

too large to publish on the balance-sheet, and large gratuities were made to charitable societies of the borough, as conscience or hush money, whichever it might be regarded.

After our talk, the President of the local branch, Mrs Pattinson, agreed to take me for a brief peep round the town near closing time. We did not expect and did not observe any sensational scenes, yet the human impressions gained in that half-hour were worth tons of figures. We walked into a few of the men's drinking rooms. A momentary inspection showed most to be middle-aged, but a number of very young men were present. We did not see any quarrelling, would not have said that any of the men we saw were intoxicated, yet even to our unaccustomed eyes it was plain that this habel of talk and hiving about of people with glasses in their hands was no normal conversation of men at ease in an ordinary smoke-room or tea-room, and no training for youths needing manly recreation after toil. But it was, of course, the women's bars we took for our objective. In one we saw a couple of middle-aged women sitting down and talking quietly over two small glasses of something. In one or two hotels the women's bar seemed closed; it was nearly ten o'clock. In others, a number of women, most of them probably young wives, were standing talking confusedly like the men, with beer glasses in their hands. Nowhere in these evening bars is there any pretence of food. The manageress of the largest bar we saw followed us out with a flood of words angrily apologetic, though we had said nothing, and had not looked censoriously at them. The women, she said, led hard lives, and surely to goodness no one need grudge them fourpence for their beer and a chat. Too well we discerned signs of influence in her own speech and behaviour, and answered gently that we wished all women good recreation after long working days. Then the woman wept, and made her apology a personal appeal.

"I work hard, God's truth, I do," she said; "I have my kiddies to keep, and it's hard—hard on twenty-two and six a week."

We quietened her again, and asked about the minding of the children of the women within. They were left to Providence, it seemed; the husbands

were in the other bars. I went home with a lasting impression of what England was doing to this woman and those to whom she was dealing out a temptation too strong for herself.

The conclusions I came to on the Carlisle experiment are these: The town showed no superficial signs of drinking, but was no cleaner or quieter than Keswick, Penrith, Llandudno, or any other licensed town of the size that I have stayed in since, while statistics show that other towns have smaller lists of convictions for drunkenness.

That somehow and somewhere large quantities of liquor are consumed in all these centres, but whereas in license towns figures are obtainable, no details of management are obtainable in Carlisle, nor can the police be expected to forget that it would be most inexpedient to look for flaws in a national system under which they are paid and promoted. For both these reasons, statistics regarding Carlisle can convince no one not already convinced.

That advocacy of a liquor bureaucracy, under which money can be spent so irresponsibly, and the will of the people locally flouted, stamps the advocate as a political reactionary of a hopeless sort.

Finally, that Carlisle, though a young experiment yet, is already started on the road of home deterioration, and that sapping of womanhood and childhood under a specious show of respectability, which has ruined Gothenburg and every other system of national or municipal control yet tried. The inevitable Commission of Enquiry is only a few years distant.

It may be added that the Home Secretary, Mr Shortt, no friend of any kind of reform, has just visited Carlisle, and vaguely praised the moral results, and very definitely praised the results to the British Exchequer. Yet, when pressed in Parliament, he has, with the prevalent pre-election "grumpiness," pointedly denied that he is extending the Carlisle experiment just now.

There's not a single bit of use
To talk and sing and pray,
For righteousness and purity,
Unless you vote that way.

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