Drink Ye All of This: The Episcopal Church and the Temperance Movement

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It has been generally assumed that the Episcopal Church was apathetic toward the temperance movement of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.[1] This assumption has informed the church's discussions on alcohol consumption and the treatment of addiction. In June of 2015, the General Convention of the Episcopal Church passed a resolution calling for the church to "confront and repent" of its "complicity in a culture of alcohol, denial, and enabling" and to advocate for public resources to "respond with pastoral care and accountability" to those facing alcohol addiction.[2] Prior to this, the church last formally considered its attitude toward alcohol in 1985, passing a resolution which presumed that the church had never advocated for prohibition or any legislative platform regarding alcohol awareness.[3] These resolutions belie the denomination's rich history of conscientious and pastoral engagement with alcohol addiction.

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, American Anglicans taught temperance in the spirit of classical philosophy and theology. Temperance was not considered the sum of all virtues,

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[1] Ken Burns and Lynn Novick, *Ken Burns: Prohibition* (PBS, 2011). In his 2011 documentary, Burns maintains that all Protestant denominations except the Lutherans and Episcopalians supported prohibition.

[2] "Resolution A158" and "Resolution A159" in *Reports to the 78th General Convention, June 25-July 3, 2015* (New York, 2015).

[3] "Resolution A083" in *Journal of the General Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America, 1985* (New York, 1985).

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but moderation in drink was recognized as a scriptural command and mark of election. While drunkenness had been commonly preached against by both colonial Puritans and Anglicans, an injunction to total abstinence on the part of either was nearly unheard of.[4] Increase Mather was in agreement with most seventeenth and eighteenth century Christians when he proclaimed, "Drink is in itself a good creature of God, and to be received with thankfulness; the wine is from God, but the drunkard is from the Devil."[5] Canon XIII of the church's 1789 canons denounced drunkenness and the frequenting of taverns on the part of clergy, but only among a substantial list of other vices punishable by ecclesiastical censure, suspension, or degradation.[6] Though there were efforts made around the turn of the nineteenth century to formally specify immoral practices unbecoming of church members,[7] such motions failed because activities such as drinking, attending balls, or going to the theater were seen as "dangerous" but were not considered sins in themselves.[8] The Rt. Reverend John Henry Hobart of New York encouraged moderation in drinking rather than abstinence in his 1826 *Church Catechism*[9] and wine was commonly served into the early nineteenth century at ecclesiastical events.[10]

Between 1800 and 1830 the nascent United States of America witnessed such a spike in annual per capita consumption of

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[4] W. J. Rorabaugh, *The Alcoholic Republic, an American Tradition* (New York, 1979), 26.

[5] Ibid., 30.

[6] *Constitution and Canons for the Government of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America Adopted in General Conventions, 1789-1922* (New York, 1924). "No ecclesiastical persons shall, other than for their honest necessities, resort to taverns, or other places most liable to be abused to licentiousness. Further, they shall not give themselves to . . . drinking or riot, or to the spending of their time idly. And if any offend in the above, they shall be liable to the ecclesiastical censure of admonition, or suspension, or degradation, as the nature of the case may require."

[7] For example the General Convention of 1817 and Virginia's diocesan convention in 1818 passed motions enjoining reform of the morals of laity.

[8] Francis L. Hawks, *Narrative of Events Connected with the Rise and Progress of the Protestant Episcopal Church in Virginia.* (New York, 1836), 127.

[9] John Johns, *A Memoir of the Life of the Right Rev. William Meade, D.D., Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Virginia.* (Baltimore, 1867), 249–52.

[10] Robert Bruce Mullin, *Episcopal Vision/American Reality: High Church Theology and Social Thought in Evangelical America* (New Haven, 1986), 120.

alcohol that many protestants demanded organized action. Between 1710 and 1830, the average American of drinking age consumed nearly fifty percent more gallons of absolute alcohol per year. During that same period of time, consumption of gallons of absolute alcohol in spirits increased from 1.7 to 4.3 per capita.[11] Prosperity, improved distilling technology, and plenty of grain from newly cultivated pastures, combined to create a drinking epidemic. For evangelical protestants in the midst of the Second Great Awakening, intemperance, more than any other vice, was seen to stand in the way of the sinner and salvation. Drinking confirmed one's hardness of heart and precluded the reception of God's grace.[12] The founder of the American Temperance Society, Lyman Beecher, preached, "Of all the ways to hell, which the feet of deluded mortals tread, that of the intemperate is the most dreary and terrific."[13] Those who drank would impede their own redemption because "God in his righteous displeasure is accustomed to withdraw his protection and abandon the sinner to his own way."[14] Societies such as Beecher's were the first expressions of the American temperance movement. Founded across denominational lines, the only prerequisite for membership was a pledge of total abstinence from distilled beverages. Like the spiritual revival that captivated early nineteenth century religion, temperance reform was seen by many to herald a millenarian era of religious enthusiasm and Christian unity.

