just one week at the end of May donations approached £1000.\textsuperscript{104}

Publicans, on the other hand, had difficulty conducting a campaign which would capture public support. Grit asserted correctly that the 'liquor party' would have difficulty in showing that their trade served the best interests of the people.\textsuperscript{105} Publicans tried to overcome this problem by basing much of their campaign on the argument of liberty. Edwin Stooke, Secretary of the Liquor Trades Defence Union, stated that closing hotels at six pm

would not find favour with the great bulk of workers, the majority of whom are shut up in factories, stores, shops etc., all day, or are kept at work either in or out of doors. When these workers are discharged from their tasks at six o'clock they ... derive pleasure and entertainment from the moderate use of liquor during reasonable hours.\textsuperscript{106}

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\textsuperscript{101} S.M.H., 13 May 1916. \hspace{2cm} \textsuperscript{102} Grit, 20 April 1916. \\
\textsuperscript{103} Ibid., 27 April 1916. \hspace{2cm} \textsuperscript{104} D.T., 28 May 1916. \\
\textsuperscript{105} Grit, 4 July 1907. \hspace{2cm} \textsuperscript{106} D.T., 19 April 1916.
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This argument, however, had limited popular appeal as it was based on sectional, class interests. Outside the metropolitan area, where public houses did not greatly feature in the social life of the community, an appeal to individual liberty was not calculated to win wide support. The liquor trade recognized this and believed from the outset that the suburbs 'would vote solidly for six'.\textsuperscript{107} The voting pattern for the referendum does show that the suburban electorates, with the least number of public houses, recorded the most solid support for six o'clock closing. But it was not only the suburban vote which lost the day for the publicans. To reiterate the point made earlier - there was considerable drift of support to the anti-drink cause among working people; the group to whom publicans directed their appeal of liberty.

Alongside their principal argument publicans tried to bolster support among inner-city residents by stressing that unemployment would be a consequence of early closing. The trade estimated that between 3-5000 hotel workers would lose their jobs.\textsuperscript{108} This argument did worry the Alliance. The organization guardedly acknowledged that some short term employment difficulties could arise.\textsuperscript{109} However, the Alliance maintained that the short-term interruptions were outweighed by the number of men who were continually thrown out of work as a result of excessive night-time drinking or whose drinking habits caused them to be crippled in industrial accidents. In an effort to counter the threat of unemployment the Alliance also argued that additional employment would be generated by higher consumer demand which would flow from the savings families made on liquor.\textsuperscript{110}

In the week before polling day the \textit{Australian Worker} ran several advertisements designed to re-assure voters that six o'clock closing

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\textsuperscript{107} Ibid., 19 April 1916. \textsuperscript{108} Ibid., 30 May 1916. \\
\textsuperscript{109} Ibid. \textsuperscript{110} \textit{Grit}, 28 October 1915.
\end{flushright}
would not produce dire consequences for employment. The advertisements pointed out that only 33 barmen and cellarmen had so far registered as unemployed in South Australia since that state had closed bars at six pm in March 1915.  

The Alliance, however, made no systematic attempt to challenge the claims made by the publicans that early closing would increase home drinking and sly-grog selling. As ever, anti-drink crusaders gave too little thought to the likely consequences which would follow if their demands for 'extreme' legislation were met. In the event, six o'clock closing, which persisted after the war was over, had important effects on the character of the drink trade. The contours of these changes, however, cannot be outlined in a precise manner, for they were cumulative and not much noticed by contemporaries at any particular time. It is clear though that in the decade after the enactment of six o'clock closing there was no abandonment of traditional drinking customs as the anti-drink movement had hoped. Indeed, it would appear that the Act, instead of diminishing opportunities for obtaining liquor, simply encouraged a greater diversity of drink venues. It also intensified the criminal character of the drink traffic. Once these facts were more fully appreciated, as they were by the later 1920s, public support for the sort of restrictive legislation advocated by the New South Wales Alliance fell off sharply, as the results of the 1928 referendum showed.

Perhaps the most renowned effect of six o'clock closing was the creation of the 'six o'clock swill', also referred to as the 'pig swill'. There is indeed strong evidence to suggest that the habits of many drinkers became less refined in response to the shorter time

111. Australian Worker, 1 June 1916.
available before closing. However it should not be overlooked that
guzzling beer before closing time was a familiar custom at hotels. The
Herald had observed in 1906 that:

Those who in other circumstances would most likely have consumed
their liquor deliberately and at reasonable intervals extending into
prohibited hours manifest a desire to consume as much as they could
before the tolling of the much dreaded, modern curfew — eleven
o'clock.112

The eleven o'clock 'swill' obviously attracted less notice than did
hurried six o'clock drinking when people were moving about city streets
on their way home from work. A night curfew on drinking in hotels,
however, undoubtedly intensified the habit of 'swilling'. The Sydney
barmaid 'Caddie' vividly recalled her experiences in the 1920s:

Soon the six o'clock rush was in full swing. It was a long time
before I learned to handle that evening rush with any degree of
skill. The beer foamed over the tops of the glasses, men complained
of 'too much collar on it'. The first arrivals crowded against the
counter ... late comers jostled and shouted and swore in an attempt
to be served before closing time. It was a revolting sight and it
took a long time for me to take for granted. The smell of liquor,
the smell of human bodies, the warm smell of wine, and on one early
occasion even a worse smell, as a man, rather than give up his place
at the counter, urinated against the bar.113

These impressions were confirmed, years later, by A.V. Maxwell,
Commissioner inquiring into the Liquor Laws in the early 1950s. After
interviewing many publicans, several of whom had been in the trade for
decades, Commissioner Maxwell reported:

There is ample sworn testimony that drinking conditions in many
hotels during the peak hour, concluding at least nominally with six
pm, amount to an evil. This is especially so in many parts of the
Metropolitan Licensing District ... Moreover, impartial observation of
such conditions can lead to no other reasonable conclusion than that
they range from the undesirable to the disgusting ... the finding is
inescapable that there are in many hotels what has been inelegantly
described as 'pig swilling'.114

112 S.M.H., 2 January 1906.
114 Royal Commission on Liquor Laws In New South Wales, N.S.W.P.P.,
The point to be stressed from these observations is not just that drinking widely assumed an unrefined character, but that the peak hour 'swill' was not conducive to diminishing the incidence of drunkenness.