The Episcopal Church remained divided over revival, reform, and temperance for much of the nineteenth century. Evangelical Episcopalians sympathetic to revival and desirous of ecumenical harmony with their Protestant neighbors, endorsed and participated in the American Temperance Society and similar societies. High church Episcopalians, however, remained wary of evangelical societies and the principals upon which they were based: ecumenism, revival, and a theology of spiritual regeneration seemingly removed

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[11] Rorabaugh, *The Alcoholic Republic*, 233.
[12] Ibid., 209.
[13] Lyman Beecher, *Six Sermons on the Nature, Occasions, Signs, Evils, and Remedy of Intemperance* (New York, 1827), 14.
[14] Ibid., 19.

from the sacrament of baptism. Robert Mullin observed that "high churchmen considered themselves to be defenders of the apostolic faith, bulwarks against unorthodoxy, and a bastion for tradition in the face of an untraditional spirit within the rest of American Protestantism."[15] The high church party was suspicious of any innovative movement or social reform that seemed to undermine or contradict the twin pillars of the Hobartian church: "sacraments and ordinances from the hands of her authorized ministry."[16] Temperance reform too was often denounced on account of its association with lay societies, unregulated preaching, and its reliance on conversion theology.

The Rt. Reverend John Henry Hopkins of Vermont was similarly disposed against the temperance movement. Hopkins' polemic was especially directed against those evangelicals who required a pledge of total abstinence as a prerequisite to Christian conversion. In an 1836 lecture, Hopkins criticized the novelty of this requirement, with its neo-Palagian tendency to confuse sobriety with the grace of the Holy Spirit,

> It is absurd to call [temperance reform] the John the Baptist of Religion . . . the forerunner of Christ . . . coming some eighteen hundred years after the blessed Savior accomplished his work. . . . And it is equally absurd to talk of a forerunner of Christianity, as if the Holy Spirit had not established the Church of God, nor favored it with his gracious influences, until after the new invention, called the Temperance system.[17]

Temperance reformers confused a change in behavior with a conversion of faith; "Instead of temperance preparing the way for faith, faith prepares the way for that and every other virtue."[18]

Undaunted by controversy, Hopkins received fierce opposition to his lecture and not only from Congregationalists, Methodists,

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[15] Mullin, *Episcopal Vision/American Reality*, 70.
[16] John Henry Hobart, *A Word for the Church* (Boston, 1832), 25.
[17] John Henry Hopkins, *The Primitive Church Compared with the Protestant Episcopal Church of the Present Day* (Burlington, 1835), 144.
[18] Ibid., 41.

and Presbyterians, but also from his fellow Episcopalians. Despite the increasing influence of Hobartian high churchmanship, the early nineteenth century Episcopal Church was effected by currents in mainline Protestantism, especially those of awakening and temperance.

Fierce opposition to Hopkins was expressed in a series of letters "by an Episcopalian" to an American Temperance Society periodical, which were subsequently published in a single volume. The information and anecdotes contained in these correspondences call into question Hopkins' statement that "the Episcopal Church, as a body, is not disposed to be active in what is called the temperance reform."[19] One letter thoroughly enumerated support for the temperance cause to include more than half of the Episcopal clergy in New York and Pennsylvania, all but two in Maine, all but two in Rhode Island, all but one in Massachusetts, and all in New Hampshire. Broad support was registered in the southern dioceses as well, especially in Virginia. "The name of this excellent man [Assistant Bishop William Meade of Virginia] stands first upon the committee of business, at the Virginia State Temperance Convention. The venerable Bishop Moore [the bishop of Virginia], though not a member, is understood to be no opponent to the Temperance Society." Even in Hopkins' own diocese of Vermont, "a majority of the clergy appear to differ entirely from their bishop."[20]

Hopkins' slant is most evident in his reference to Connecticut's latest diocesan convention as evidence for general Episcopal opposition to temperance reform.[21] The bishop of Vermont seems to have willfully neglected to mention the strong support of the temperance cause taken by the neighboring Eastern Diocese. The Eastern Diocese, which composed a federation of much of Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Maine, had resolved in 1834 to support "the rise and progress of the Temperance Reformation," and further encouraged cooperation with interdenominational

[19] Ibid., 129.

[20] Lucius M. Sargent, ed., *Letters to John H. Hopkins, D.D., Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church for the Diocese of Vermont* (Windsor, 1836), 39–42.

[21] Hopkins, *The Primitive Church*, 128.

societies to promote reform.[22] The Rt. Reverend Alexander V. Griswold, bishop of the Eastern Diocese, lamented high church antagonism toward the temperance movement and maintained such a favorable opinion of the temperance cause that he published a prayer to be used at temperance society meetings.[23] Far from "not being disposed" to temperance reform, a significant portion of evangelical Episcopalians regarded the movement as a foundation for national awakening.

Temperance reform and national revival were gospel imperatives for the Reverend Charles Petit McIlvaine of Philadelphia (later bishop of Ohio). McIlvaine had become a leading figure and sometime president of the American Tract Society, an interdenominational evangelical society devoted to printing and disseminating Christian literature, especially on temperance reform.[24] In the 1830s McIlvaine published a lecture entitled "Address to the Young Men of the United States on Temperance" in which he spelled out the dangers of alcohol and prescribed abstinence as the only means to avoid sin and curb its destructive effect on the person. McIlvaine rejected any halfhearted advocacy of temperance without total abstinence. "[Moderation] is precisely the plan on which intemperance has been wrested with ever since it was first discovered that 'wine is a mocker' and that 'strong drink is raging.' . . . So far from its having shown the least tendency to exterminate the evil, it is the mother of all its abominations."[25] In bombastic prose, McIlvaine exclaimed that the motto "abstain entirely" is like unto that which "Constantine saw inscribed with a sunbeam upon the cloud, *in hoc signo vinces*!"[26] Nevertheless, McIlvaine's principle of abstinence was qualified in an important way: its application applied only to "ardent spirits."[27] McIlvaine's hesitancy to condemn the use of all intoxicating beverages may be

[22] Sargent, *Letters to John H. Hopkins*, 25.
[23] Alexander Viets Griswold, *Prayers Adapted to Various Occasions of Social Worship* (Philadelphia, 1836), 215–16.
[24] The society was responsible for the first publication of Lyman Beecher's sermons on intemperance (above) in 1826.
[25] Charles Pettit McIlvaine, *Address to the Young Men of the United States on Temperance* (New York, 1839), 6.
[26] Ibid., 7.
[27] Ibid., 12.

indicative of an early rupture within the wider temperance movement and conservative, albeit evangelical, Episcopalians.

Beginning in the 1830s, temperance pledges became more and more inclusive of all intoxicating beverages. In 1836, the American Temperance Society merged with other temperance groups to form the American Temperance Union (ATU). The ATU platform included a pledge to "tee-total" abstinence from drinking both fermented and distilled alcohol. This shift coincided with an increasing reliance on the coercion of law, including local option prohibitory licenses. By 1851 the secretary of the American Temperance Union could summarize his organization's philosophy in a simple statement: "Alcohol . . . wherever found, whether in fermented or distilled liquor, is a subtle poison, never heedful in health, and, in all its tendencies, at war with the whole physical and moral system as God has made it."[28] Intemperance became associated with alcohol itself.

For many Episcopalians, including evangelicals, the near Manichaean equation of alcohol with sin was a step too far. The dogma of total abstinence seemed to contradict a conservative reading of the plain words of scripture, even flying in the face of the institution of wine at the Last Supper. Bishop William Meade of Virginia, previously listed among those devoted to the temperance cause, was typical in his reticence to endorse total abstinence as the only cure for intemperance. Meade's biography, authored by his successor, the Rt. Reverend John Johns, included an 1835 letter to the Reverend Alonzo Potter that explained his misgivings for the principle of total abstinence. Johns presented Bishop Meade as initially disposed to the abstinence pledge; however, when the original pledge was expanded to prohibit wine, Meade felt that the authority of scripture forbade his advocating the new measure. "We may do much harm to the best of causes by taking improper liberty with the word of God, and trying to draw from it a condemnation of that, whose temperate use was plainly allowed." For Meade, wine especially could not be regarded in the same category as "the great authors of mischief," "whiskey,

[28] John Marsh, *A Half Century Tribute to the Cause of Temperance* (New York, 1851), 8.

brandy, and rum" because it had "the sanction of God's word and the Saviour's example."[29]

Bishop Potter's initial letter to Bishop Meade has not survived, but given its 1835 date and the subject matter it may be safe to presume that it was occasioned by the temperance movement's adoption of teetotalism, bolstered by an 1834 tract authored by Moses Stuart of Andover Seminary. Stuart derived a theory in conjunction with Eliphalet Nott, Potter's father-in-law and professor at Union College, that the Bible referred to two different varieties of wine: one wine was fermented, and widely condemned by scripture; the other, non-fermented, and commended because of its sober quality. Jesus, Stuart and Nott argued, would have never condoned the consumption of an intoxicating substance, but served non-fermented "bible wine," at Cana and at the Last Supper.[30]

Stuart and Nott's thesis did not endear itself to conservative Episcopalian sensibility. Otherwise sympathetic to the cause of temperance, evangelicals, such as Meade, were put off by Stuart's contradiction of the plain words of scripture.[31] Likewise, traditionalists were repulsed by his substituting wine for what was essentially grape syrup as pasteurized grape juice had yet to be invented. The high church periodical, *Churchmen,* quoted one minister's editorial on the liturgical substitution:

> Another way in which men make themselves over-wise on this subject is by modifying the ordinance to suit their own views; especially by inculcating the doctrine, or adopting the practice, of dispensing with the appropriate elements, or of substituting something in place of them, which the scripture does not warrant; or to come fully to the point which I now have more particularly in view, and on which the movements of the present day will not allow me any longer to

[29] John Johns, *A Memoir of the Life of the Right Rev. William Meade, D.D.* (Baltimore, 1867) 249–52.

[30] Eliphalet Nott, *Lectures on Temperance* (Hamilton, 1857).

[31] One might also suspect that Stuart and Nott, vocal and popular anti-slavery advocates, would have been viewed with suspicion and even hostility among southern evangelicals given their anti-slavery interpretation of the Bible. Consequently, even Southern Methodists did not subscribe to their teachings on temperance and only later substituted fermented wine with "bible wine."

be silent—THE EXCLUSION OF WINE FROM THE LORD'S SUPPER.[32]

It is unclear whether Bishop Potter might have subscribed to Nott and Stuart's two-wine hypothesis, but he certainly agreed in his advocacy for teetotalism.

Bishop Alonzo Potter was among the few evangelical Episcopalians whose endorsement of the temperance movement included definitive support for total abstinence from all intoxicating beverages. Potter was elected bishop of Pennsylvania in 1845, following the resignation of his predecessor, the Rt. Reverend Henry U. Onderdonk, on confessing to charges of drunkenness.[33] Perhaps as a consequence, Potter was seen as a refreshing alternative, having been known to have pledged total abstinence from all intoxicating beverage once he succeeded his father-in-law as President of Union College.[34] Indeed, his biographer noted that "the pledge was never retracted nor violated by Dr. Potter while he lived . . . He became in the end thorough and uncompromising, though never pharisaical and denunciatory." Bishop Potter is even said to have commonly "declined the courtesy of a glass of wine at table"—a habit that Bishop Meade deplored as "improper."[35] Nevertheless, Bishop Potter is a seminal figure in Episcopal approaches to temperance reform not because of his unusual advocacy of teetotalism, but because of the manner in which he approached intemperance.