The imposition of six o'clock closing not only ensured the continuation of the sly-grog trade but it was responsible for encouraging an undesirable criminal element. Newspapers alleged that the illegal trade flourished in response to early closing. Although there is no way to adequately test this claim it is consistent with all available information about the post-war sly-grog trade.

The trade remained rooted in the predominantly working class districts of the inner-city. Immediately after 1916 it continued to be operated by much the same small-time entrepreneurs who were responsible for organizing the trade after the passing of the restrictive 1905 legislation. Cases which came before court, and which were reported in the popular press, illustrate this continuity. Esther Goldenberg, for example, operated a small grocery store and lodging house in Union-street, Pyrmont. She worked 'so hard, washing and scrubbing, that she just made ends meet'. In October 1917 she was fined £30 for selling beer at 3s. a bottle on her premises. Esther was one of a number of single women who continued to rely upon the sly-grog trade to eke out a basic living. Annie Brenan was another. Testimony at her trial revealed that she was a widow earning 'a precarious living' from a small confectionary and mixed goods business in Devonshire Street, Surry Hills. Males brought before court were usually unskilled workers. The case of William Curtis, charged in February 1917, was typical. He

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115 Truth, 10 October 1920; Smith's Weekly, 8 September 1923.
116 Truth, 7 October 1917.
117 Labor Daily, 28 May 1924.
was a fisherman, living in Redfern, who hawked his 'scaly catches' around the streets. In addition, Curtis was fond of his beer. He and his wife rented a room in a cottage where he was caught selling beer to customer friends. These cases highlight the entrenched appeal of liquor as a beverage, and drinking as a social pastime, among inner-city working people. The operators of the trade did not differ greatly from their patrons. It had long been the view of anti-drink campaigners that the civilizing influences of a wife and a home would moderate habits of drinking. The sly-grog trade however illustrates that working men, in particular, shunned this ideal and preferred their drinking to be accompanied by a social environment.

This pattern of illegal drinking was accompanied by a more disturbing element. From the early 1920s sly-grog selling became part of the activities of organized crime. Alfred McCoy has highlighted this connection and placed it within the context of the emergence of organized crime in Australia which, he points out, had its birthplace in Sydney during the early 1920s. The city had

all the requisite elements for the formation of a professional milieu: a colonial legacy of strong anti-police sentiment, a weak port economy producing periods of insufficient employment, impoverished slum dwellers for whom crime was an economic necessity, and a police force often incapable and sometimes unwilling to check the growth of organized crime.  

The popular press began referring to the existence of Sydney's 'underworld' in the early 1920s. Geographically it was located in the inner-city slum districts, and in particular, Surry Hills. The narrow lanes and alley-ways that intersected this district offered a

comparatively safe-field for the 'nefarious operations' of the underworld.\textsuperscript{119} The laws which had made liquor, opium, gambling and prostitution illegal gave rise to the activities of organized crime. Liquor was an obvious field for criminals. The demand for drinking after hours was such that high profits could be made. Smith's Weekly estimated that an average sly-grog seller in the early 1920s could reap at least \$500 profit each year.\textsuperscript{120} Larger scale operators were encouraged by the doubling of fines for sly-grog selling and by the well-publicised police crack-down on the after hours trade. Smith's Weekly reported in September 1923 that of the 400 sly-grog sellers caught in Sydney since 1921, 'A few ... were amateurs, but those who specialised were hard to kill'. The paper mentioned one family of three brothers who had been able to pay \$2400 in fines over a three year period before eventually being jailed.\textsuperscript{121}

Well organized sly-grog operators developed sophisticated techniques to avoid detection. Paid 'toughs' discharged the double duty of ensuring that the illegal publican had ample warning of approaching customers and police.\textsuperscript{122} Elaborate means were developed to hide liquor. Police found tubs hanging from backyard fences containing several dozen bottles of beer and one determined seller dug up the floor of a stable, laid in concrete, and recovered the area with straw and manure.\textsuperscript{123}

While the working man risked fines to obtain liquor after hours wealthier citizens could do so with relative immunity. Several unlicensed city restaurants advertised that they would arrange ordering liquor before six pm so that it could be served to customers at any time

\textsuperscript{119} Truth, 25 June 1922. \textsuperscript{120} Smith's Weekly, 8 September 1923.
\textsuperscript{121} Ibid. \textsuperscript{122} Truth, 18 July 1926.
\textsuperscript{123} Smith's Weekly, loc.cit.
during the evening. Police did occasionally raid such places but patrons were not threatened with arrest. In January 1925, for example, police raided the Cavalier Restaurant in King Street at 10 pm and impounded £80 worth of beer and wine but 'None of the men and women who were dancing in the restaurant were disturbed by the visit'. Even when restaurant owners sold liquor illegally customers were still safe from arrest. Norman Dawson, for example, who was proprietor of the Ambassador Restaurant was fined £30 for selling whisky on his premises without a license. Jennings, the magistrate, agreed with the decision of the police not to arrest patrons. He explained to the court hearing that such action "would have caused a stir in the resort of the very smartest people".

Administering the six o'clock closing law also brought the police into further disrepute. It was obviously a difficult task to wipe out a trade which was widely accepted; whose operations could be cleverly disguised; and which became organized and profitable. Before 1916 the methods police used to trap sly-grog sellers were resented in the inner-city. After the new closing law police intensified the deployment of marked coins and 'pimps' to snare sly-grog sellers. Protest was raised particularly over the employment of 'pimps'. 'No respectable citizen', Truth complained,

who might be suspected of some offence or other, chiefly against the liquor and betting laws, is safe, especially when results must always be in the minds of the gentlemen who live under the somewhat innocuous name of 'police agents'.