In Bishop Potter's widely publicized lecture, "The Drinking Usages of Society," delivered in Pittsburgh in April of 1852, Potter raised the level of consciousness from the individual to the collective. No longer was intemperance described as a mark of an unconverted or unregenerate soul, it was more and more characterized as a public health crisis, "Drunkenness is a disease more

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[32] *Churchmen* 5 (18 July1835) quoted in Mullin, *Episcopal Vision/American Reality*, 111. [emphasis original]

[33] Hermon Griswold Batterson, *A Sketch-Book of the American Episcopate During One Hundred Years, 1783-1883* (Philadelphia, 1884), 95.

[34] M. A. De Wolfe Howe, *Memoirs of the Life and Services of the Rt. Rev. Alonzo Potter, D.D., LL.D.* (Philadelphia, 1871), 75.

[35] Johns, *Life of William Meade,* 250.

loathsome and deadly even than small-pox. Its approaches are still more stealthy; and the specific against it—total abstinence—has never failed, and cannot fail."[36] Like any public health crisis, alcoholism required social awareness to prevent its causes. Potter held that social drinking, which he calls "the drinking usages of society," is the root cause of infection.

> Can you drink with safety to your neighbor? Are you charged with no responsibility in respect to him? You drink, as you think, within the limits of safety. He, in imitation of your example, drinks also, but passes that unseen, unknown line, within which, for him, safety lies. Is not your indulgence, then, a stumbling-block—ay, perchance, a fatal stumbling-block in his way? Is it not, in principle, the very case contemplated by St. Paul, when he said, 'It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak'?

Early temperance reformers, like Lyman Beecher, had considered intemperance to be the result of an unconverted sinner's woefully misguided will. However, in Potter's temperance writing, the sin of intemperance was diagnosed as a consequence of social degeneration. To illustrate this point, the former university president and professor recalled several moving accounts from his collegiate ministry. Potter's narratives are dominated by a pastoral sensibility that minimized personal culpability and ascribed guilt to base social norms. In one narrative, Potter recounted the story of a professor, who, grieved by the deleterious effects of alcohol on bright young minds, required of his students a pledge to refrain from "intoxicating spirits." While the experiment worked at first, soon the young men would indulge in champagne and beer in an effort to circumvent the prohibition on hard alcohol. Potter added, "The wine these young men drank was as fatal to them and to college discipline as rum; and the simple alternative was between continued excesses, on the one hand, or total abstinence from all intoxicating beverage, on the other." Ultimately, the professor discerned the latter course; however, not before realizing

[36] Alonzo Potter, *The Drinking Usages of Society* (Boston, 1868), 21.

that he too would be complicit in their demise if he did not remove "the bottle of Madeira on his own table."[37]

In another narrative, Potter highlighted the social evils of a drinking culture. After one young man "of not ordinary promise" had resolved to refrain from all alcohol, he was challenged to drink by "a young lady, whom he desired to please." After he refused,

> With banter and ridicule she soon cheated him out of all his noble purposes, and her challenge was accepted. He no sooner drank than he felt that the demon was still alive, and that from temporary sleep he was now waking with tenfold strength. 'Now,' said he to a friend who sat next to him, 'now I have tasted again, and I drink till I die.' The awful pledge was kept. Not ten days had passed before that ill-fated youth fell under the horrors of delirium tremens, and was borne to a grave of shame and dark despair.[38]

By raising social consciousness, Potter hoped to counter the pressure unwittingly exerted by moderate drinkers on vulnerable individuals. Intemperance was understood to be the product not of personal impiety, but collective amorality.

As evangelical Episcopalians experienced the tragedies of the mid-nineteenth century, including civil war and the dire realities caused by urbanization and industrialization, they increasingly adopted Potter's view that temperance, like other societal ills, required social reform coupled with spiritual renewal. Post-Civil War evangelicals described the intemperate as casualties of an alcoholic culture. Personal culpability was minimized in the shadow of the satanic powers of the liquor industry. The Reverend Stephen H. Tyng, rector of St George's Church, New York, a flagship evangelical parish, preached in earnest against social intemperance, dubbing this force "Legion," after the demonic collective exorcised by Christ. "LEGION," whence "all the miseries and madness of human life are seen flowing from it and produced by it ... This is the EVIL SPIRIT OF INTEMPERANCE—the Moloch of our age and nation."[39]

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[37] Ibid., 23–24.
[38] Ibid., 27.
[39] Stephen Tyng, *Temperance Sermons* (New York, 1873), 351.

Legion's "victims," far from being unregenerate and impenitent sinners, were characterized as formerly pristine souls,

> These were once the objects of human tenderness and love, bedewed by a mothers' tears of joy, and bathed with a mothers' kisses of affection . . . Their youthful blood was as fresh, their infant blush as innocent, and their appetites as docile, as others around them. They have since been driven away before this demon of intemperance, since these eyes of ours have seen the light, from the very soil which we inhabit . . . to a hopeless and dark eternity.[40]

Tyng's sermon is indicative of the growing shift from pietism to moralism among evangelical Episcopalians. The low church party had been exhausted by debate over baptismal regeneration, a cause made all the more divisive by the growing influence of tractarianism. The temperance movement had long been coupled with a theology "that regeneration was a voluntary change in the elect, undertaken in response to the moral suasion of the Spirit, which presented truth to the mind."[41] However, by the time Tyng preached his sermon on "Legion" in the 1870s, conversion for many evangelicals was less about regeneration and more about self-mastery through the cultivation of a character modeled after Christ as "moral warrior."[42] Tyng's own soteriology echoed this vision of Christ as the "strong man" destroying the social, cultural, and economic forces of Satan, through total abstinence and suppression of the liquor trade.[43] "The Saviour's purpose is to break up the whole dominion of Satan over the souls of men, and to annihilate his power, however exercised, and by whatever instruments maintained."[44]

Tyng's characterization of the temperance movement is indicative of a broader trend in the history of evangelicals in the Episcopal Church. Church historians like Diana Butler Bass and Allen C. Guelzo have sought to explain one of the great quandaries of

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[40] Ibid., 357.
[41] E. Brooks Holifield, *A History of Pastoral Care in America: From Salvation to Self-Realization* (Nashville, 1983), 143.
[42] Ibid., 171.
[43] Tyng, *Temperance Sermons*, 371.
[44] Ibid., 351.

the history of the Episcopal Church: what became of the evangelical Episcopalians following the 1870s? A portion of conservative evangelicals had broken away as Reformed Episcopalians following the 1871 General Convention's unwillingness to sufficiently define baptismal regeneration.[45] However, as Bass observed, this schism could not have resulted in the exodus of the entire evangelical party. Yet, in 1872, only a year following that small schism, John H. Hopkins Jr, was able to proclaim that "the old Evangelical party is dead, dead, dead."[46] Where then did evangelical energy go?

Several causes have commonly been listed to explain the demise of the old evangelicals, most of them acknowledging, like Bass, that "evangelicals slowly abandoned old party loyalty in favor of the broad church party whose new emphasis on critical theology and social ministry seemed to better address the problems of post-Civil War America."[47] Factors influencing this realignment included the emergence of liberal Protestantism, higher biblical criticism, the division of northern and southern evangelicals over slavery and reconstruction, and an increasing reliance among some evangelicals on secular institutions to bring about change. In addition, the changing attitude toward temperance reveals that evangelical theology was undergoing a theological reevaluation away from a soteriological focus on personal conversion, toward a vision of social transformation. Thus evangelical Episcopal activism did not disappear, but reemerged during the broad church pursuit of social reform. In this new era, temperance remained high on these reformers' agenda.

Temperance reform became a major topic of discussion within the Episcopal Church Congress movement. Beginning in the early 1870s, annual congresses provided a national forum for broad church progressivism. A discussion dedicated to the "Prevention

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[45] The convention was unable to condemn to the satisfaction of evangelicals a tractarian understanding of baptismal regeneration as *opus operatum*, leaving open the possibility that the term "regeneration," used at baptism, could be interpreted so as to make superfluous any spiritual regeneration brought about by spiritual conversion.

[46] Quoted in Diana Hochstedt Butler, *Standing against the Whirlwind: Evangelical Episcopalians in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York, 1995), 224.

[47] Ibid., 225.

and Cure of Drunkenness" dominated the third congress of 1876, with over ten speakers participating. Many of these speakers agreed that temperance reform required wholistic pastoral care rather than a "fanatical" commitment to teetotalism. The first address on the issue, by the Reverend Richard Heber Newton, prescribed that "the prevention of drunkenness is to be reached by a general advance along the whole line of progress, physical, social, mental and moral, in accordance with the laws of nature."[48] Newton was followed by George C. Shattuck M.D. who similarly advocated a wholistic approach to the care of the person. While Shattuck commended medical research, pledges of temperance or total-abstinence, the implementation of prohibition laws, he acknowledged that these efforts are futile if not combined with spiritual care.

> The medical man cannot get along at all in his efforts to cure disease and disorder, unless he can command the confidence and confession of his patients. Surely the drunkard needs a spiritual adviser, to whom he can confess his temptations and his faults, and who can counsel and pray as one in authority and in communion with the source of all strength.[49]

Other addresses followed in a similar vein. Speakers included congress movement founder, the Reverend William R. Huntington; the revered reformer, the Reverend Thomas Gallaudet; and the high church bishop of Northern Texas, the Rt. Reverend Andrew C. Garrett. Together they articulated a moderate and pastoral approach to the temperance question.

Many of the ideals of the previous generation of evangelical reformers were promoted at congresses throughout the late nineteenth century. Like Griswold, McIlvaine, and Potter, broad church leaders sought to address temperance and other theological and social issues of the day in a "comprehensive" and ecumenical manner.[50] The movement engaged high and low

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[48] *Authorized Report of the Proceedings of the Congress of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States* (n.p., 1876), 237.

[49] Ibid., 241.