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124 Labor Daily, 26 January 1924.
125 Ibid., 30 January 1925.
126 Daily Guardian, 26 March 1924.
127 Truth, 25 July 1925.
Six o'clock closing was undoubtedly one of the outstanding victories of the anti-drink campaign. Its introduction was greatly aided by the climate of war but it owed considerably to the zeal and organization of members of the New South Wales Alliance. The evidence suggests that the restricted hours for drinking intensified the criminal character of the drink trade. In spite of the deleterious effect of six o'clock closing the anti-drink campaign remained active for another decade, during which time crusaders made a final attempt to secure legislative prohibition on the retail sale of liquor.
In 1916 anti-drink activists were so buoyed with success that many believed they could successfully push for the abolition of the Liquor traffic. 'There are so many workers for Six O'Clock', the editor of the *Worker* commented in the lead up to the poll, 'that public men tell me that they believe that if, just now, we went for Prohibition we would get it'.¹ The Alliance maintained that the outlook in 1917 'for the final overthrow of the Liquor Traffic was never more hopeful'.²

After the resounding vote in favour of six o'clock closing the anti-drink movement set out to achieve its ultimate objective. Between 1917 and 1923 the Alliance worked tirelessly to extend its support in the community. The organization now aimed to force the government into holding a referendum on prohibition. There was a lot at stake for the Alliance in this final lunge at the drink trade. If governments refused to comply with their demand the anti-drink crusade would probably peter out. But, practically speaking, a call for a referendum on prohibition was the only avenue of protest left to the organization and its supporters. In recent times activists had gained local option legislation and shorter hotel trading hours. Since neither had proved satisfactory in the event, few other possibilities remained for them, through 'democratic' means, to abolish the drink trade. In 1925 the Alliance formally changed its name to the New South Wales Prohibition Alliance.

The Alliance began its campaign in 1917 to secure a referendum on prohibition. They achieved their aim two years later when the Holman

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¹ *Australian Worker*, 13 April 1916.
government passed its Liquor (Amendment) Bill which, among other things, provided that a poll be held no later than eighteen months hence. Members of the government, however, had little faith in such a poll and its inclusion in the bill owed more to the approaching state election. After the successful 1916 campaign the anti-drink cause was assumed to be a powerful electoral lobby and considering the unpopularity of Holman in the months before the election the concession of a referendum appears, as the Telegraph believed it was, 'sail trimming in view of the coming elections'.

In addition to the provision for a referendum the government intended to create a Licenses Reduction Board along the same lines as the one which had operated in Victoria since 1905. The government maintained that the Board would be able to carry out effective reform of the drink trade. Introducing the second reading debate on the bill R.D. Hall, the Minister for Housing, drew special attention to the work of the Victorian Board. He pointed out that between 1907-16 it had closed over 1,300 hotels in that State. Hall went on to say that in New South Wales, under local option,

> We have had a cleaning up of hotel properties in quite a number of areas, but we have had no cleaning up right around the city where it is most required. Where the most licenses are there has practically been no reduction.

Hall envisaged the Licenses Reduction Board as closing between 200-300 of 'the poor types of hotels round about the city'. The Board, he added, would be given the power to decide which hotels should close and the amount of compensation to be paid. Their decision would be

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4 D.T., 18 December 1920.
final. Compensation was to be determined by averaging a publican's income over the past three years as shown by his taxation returns. A compensation fund was to be created by a levy of 3% of the value of the liquor purchased. The fund, however, was to apply only to the Licenses terminated by the Board and not to the closure of hotels if prohibition were to be carried at the referendum.

The Alliance guardedly approved the bill. The organization regretted that the bill provided for compensation but its muted criticism of this proposal reflected its appreciation that compensation was a political reality. The Alliance wholeheartedly approved of the provision of a referendum and it urged 'all citizens to co-operate in a State-wide campaign for the overthrow of liquor traffic'.

In the two years leading up to the passage of the 1919 Liquor Bill the Alliance had lost none of the enthusiasm which for decades had underlined its successful role as a reformist pressure group. Reviewing its successful efforts in 1919 Alliance organizers noted that:

Special issues of 'Grit' have been largely circulated, thousands of leaflets have gone out. Display advertisements have been placed on many railway stations. Five thousand copies of the pamphlet 'Doings in Dryland' [U.S.A.] have been distributed... Mr. Phil Adler has continued his special work in factory and workshop... and Miss Grant has continued amongst women's organisations.

The work of the movement in the early 1920s appears to have been rewarded with growing public support. Income to the Alliance, which was almost entirely donated, rose nearly twelve fold between 1917-1922; from 1711 to 12,911. The anti-drink cause in New South Wales derived enormous encouragement from the enactment of nationwide

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6 N.S.W. Alliance Annual Report, 1919-20, p.2.
7 Ibid., p.6-7.
8 See Annual Reports.
prohibition in the United States. On 16 January 1920 a thanksgiving service, which representatives from all Protestant churches attended, was held in the Central Methodist Mission in celebration of this event.9

Preparation for the forthcoming referendum on prohibition involved the Alliance in its greatest ever activity. Altogether 1500 addresses were given in churches, halls, schools, factories and in the openair averaging 30 meetings each week. The Alliance estimated that a total of 120,000 people attended these meetings.10 Public support for the Alliance at this time was also shown by a thriving network of local prohibition branches; 119 functioning throughout the state. Moreover, the organization sold 300,000 copies of Grit and 30,000 copies of Hammond's book With One Voice. The book, based on two field trips Hammond made to America, praised the introduction of prohibition. Hammond repeated the benefits which he and his supporters believed prohibition would bring. 'It promotes', he wrote in the conclusion to his book,

morality by protecting the weak, removing a stimulus to vice and providing conditions under which religion flourishes. The jails [in America] are almost empty, the churches are almost full.11

Rev. R.B.S. Hammond remained the guiding figure behind the anti-drink campaign. In 1917 he suffered a serious breakdown in health but recovered to lead the referendum campaign with characteristic enthusiasm and enterprise. During 1920 he delivered over 100 lectures at which he personally raised £6000. In addition Hammond presided over 130 Alliance Committee meetings and continued to edit Grit for which he also had


10 N.S.W. Alliance Annual Report, 1919-20, p.2.

11 R.B.S. Hammond, With One Voice, Sydney, 1919, p.120.
complete financial and managerial responsibility.\textsuperscript{12}

After such tireless work the Alliance was stunned when, in December 1920, the Storey Labor government announced that the referendum on prohibition would be postponed. Storey explained that the decision had been necessitated by the grave financial situation. Loans amounting to over £20 million were to fall due in 1923 and 1924. If prohibition was carried, Storey told parliament, the extra financial burden to the state of compensation would 'cripple the country'.\textsuperscript{13} Storey must have believed that the anti-drink movement had some chance of carrying the vote.