[50] Richard M. Spielmann, "A Neglected Source: The Episcopal Church Congress, 1874-1934," *Anglican and Episcopal History* 58 (1989): 57.

churchmen, layman as well as clerics. Richard Spielmann noted that the congress movement did much to undermine a stereotype of a self-interested Episcopal Church that bishops such as Hobart and Hopkins had unwittingly cultivated because of their apathetic stance toward social issues that were not narrowly ecclesiastical.[51]

Another aspect of the broad church and congress movements was its increasingly international scope, especially in the years leading up to the second Lambeth Conference of 1878. Richard Hebert Newton concluded his 1876 address by wondering whether it was time for the Episcopal Church to change the tenor of national temperance reform by establishing a Church Temperance Society in the pattern of the Church of England Temperance Society. Unlike the temperance organizations of mainline protestant denominations in America, the English Temperance Society did not mandate "total abstinence," but maintained a two-tiered membership of abstinent and temperate members.[52] Newton and other reformers at the 1876 Church Congress commended such a model for its inclusive platform.

Accordingly, it was at the 1881 Church Congress, that Mr. Robert Graham was first given an opportunity to plead his case for temperance reform. Graham, formerly secretary of the Church of England Temperance Society, was invited to found a sister organization for the Church in America. Graham's society, the Church Temperance Society (C.T.S.), based in New York, would be founded upon the English model: The C.T.S.'s moderate attitude to reform was reflected in a constitution that outlined four sensible objectives,

1. Training the young in habits of temperance.
2. Rescue of the drunkard.
3. Restriction of the saloon by legislation.
4. Counteractive agencies, such as Coffee Houses, Working Men's Clubs, Reading Rooms, and other attractive wholesome resorts.[53]

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[51] Ibid.

[52] Like its English counterpart, "It was to be distinctly understood that this promise has no reference to the use of wine in the Holy Communion."

[53] Robert Graham, *Hand-Book of the Church Temperance Legion* (New York, 1894), 17.

Neither Graham nor his society endorsed prohibition, an objective they viewed to be counterproductive. "The Prohibitionists are earnest, extreme, narrow, partisan men as a rule. They bow down to a creed of law as their shibboleth and have made it their God."[54]

The activity of the Church Temperance Society was earnest, thorough, and effective. In a series of publications between 1883 and 1887,[55] Graham and the C.T.S. conducted a comprehensive survey of alcohol dependent New York City, which they called "Liquordom." Graham compared the 10,168 saloons with the 568 churches and schools and included maps that made plain the excessive saloon activity in each of New York's twenty-four assembly districts.[56] Based on this troubling data, the C.T.S. advocated a non-partisan political agenda which, with the enthusiastic support of Assemblyman Theodore Roosevelt, saw the City's Board of Excise Commissioners directly appointed by the mayor rather than by the corrupt Board of Alderman—half of the 1884 board were in the liquor business; two of whom were in Sing-Sing.[57] The C.T.S. would go on to submit several additional bills which met with varying success; however, these initiatives were notable for their pragmatic approach to saloon reform. Graham remarked of his legislative program: "It will not bring the Millennium but it will reduce the saloons to a measurable and manageable quantity."[58] Unlike other church temperance boards, the C.T.S. refused to devote "an inordinate share of the enthusiasm, skill and labor" to the cause of temperance reform through prohibition.[59]

The Church Temperance Society did not only focus on legislation as a means to combat the deleterious effects of alcohol, but also evangelism. Graham proposed the opening up of "coffee

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[54] *Authorized Report of the Proceedings of the Congress of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States* (n.p., 1893), 32.

[55] Robert Graham, *Liquordom* (New York, 1883) and Robert Graham, *New York City and its Masters* (New York, 1887).

[56] Graham, *New York City and Its Masters*, 18

[57] Ibid., 41.

[58] Ibid., 45.

[59] Ibid., 3.

taverns" to serve as a commercially viable alternative to the saloon. Acknowledging that the saloon "meets the want of warmth, freedom and company," he suggested their substitution with places of innocent recreation that would serve food along with non-alcoholic beverages in an environment conducive to Christian learning and fellowship. "Saloons without drink, where men may sit and read and think."[60] Graham's vision would be realized in January of 1900 when "Squirrel Inn No. 1" opened at 131 Bowery in Manhattan. The Squirrel Inn was made possible by the enthusiastic support of the Rt. Reverend Henry C. Potter of New York—the son of teetotaler Bishop Alonzo Potter—and with generous donations from Cornelius Vanderbilt, J. P. Morgan and a host of New York's elite. Bishop Potter optimistically prophesied at its opening that in ten years there would be in New York a "Squirrel Inn No. 100": "The saloon exists in New York because we have given our less fortunate brothers no better things . . . never has there been a better temperance work projected than this one."[61]

Potter's involvement in the Church Temperance Society's moderate initiatives may be surprising in view of his father's teetotalism. Yet, Henry Potter's biographer, George Hodges, noted that Alonzo Potter's son insisted on carrying forward the legacy of evangelical Episcopalians. Hodges especially considered Potter's interest in temperance reform to be a part of the evangelical legacy he inherited from his father.[62] In an address to one particularly low church congregation, republished in an essay for *Churchman* entitled "The Witness of Our Fathers," the younger Potter defends his identity as an evangelical. "There was never a more impudent or more superficial misstatement" than "to speak of [the evangelical] school as well-nigh extinct, and to dismiss its characteristics as superannuated and eccentric peculiarities which have no vital relation to the Church's inheritance or the Church's life." He goes on to say "Believe me, the great

[60] Robert Graham, *Social Statistics of a City Parish* (New York, 1894), 46.
[61] "The Squirrel Inn Benefit," *New York Times*, 17 January 1899.
[62] George Hodges, *Henry Codman Potter, Seventh Bishop of New York* (New York, 1915), 366.

school which nurtured so many of our fathers . . . has not lived in vain nor ceased to live in their children." The younger bishop is clear that their evangelical influence continues in the social consciousness of Potter's day:

> From first to last, these men were foremost in that practical realization of the spirit of the religion of Christ which, as incarnated in Himself, sought to reach out, and touch, and heal, and lift up the lowest and most alienated and most despised. . . . These, I say, were the distinguishing characteristics of the men of that school. . . . I affirm that underneath [their concern for doctrinal belief and of the ceremonial expression of that belief], these were the conviction and aims that were potent as shaping character and influencing conduct.[63]

Bishop Potter's assertion that the evangelical spirit carried on in social ministry is significant of the continuity between the evangelical temperance movement of his father's generation and the same movement refashioned in the midst of the social gospel of the broad church.