The Alliance was deeply angered by the government's betrayal. The organization immediately set about to rescue political commitment to the referendum. At the inspiration of Hammond the Alliance decided to harness its public support to directly influence the 1922 elections. In July 1921 the Alliance instituted the 'Modern Pledge', claimed as the first of its kind in the world, which aimed to collect a commitment from 100,000 electors not to allocate a first preference vote to any candidate who was not pledged to support an immediate referendum on prohibition to be decided by a simple majority. The Alliance claimed to have spent 'well over four figures' in the 'Modern Pledge' campaign. A staff of fifteen was employed who were able to collect 50,000 signatures.\textsuperscript{14} Bouyant as ever, the Alliance viewed this 'novel undertaking' as one of the most effective efforts in its history.\textsuperscript{15}

\textsuperscript{12} N.S.W. Alliance Annual Report, 1920-21, p.2.
\textsuperscript{13} N.S.W.P.D., 2nd Series, 1920, vol.82, p.4026.
\textsuperscript{14} N.S.W. Alliance Annual Report, 1921-22, p.6.
\textsuperscript{15} Ibid.
The campaign did have its rewards. It was probably a factor in the election victory of Sir George Fuller's Nationalist Party which, in November 1921, had wisely, perhaps shrewdly, included a plank in the party platform calling for a referendum on prohibition. Thus, it was not surprising that after the election Fuller informed an anxious delegation from the wine industry that:

The Ministry takes the view that in a great social matter of this kind the people of a State have a right to express an opinion. The prohibition movement must be recognized. A vote on the matter will have to be taken some day in the State. And until that vote is taken there will necessarily be an atmosphere of uncertainty.16

Fuller, however, did not stand by his party's platform, which called for a referendum to be held at the earliest possible date. Rather, the ministry set the time for the referendum five years hence - in 1928. The only apparent reason for this decision, which also infuriated the Alliance, was a statement made to the Assembly by T.J. Ley, the minister responsible for overseeing the passage of the bill. Ley, who still maintained his commitment to temperance ideals, believed that the lapse of five years would benefit the anti-drink cause by allowing them maximum time to win public support. Events were to show that the passage of time fatally diminished whatever chances of success the Alliance might have had in the early 1920s.

It is clear that, by the mid-1920s, the anti-drink cause was on the decline. By the time the vote on prohibition was taken in 1928 the crusade against liquor was all but a dead issue. The annual reports of the Alliance bear witness to the slow decline in public support for the organization.

16 S.M.H., 17 October 1924.
TABLE 10
Attendance at N.S.W. Alliance Meetings 1922-1926

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year Ending 31 March</th>
<th>Total Meetings &amp; Services</th>
<th>Total Attendances</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1922</td>
<td>1409</td>
<td>114334</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1924</td>
<td>798</td>
<td>60079</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1925</td>
<td>636</td>
<td>48000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1926</td>
<td>616</td>
<td>39000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Complied from N.S.W. Alliance Annual Reports.

An important indication of the diminished power of the anti-drink movement in the latter 1920s was the passage of the 1927 Liquor bill introduced by the Lang Labor government. The measure represented the first legislative reversal of a trend which, for several decades, had been favourable to the demands of anti-drink activists. The principal feature of the bill was a provision to allow the sale of liquor with meals on licensed premises. The measure received the broad approval of the leader of the Opposition, T.R. Bavin, who used the debate on the bill to express his view that the 'evils' associated with the liquor traffic could not be cured through prohibition. 17 He went on to explain that as the law controlling early closing of hotels was continually being broken it ought to be revised:

Law abiding people are continually faced with the alternative of either having to adopt a practice which they consider wholly unreasonable or they have to break the law. We have no right to put law abiding citizens continually in that position. 18

The measure was also favourably received by the press. The Telegraph commented that:

18 Ibid., p.771.
Rather than conive at the breaking of the law as it stands the Government has very wisely decided to bring the law into conformity with reason and commonsense.\textsuperscript{19}

By the time the referendum was held at the beginning of September 1928 it was evident that public interest in the anti-drink cause had drastically waned. The issue did receive some press coverage but this was directed mainly at highlighting the financial burden which the state would have to bear in compensation if prohibition was carried. Estimates put the figure at £20 million.\textsuperscript{20} The ability of the Alliance to conduct a vigorous campaign was severely impeded by the decline in enthusiasm for the anti-drink cause. Hammond lamented in \textit{Grit} that 'We have no organization'.\textsuperscript{21} Unlike previous campaigns the Alliance had no army of willing supporters to canvas for votes.

By polling day the result was a foregone conclusion. Indeed, on the night the results of the referendum were declared, the \textit{Herald} remarked that:

If one were looking for excitement one would go to a literary evening at the local knitting circle rather than a prohibition poll... [of the sort] observed in Sydney on Saturday.\textsuperscript{22}

The results of the poll represented a massive public rejection of prohibition. The majority for the 'No' vote approximated 500,000 or 5 in every 7 electors (336,771 people voted for prohibition and 833,652 voted against it). Not a single electorate in the state recorded a majority in favour of prohibition. Thus, for the first time, different social groups voted in a like manner on the drink issue. Yet, class differences were still apparent. The substantial occupational and religious diversity

\textsuperscript{19} D.T., 4 February, 1927.  \textsuperscript{20} S.M.H., 8 June, 1928.  \textsuperscript{21} Grit, 6 September 1928.  \textsuperscript{22} S.M.H., 3 September 1928.
revealed in the Commonwealth censuses of 1921 and 1933 preclude the making of more than a crude class and religious analysis of the referendum vote. The figures on religion and occupation shed little light on the class make up of the suburbs although those on unemployment provide some guide to the predominant class of suburbs as the table below indicates.

### TABLE 11
REGISTERED MALE UNEMPLOYMENT IN 1933

(A) PREDOMINANTLY WORKING CLASS MUNICIPALITIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Municipality</th>
<th>% Male Unemployed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alexandria</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balmain</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glebe</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marrickville</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newtown</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paddington</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redfern (incorporating Surry Hills)</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(B) PREDOMINANTLY MIDDLE CLASS MUNICIPALITIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Municipality</th>
<th>% Male Unemployed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Burwood</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lane Cove</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mosman</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Sydney</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vaucluse</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waverley (incorporating Coogee)</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Commonwealth Census, 1933, pp. 126-129
Overall, as table 12 indicates, the predominantly working class suburbs registered a higher average 'no' majority. However Commonwealth census figures are not very helpful in providing a better understanding of the obvious anomaly of Coogee recording a higher 'no' vote than Balmain. The electorate of Coogee forms part of the municipality of Waverley for the purpose of Commonwealth censuses. There were roughly equal proportions of Protestants and Catholics in both municipalities but these figures do not show church attendance from which more accurate conclusions could be drawn.
about differences between the two electorates.