If Alonzo Potter's generation of temperance reformers were doctrinaire in their insistence that moderate consumption provided a social temptation, then Henry Potter's generation could be radically unorthodox. Despite the efficacy the Church Temperance Society's program, its initiatives were not universally appreciated. At the Church Congress of 1893, Graham and his methodology represented a moderate position. Yet, much of Graham's address was given in response to the Reverend William S. Rainsford of St. George's Church, Stephen H. Tyng's successor and a notable leader of the industrial and social gospel movement. Rainsford scandalized many present by suggesting that the church open public houses, purveying beer and wine, but without a bar, and with "plentiful" sources of entertainment, amusement, and food. Rainsford argued, "Drink often gains its hold because the life of its victims is so dull and flat, so utterly devoid of all legitimate amusement and recreation, that they know no other excitement . . . than the grateful forgetfulness of creeping

[63] *The Churchman* 62 (1890): 24–25.

inebriation."[64] Although Rainsford clearly represented a minority opinion at the congress, Bishop Henry Potter would later sponsor the opening of a tavern along Rainsford's philosophy to much ridicule and outrage.[65] For now though, even tacit suggestion that the church establish public houses, provoked a lively and at times acrimonious discussion, typical of the congresses of the early 1890s,[66] with Graham wondering whether Rainsford and he belonged to the same church or not. Alternatively, Graham offered the C.T.S.'s moderate combination of strict licensing and compassionate ministry.

The consideration of temperance at the Church Congress of 1893, as well as those of 1876, 1881, and briefly in 1914 show that the church considered temperance under the purview of its ministry. The Episcopal Church had heard a call to action and whether through advocating stricter legislation or compassionate ministry, it felt called to respond. This motivation was in keeping with the Episcopal Church's changing attitude toward its obligation to the advancement of social progress. The promotion of temperance

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[64] *Report of the Congress of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States* (New York, 1893), 16.

[65] Bishop Potter would go on to found the Subway Tavern along Rainsford's model in 1904, aimed at providing "quality" wines, beers and even some spirit to New York's underprivileged. The endeavor met with a nationwide uproar among Episcopalians and Protestants, who were scandalized by the Church's involvement in any aspect of the saloon. In one editorial, the *New York Times* mocked Potter's endeavor with a "hymn" "For use in Gin Mills Under Episcopal Patronage" (in "Good Business After 'Tavern's' Dedication" *New York Times*, 4 August 1904).

Come ye that love your booze,
Your favorite tipple name:
Your pet intoxicant now choose,
And all its joys proclaim.

Come to our decorous bar,
And pay our prices low:
Bring wives and kids from near and far,
And let the whisky flow.

From jags that split the head,
From all-o'er-noisy glee,
From dark-brown taste and brain of lead,
Lord Bacchus, keep us free.

[66] Spielmann, "A Neglected Source," 62.

was clearly enumerated among the denomination's list of social gospel initiatives, including labor relations, women's suffrage, public education, and the condition of the working class.

Furthermore, the Church Congress of 1893 shows that the Church Temperance Society achieved wide support from broad, high, and low parties, though it would be an exaggeration to say that the precise methods of the C.T.S. represented a denominational consensus. Even the high churchman, the Rt. Reverend Charles C. Grafton of Fond du Lac, in the brewers' capital of Wisconsin, endorsed the aims of the temperance movement as articulated by the C.T.S. In a sermon on "Law and Grace" Grafton commended the organization for taking the attitude of the Church and "looking rather to the aid of moral restraint, and to the aid of grace," unlike their "sectarian" and "Puritan" counterparts that "strive to do this by force, or law, or prohibition."[67]

Outside the Episcopal Church, prohibition had by the twentieth century become the favored method of mainline temperance advocates. The Anti-Saloon League, perhaps America's first single-issue lobby, had already galvanized the support of mainline protestants, especially among Methodists and Presbyterians. In 1907 the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church officially endorsed the League as a "sane, safe, and effective organization in the advancement of the great cause of temperance," while many of the Methodist Episcopal Church's leading officials were integrated into the league's councils so much so that "the public naturally came to regard the League as a Methodist agency."[68]

In comparison, the Episcopal Church and its temperance society had for the most part been apathetic and even hostile toward legislated prohibition as a cure-all for inebriety. Other Protestant reformers recalled that Hobartian caricature of a self-interested church, disengaged from righteous moral reform. Even some Episcopalians decried their own denomination's reticence to engage in the prohibition movement. In 1914, the Reverend E. A.

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[67] Charles Chapman Grafton, *The Works of the Rt. Rev. Charles C. Grafton: Addresses and Sermons* (New York, 1914), 325.

[68] James Harfield Timberlake, *Prohibition and the Progressive Movement, 1900-1920* (New York, 1970), 20.