The occupational categories, included in the census, are not sufficiently revealing of economic or social status to generalise about voting patterns - little of substance can be drawn from the fact that, for example, in Balmain just over 1% of working males were employers while in Waverley 3% were in this category. The percentage of wage and salary earners was also roughly similar. Thus, there is no apparent reason which led voters of Coogee to register a higher 'no' vote than those of Balmain.

However, the Herald appreciated the results indicated in Table 12. The paper noted that the 'industrial' constituencies were especially emphatic in rejecting prohibition. Their vote

may be taken as resentment against the attempt of the prohibitionists to deprive the working man of the only club where ...

... he can meet his fellows and offer hospitality.

The paper added that the higher vote for prohibition in the wealthier suburbs must have been from people who 'do not have to rely upon public houses for this very human purpose'. When Hammond was interviewed about the poll he sounded like a bitterly disappointed man. "Those silly people", be said, "Who voted yesterday against prohibition will ... live to regret it". He added that the result was "not the end of the war".

However, the 1928 referendum was the end of the anti-drink crusade. Never again were campaigners able to mobilize the extent of public

23 Ibid.
and political support which had characterised their efforts over two
generations. Indeed the decline into obscurity of the crusade
against liquor, which was so clearly manifest in the 1928 vote, reflected
post-war social changes.

By the mid-1920s commentators recognized that a new age had dawned.
The Herald once observed that a great deal of the unease in society
was

but symptoms of one universal sickness - the aftermath of the war.
Humanity was subjected to so terrible a shaking ... that it would be
strange indeed were it to settle down ... to its old time staid
routine. 24

The Labour Daily remarked that

This newer age - the World War completely shattered the old - has
brought us face to face with numerous problems that mankind had
no cause to trouble himself very much about before. 25

On another occasion the paper observed that 'in the rush of modern
civilization people were craving for new sensations, and
excitements'. 26 In the mid-1920s the Telegraph commented that the war
was responsible for 'a great change in the mentality of the people'
which was particularly manifest in 'a strange craze for new
excitements'. 27 Indeed being a 'modernist' was a commonly used phrase
to describe the spirit of the age. 28

24 Ibid., 12 February 1924.
25 Ibid., Labour Daily, 18 August 1924.
26 Ibid., 30 April 1928.
27 D.T., 15 February 1924.
28 Ibid., 4 February 1928.
There are many indications of a changing character to society in the 1920s. Most of these changes involved a desire for personal liberation and enjoyment. State authorities, for example, expressed concern about the increasing use of cocaine. Some magistrates believed the problem so serious that they called upon the government to establish an institution for the treatment of drug addicts. Evidence of change too was seen in the growing popularity of night clubs offering jazz music and dancing.

Attitudes to and responses from women were also seen as part of a changing social climate. The Herald expressed a common view when, discussing women's emancipation, it commented that 'Everywhere she is acquiring potencies formerly unwanted, everywhere invading fresh fields, everywhere achieving emancipation'.

This view probably went too far in ignoring the age-old continuities in the lives of many women. It was still common for conservative groups to appeal - with some success - to women to be good wives and mothers in order to enhance 'national life', and some women's organizations continued to uphold these values. On the eve of the 1927 state elections, for example, the Women Citizens' organisation, held a rally at which they deplored the 'influence of social evils' and called upon females to return to parliament members who will 'restrict these evils and protect childhood and womanhood'. Thus, it is not surprising to

29 Labour Daily, 30 April 1928.  
30 Ibid., 25 May 1924.  
31 S.M.H., 6 December 1926.  
32 Australian National Review, 21 January 1924.  
33 D.T., 1 October 1927.
find women still actively involved in the prohibition campaign. The Representative Women's Prohibition League and the Business Women's League gave active support to the Alliance.  

Side by side with the conservative image of women there existed in the later 1920s, the new phenomenon of 'liberated' females. This was symbolised by an increase in cigarette smoking, stylish fashions and greater entry into professional careers. There is also evidence that females began to drink regularly in hotels and wine bars. Tom Hoskings, a Nationalist member of the Assembly, claimed to be familiar with the 'high-class' hotels. He deplored the ladies who went to these places to 'drink cocktails and smoke cigarettes'. Wine bars were popular among some women drinkers, especially the young. Brian Doe, another Nationalist parliamentarian, told colleagues in 1927 that he had seen a large number of young women being turned out of a wine shop at 6 pm. Even in the working class districts contemporaries noted that public drinking among women was growing more commonplace. 'According to the sin-seasoned Redfern police', Truth reported, 'the public house parlours and wine shops in the district are well patronised by the fair sex—particularly married women'.  

The 'liberated' social manners of a number of women had obvious consequences for the anti-drink cause. Formerly, activists had relied upon women to help win anti-liquor legislation. But in the 'modern' post-war age an appeal to women to uphold the ideals of 'social morality' no longer carried the weight of a decade earlier.

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34 N.S.W. Alliance Annual Report, 1925, p.4.  
35 D.T., 11 August 1928.  
36 S.M.H., 28 January 1924.  
38 Ibid., p.796.  
39 Truth, 18 April 1924.
Social change was evident too in the declining influence of the Protestant churches. This development played a large part in the demise of the anti-drink movement for the crusade against liquor had rested upon the prestige of church leaders in community affairs. Moreover, the flocks of protestant church goers had provided the movement with its solid basis of support. There is strong testimony to the decline in church numbers and to the consequent loss of influence of church leaders. Towards the end of 1925 the Herald commented that 'Churches and pulpits alike are difficult to fill. The flock dwindles'. Later, the paper remarked that 'the Churches have lost some of their prestige and influence during recent years'. Protestant church leaders acknowledged the trend. G.R.S. Reid, Convener of Youth Work for the Presbyterian Church, lamented that family religion was 'less common' and that church attendance was seldom encouraged by the example of parents. Writers on religious affairs for the Herald were concerned that the 'present generation is slipping back into paganism'. They were fearful that there were numerous homes where the 'things of God do not count for anything'.

Church leaders were anxious about the waning influence of religion for many recognised that the age was characterised by ephemeral, some said degenerating, values. Rev. C.J. Leese, for example, told the annual conference of the Congregational Church in 1924 that, 'We were living ... in a time of general nervousness and of fermentation in the social body'. Church leaders, however, were no longer able to provide the

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40 S.M.H., 17 October 1925. 41 Ibid., 30 June 1928.
42 Ibid., 24 April, 1926. 43 Ibid., 2 June 1927.
44 Ibid., 29 May 1926. 45 Ibid., 22 October 1924.
leadership they once enjoyed. The Herald once discussed this matter and argued that the long years of war tension had induced a reaction against religious observance. The present age, the editor continued, was one of doubt, and one consequently devoted to the 'pursuit of pleasure and gain'. Thus, the surf, the motor car, the golf links, the tennis court, the garden, held out 'strong counter attractions to the church'. 46

It is not surprising, therefore, that the decline in the influence of the church, particularly on social matters, also resulted in a fading commitment to the anti-drink movement's conception of social reform. This was most clearly typified in a comment W.A. Holman made about the 1928 referendum. He told a Town Hall meeting that:

The old golden dream of a renovated humanity ... seems to have been laid aside... We used to hear heart-rendering stories of little children who suffered from corruption, degeneration and misery, things of that kind. That is largely disappearing. 47

Social reform increasingly focused on the need for improving the condition of material life among the poorer sections of the community. In the later 1920s considerable attention was given to the need for slum clearance. At the 1924 convention of the Nationalist party, for example, a motion was carried calling on the government to provide 'homes for the people'. Seconding the motion, Mrs. Arding Thomas, said that

the hand that rocked the cardle ruled the world, and that the hands that rocked the cradles of the workers should have decent homes for themselves and their children. It was no good providing gaols, reformatories, and asylums to deal with things that grew out of bad conditions of living. They should strike at the root of these evils, the slums. 48

46 Ibid., 17 October 1925.
47 W.A. Holman, Prohibition Exploded, Citizens' Rights and Liquor Reform Association pamphlet, Sydney, 1928 p.3.
Conditions in Sydney's inner-city slum districts were indeed appalling. An official report submitted to the Paddington Municipal Council in 1926 estimated that 2000 families, in that suburb alone, were living in conditions that were 'not in the best interests of health and morals'. A large number of the dwellings were found to be damp and without ventilation, bathrooms and lavatories. The report criticised landlords whose aim 'appeared to be to see how much they could make out of their premises'. In 1928 the government of New South Wales received a comprehensive report on slum conditions in the inner-city. This report drew attention to the 'old, leaky, and dilapidated' dwellings which were commonly found and it commented upon the poverty which was 'manifest' in the areas visited.

Ideas about social reform in the later 1920s no longer gave much credence to the detrimental effect of liquor in creating slum conditions. Mark Gosling, for example, who was a Labor member of the Assembly but also a freemason, staunch teetotaller and member of the Australian Industrial Christian Fellowship Council, told Assembly members in 1927 that:

the troubles which arise from poverty and the crowding of people into slum areas ... [could only be remedied by] better housing, better social conditions, and better environment. Better environment is bound to decrease the evils arising from the drink traffic... the Labor party is on the road to temperance reform, not by means of prohibition, but by bettering the environment of the people.

Dr. Robert Stopford, a Labor member before the party divided over conscription in 1916, who afterwards sat in the Assembly as the Nationalist Party Member for Balmain, had similar social attitudes to

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49 S.M.H., 4 December 1926. 50 Ibid., 10 August 1928.
51 N.S.W.P.D., op.cit., p.806.
Mark Gosling. Stopford also shared a similar background. He was a committed Protestant belonging to the Church of England, the Protestant Federation and the Freemason Society. Stopford told the Assembly during debate on 1923 Liquor Amendment Bill that the temperance movement had concentrated solely on symptoms and had not battled with the causes of drinking:

The miserable homes of so many of our people, the uncertainty of employment, long hours of exhausting toil, bad and insufficient food... want of wholesome recreation, a sense of hopelessness of the future... who shall say that these are not causes far more frequently than fruits of intemperance?52

Conservatives who might not have shared these social views nonetheless came, in increasing numbers, to believe that reform of the drink trade was preferable to its abolition. In part this attitude was shaped by the widely reported experience of national prohibition in America. The daily newspapers frequently highlighted that 'Americans have become a nation of law breakers'.53

The commitment to reform was also a product of the widely held libertarian values of the age. Libertarianism was the creed of the Citizens' Rights and Liquor Reform Association, an influential organization, which contested the 1928 referendum 'from the standpoint of the citizens'.54 The Association was made up of businessmen, physicians, lawyers and educationalists.55 Members believed that national sobriety was best achieved through reform and that otherwise citizens had the right to 'regulate their personal and social habits according to their convictions and their conscience'.56 Several clergy belonged to the Association the most prominent being Rev. Wyndham

53 D.T., 2 July 1926. 54 S.M.H., 17 January 1928.
55 D.T., 29 August 1928. 56 Ibid., 28 August 1928.
Heathercote. He was a leading speaker at rallies organized by the Association. Heathercote firmly believed that the public should not "commit the unutterable folly of deciding our personal habits by majority votes". At one Town Hall meeting he had 'people hanging out from the galleries to cheer him'.

The press generally agreed that reform was better than prohibition. 'What prohibitionists seem to overlook', commented the Herald, is that this is not a question of choosing between drunkenness and sobriety. It is a debate as to whether gradual reform or sharp legislative violence is the wiser road towards the correction of social dangers. Violence is but a doubtful reformer.

The work of the Licenses Reduction Board had given the community an opportunity to judge the practicability of reform. The Board began its work at the beginning of January 1920 and had completed its task by early 1928. Throughout this time local option ballots were suspended. By mid 1927 the Board had deprived 288 hotels and 61 wine shops of their licenses and had paid out over £600,000 in compensation. At the 1924 Nationalist Party Convention Mr. J.R.S. Jarvie moved that the conference approve the work of the Licenses Reduction Board and affirm that the Board was 'doing more for the temperance cause than could be done by legal prohibition in the present state of public opinion'. Speaking on his motion, which was carried, Jarvie expressed the warmest approval of the fine achievement of the board in the abolition of low-class hotels, wine shops, and shanties in the city and country.

The work of the Board had helped to improve the character of the entire drink trade for licensees were aware that if their premises were

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57 S.M.H., 29 March 1928. 58 Ibid., 29 June 1928.
59 Ibid., 12 June 1928. 60 Ibid., 12 July 1927.
61 Australian National Review, 14 October 1924.
badly conducted their licenses would be terminated. In the mid-1920s the Herald conducted an exhaustive investigation into Sydney's wine bars. The reporter noted that the bars were 'quite well-conducted', because the proprietors knew 'that if the proceedings were disorderly the bars would soon be closed'. The reporter had established that 'no riotous behaviour is countenanced, and ... very little, if any, immorality takes place on the premises'.

By the late 1920s it was clear that the appeal of the anti-drink movement had diminished principally in response to changing social attitudes. One additional reason can help explain the waning relevance of the crusade against drink. From the early 1920s new forms of popular leisure rivalled the dominant place the public house once held as a centre of social relaxation and entertainment.

The advent of the cinema made a significant impact on society. By the mid-1920s every suburb in Sydney had at least one picture theatre. Press commentators worried about the effect 'movies' had in promoting 'false values'. But this form of entertainment proved to be extremely popular and, being inexpensive, was accessible to lower income groups. The Australian Christian World recognised the 'immense service rendered' in every country where the cinema had been introduced. The 'quiet work of social reformation' lay particularly in providing an alternative to the public house which had been 'one of the most pressing problems of the labouring classes'. The appeal of the cinema was even more pronounced when, in the late 1920s, the first 'Talkies' were

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62 S.M.H. 2 February 1925.  
63 Ibid., 5 February 1925.  
64 Ibid., 29 May 1926.  
65 Ibid.  
shown. The home wireless set was also part of the greater diversity of popular entertainments which emerged during the early 1920s. In 1924 the Herald remarked that 'Thousands of people are now listening in nightly,' and two years later the paper noted the extent to which the wireless had become 'an addition socially to the entire family.'

These new forms of entertainment also made it difficult for anti-drink activists to conduct their public campaign. Crusaders were the product of late nineteenth century agitation where support for causes was generated by methods of personal contact and persuasion - outdoor and public hall meetings and swaying electors and politicians on the hustings. But radio and the cinema had diverted the public's interest from these gatherings. As the Herald commented only months after the first sound pictures were shown in Sydney:

The 'talkies!' By tonight 30,000 people will have seen them at the Lyceum Theatre and about 85,000 at the Regent. At half-past 9 o'clock on the morning of New Year's Day a queue of several hundred people had lined up outside the Regent ... in their zeal to see this new form of entertainment. On any morning now outside the Lyceum large crowds may be seen assembled at 10 o'clock, ready to take their seats when the doors open half an hour later.

In the later 1920s the anti-drink movement was unable to maintain a prominent place in society. As the decade drew to a close leading activists openly recognised that the tide of public opinion had turned against them. Rev. R.B.S. Hammond, addressing a meeting of the Women's Club in August 1929 admitted that, in combatting the drink traffic, the Alliance was 'up against tremendous forces'. These, he said, could be divided into three categories:

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67 Ibid., p.444. 68 S.M.H., 20 September 1924. 69 Ibid., 19 December 1926. 70 S.M.H., 4 January 1929.
the people who really loved the beverage use of alcohol; those who regarded traffic in alcohol as a sound business investment, and the conservatism in human nature, which was opposed to every radical change.71

It is not surprising that in the unfavourable climate of public opinion anti-drink activists increasingly directed their efforts to the young as the Band of Hope had done in the 1850s. In January 1929 the W.C.T.U. planned a state-wide campaign to 'interest growing girls and boys, young men and women in the cause of temperance'.72 Hammond explained that, while he recognized the young 'resented restraint and discipline', temperance workers were 'encouraged to continue the work among the rising generation'.73

However, as the economic recession of the late 1920s deepened into depression Hammond found other, more pressing, calls on his reforming zeal. Confronted by the plight of the growing army of homeless unemployed Hammond devised an innovative housing scheme. Established just outside Liverpool, 'Hammondville' (as the scheme was known) settled over 600 men, women and children in family units on an acre of ground each with a modest cottage. Here the families survived the depression living a self-sufficient and communal life-style.74

Nevertheless, the decline into obscurity of the anti-drink campaign left unresolved problems associated with the liquor trade. Sly-grog selling continued unchecked so long as six o'clock closing persisted and down and out alcoholics still roamed the poorest parts of Sydney. On several occasions the Herald drew readers' attention to the continuing rise in the number of 'metho-drinkers' who, the paper maintained, were

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71 Ibid., 16 August 1929. 72 Ibid., 7 January 1929.
73 Ibid., 15 February 1929.
brought to their condition by 'the early closing of hotels and the high cost of intoxicating liquor'.

One such case was reported in July 1929. Two constables were drawn to a lane-way in Surry Hills by the smell of methylated spirits. Lying huddled together in the gutter the constables found two men and a woman, and on the ground nearby was a billy can which had contained the spirit. By this time, though, there was no longer a sufficiently active anti-drink campaign to take pity on the poverty of three 'metho-drinkers' whose 'combined property when arrested comprised a broken comb a rusty tin opener and three matches'.

The great crusade to outlaw alcohol may have ended in the 1920s, as people came to accept the impossibility and the irrelevance of trying to secure prohibition: but so long as alcohol remains socially accepted, the problems of ensuring that it is used reasonably will not go away. Liquor is no longer seen as the root of all evil, but its use remains a mixed blessing.

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75 Ibid., 31 December 1929.
76 Ibid., 5 July 1929.
CONCLUSION

The political anti-drink movement did not secure prohibition - the reform which activists had always felt would pave the way for a better society. With the benefit of hindsight this hardly seems surprising. Prohibition was a drastic proposal for social reform. It not only challenged widely spread and entrenched habits of drinking but it threatened a powerful vested interest group. Reformers less than zealous and persistent would never have attempted to abolish the drink trade. The failure of the movement to secure its ultimate goal should not, however, be a reason to dismiss its achievements.

The press which was often critical of the extreme demands of the movement did, on occasions, recognize that it fulfilled an important social function. Truth, for example, once overcame its antipathy towards the fanaticism of 'wowsers' to remark that:

It is only natural that, vigilantly watched by the Temperance party, the abuses of the liquor traffic should attain special prominence in the public mind. Evils and irregularities, which in other walks of life are unnoticed or winked at, in this instance come under the full glare of criticism and condemnation.\(^1\)

Just after the turn of the century the Telegraph wrote in a similar appreciative tone. 'If no reform had been attempted by such means as the temperance organizations have employed', the editor remarked, 'it is likely that a great deal more drunkenness would abound than now does'.\(^2\)

There is undoubtedly some credibility in these views. In 1870 the liquor traffic did require reform and the crusading efforts of anti-drink activists did, in large measure, provide the impetus for the

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1 Truth, 10 September 1899.
2 D.T., 8 March 1902.
regulatory measures which were adopted. Public houses were better conducted in the 1920s than they had been half a century earlier.

Anti-drink campaigners prided themselves on having achieved a significant reduction in hotel numbers. In 1892, for example, there were 833 hotels in Sydney but by 1923 this number had dropped to 543.\(^3\) This fall in public house numbers can largely be attributed to the anti-drink campaign. Before their agitation commenced the system of free trade in public house licenses had been responsible for a proliferation in hotel numbers. Temperance protest ended this state of affairs. The introduction of a system to regulate the granting of licenses, even though it was sometimes abused, established the important principle that the state had a responsibility to oversee those areas of social behaviour which impinging upon the welfare of the community.

The anti-drink movement was successful in drawing public and political attention to drinking and drunkenness by operating as a disciplined pressure group. Its active members began their campaign for legislative restrictions with little experience in politics. Over the decades crusaders developed effective techniques of forcing parliament to pass restrictive measures. Initially they concentrated on building mass support and cultivating supporters in parliament. Later in the nineteenth century, and especially in the early twentieth century, the anti-drink movement developed close connections with political parties, and with women's groups and the labour movement. The Local Option League, and later the New South Wales Alliance, acted as central organizations to unite both the local church based and community based

temperance societies. These central organizations were also the focal point for fund raising, the dissemination of information and for the co-ordination of political campaigning. At all times the anti-drink movement was in the fore-front of developing techniques of electioneering. In these ways, crusaders won restrictive legislation. The effect of this legislation, however, was not to materially diminish drinking but to foster a sub-cultural and criminal dimension to the habit. Thus, the claim advanced by anti-drink campaigners that the law could improve social behaviour appears to have been wildly misguided. In retrospect the assumption that widely indulged in social habits could be eradicated by a policy of restriction, together with harsh penalties for offenders, may seem to have been naive. But in passing comment on its failure it is worth remembering that much the same policy has guided our own society's efforts to curb drug abuse with very similar criminal consequences.

In their advocacy of restrictive policies anti-drink crusaders failed to appreciate the social and cultural forces which stimulated widespread habits of drinking and, moreover, which fostered drunkenness as a social problem. This lack of appreciation is not surprising given the social background of the movement. Its support and its leadership came mostly from the 'respectable' classes who established its overwhelmingly evangelical, Christian character. Consequently, a chasm separated the way of life of anti-drink campaigners and the people whose behaviour they were chiefly concerned about. Most crusaders found the drinking habits of the working classes so offensive that little attempt was made to examine them closely. Indeed it was often a source of pride among crusaders to disclaim any knowledge of public houses. The revulsion experienced by those who had glimpsed hotel life was often extreme. Prominent W.C.T.U. worker, Mrs. S. Nolan, told a meeting in September
1916 that she 'failed to see the attraction of the bar', adding that she 'often poked her head in and found foul smells and dirty floors, unclean people and oaths'. The result of campaigners' distance from the lives of drinkers was their inability to appreciate why the working classes, in particular, drank and why public houses were so popular.

There is strong evidence to indicate that drinking, and especially drunkenness, was related to a socio-economic environment of deprivation. The hordes of drunks who mainly lived in the inner-city districts endured conditions which acted as a constant incentive to regular and heavy drinking. Public houses were heavily located in inner-city working class districts where they functioned as social centres for people who had few other meeting places.

Ignorance of the 'culture' of drinking lay behind the crusaders' resolute faith in drastic legislative remedies. However, the movement's success as a pressure group for restrictive legislation acted to prevent the acceptance of alternative means to deal with the liquor traffic. This angered Assembly member John Gillies who, at the time the 1905 Liquor Bill was debated in parliament, protested that ardent temperance reformers ... ruin their cause by their intemperate utterances at the street corners and on the public platforms, and are responsible for the fact that we have not long ago placed upon the statute-book a better and more satisfactory licensing law.

Gillies' view has considerable substance. The measures sponsored by the movement were continually aimed at the extinction of the drink trade and this policy in fact had the effect of slowing down the more practical work of regulating and reforming that trade. The belated establishment of the Licenses Reduction Board in 1919, which carried out far more

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4 D.T., 6 September 1916.

effective work in abolishing unnecessary and badly conducted public houses than local option had managed to achieve, demonstrated the effectiveness of alternative measures.

Anti-drink campaigners could have achieved a great deal to reduce the incidence of drunkenness had they not been so firmly fixed on winning restrictive legislation. Leaders of the campaign were well placed to make a constructive contribution towards improving the physical environment of poor, inner-city residents. Moreover, activists might have sponsored the development of alternative entertainments and venues to the public house. Some interest had been shown in this matter before the 1870s but it dissipated once the political campaign began. Indeed, Protestants obstructed the spread of leisure facilities, especially on Sundays. Crusaders failed to appreciate that this was the only day for social recreation for many working people. Well into the twentieth century Protestants continued to hinder opportunities for leisure which may have helped to diminish working people's reliance on the public house. In the mid-1920s the Anglican, Presbyterian and Methodist churches protested, unsuccessfully, against sport being played in the city parks on Sundays. The Sydney City Council had approved the move but churches continued to fear the 'secularisation of Sunday'.

Anti-drink campaigners might also have contributed towards improving the quality of liquor. From the earliest days of the colony it had been widely known that the liquor consumed by working people especially was powerful and poisonous. By the 1870s police authorities and others close
to the drink trade recognized that the poor quality of the liquor, together with the substances with which it was adulterated, was directly linked to the incidence of drunkenness. The improvements, however, made to the quality of liquor were carried out without the aid or interest of the anti-drink movement.

Crusaders were similarly uninterested in working to help alleviate the sufferings of the down and out chronic drinkers. The tragic plight of this group had always fuelled campaigners' certainty of the evils of liquor. But they made no concerted effort to press for the proper institutional and medical care of alcoholics. Had such efforts been made then undoubtedly fewer would have suffered the slow but certain deterioration that an existence in the parks drinking crude, cheap spirits inevitably brought.

Despite the limitations of the largely Protestant anti-drink movement, especially their misguided faith in the abolition of the drink trade, crusaders were responsible for establishing the view that the level of drunkenness in society was intolerable. They were also responsible for focusing community attention on the social problems which accompanied the habit of drinking. This in itself was a worthwhile achievement.
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