Wasson of Newark, lauded the work of the Methodists, Presbyterians, and other American protestants, while shaming his own denomination. "Every Episcopalian is free to drink or not . . . but he is not free to pronounce drink wrong; for he is obliged, from time to time, to drink wine in the Holy Communion." Wasson's views are charged with an anti-high church invective,

> Whereas in earlier times good Episcopalians went to Communion only quarterly, now they go once a month, even daily. . . . All this the Episcopal Church encourages. Yet this encouragement means that, so much more frequently, the Church puts the cup of fermented wine to the lips of the communicant, with the injunction, 'Drink.' It entails that the taste and the smell of wine shall become a regular and frequent experience of the Christian life.[69]

He further goes on to criticize an 1884 resolution of the church's General Convention as well as a nearly identical resolution of the 1888 Lambeth Conference which prohibited any substitute for fermented wine at communion, including "juice of the grape," recently made widely available through Methodist Thomas Bramwell Welch's pasteurization process to prevent fermentation.[70] Once again, objections to providing a substitute for sacramental wine became a point of departure for most Episcopalians and mainline evangelicals who, like Wasson, believed that temperance extended to the Communion Table.

In the first decades of the twentieth century, under pressure from interest groups composed largely of mainline Protestant Christians, states began to legislate prohibition. Unlike the nation-wide Volstead Act of 1919, these local laws were often so strict as to prohibit the importation of sacramental wine. Wine drinking (and foreign) Roman Catholics, Lutherans, and Jews might have been the targets of these draconian laws, but Episcopalians were indirectly effected.[71] Episcopalians in Georgia, Oklahoma, and Arizona found that according to the letter of their states' "bone

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[69] Wasson, *Religion and Drink*, 193.
[70] Ibid., 200.
[71] Michael D. Newsom, "Some Kind of Religious Freedom: National Prohibition and the Volstead Act's Exemption for the Religious Use of Wine," *Brooklyn Law Review* 70 (2005): 743.

dry" laws, an exemption for "sacramental wine" was ambiguous at best.[72] The editorial pages of the largely Anglo-Catholic periodical, *The Living Church*, were replete with concerns about the strictness of state sponsored prohibition laws. One editorial remarked that while church members may stand for prohibition as a measure justified by the widespread abuse of liquors,

> Churchmen cannot hold that the use of wine is sinful or necessarily evil without thereby indicting our Lord Himself. . . . But, notwithstanding all this, the Church . . . is bound to see that pure wine is made available for sacramental use in every county, town, and village in the country, no matter how ironclad may be the regulations against its sale or use as a beverage.[73]

Nevertheless, even prohibition activists such as Wayne Wheeler, the legislative superintendent of the Anti-Saloon League, shied away from such an extreme interpretation of prohibitory laws. Indeed, it was in his lobby's interest to achieve as broad a coalition of church groups as possible. The sacramental exception therefore became standard in prohibition legislation through the Volstead Act of 1919.[74]

Eventually the Church Temperance Society and a considerable portion of Episcopalians stepped onto the prohibition wagon. Robert Graham retired in 1909 and died the following year. By the second decade of the twentieth century, the Church Temperance Society increasingly adopted a prohibitionist stance. This change in policy was in keeping with a broader current in national thought. In 1916, the Reverend Dr. James Empringham took over as the general superintendent of the Church Temperance Society.

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[72] Arizona's 1917 law, read: "Section 1. Ardent spirits, ale, beer, wine, or intoxicating liquor ... shall not be manufactured in or introduced into the State of Arizona. . . . Every person who sells, exchanges, gives, barters, or disposes of any ardent spirits . . . wine, or intoxicating liquor . . . to any person in the State of Arizona, or who manufactures, or introduces into, or attempts to introduce into the State of Arizona any ardent spirits . . . wine, or intoxicating liquor . . . shall be guilty of a misdemeanor . . . provided that nothing in this amendment contained shall apply to the manufacture or sale of denatured alcohol. Section 2. The legislature shall by appropriate legislation provide for the carrying into effect of this amendment." Quoted in Ibid., 800.

[73] *The Living Church,* 24 March 1917, 673.

[74] Newsom, "Some Kind of Religious Freedom," 823.

Unlike Graham, Empringham was a staunch advocate of the methodology of the Anti-Saloon League, having previously served as the New York Metropolitan superintendent of the league, the first Anglican clergyman to hold high office in the national prohibition movement. Empringham adopted the league's "scientific" attitude to the disease of intemperance, prescribing prohibition as its sole cure. Empringham's radical effect on the C.T.S. may be gleaned from his attitude toward the Squirrel Inn initiative, once lauded as the society's crowning achievement. A committee, appointed by the Church Temperance Society, investigated the activity of the inn in 1917 only to deem that "the work professed to be carried on for years at that institution had, in reality, been worthless." The committee recommended that the building be rented so that the resulting income might be dedicated to the "scientific" treatment of inebriates through the legislated prohibition of the saloon. The new society would seek to bother with no other charity save for its advocacy of prohibition,

> What charitable aid was never able to do Prohibition has done; and for the Church, or any society organized for minimizing the evils of drink and helping the victims of drink, to spend money merely to support a buttered-bun and cheap-shelter policy when the cure for the social ravages of alcohol is plain, would be a sinful misappropriation of funds. The Church Temperance Society is such an organization. It has quit handing crutches to crippled souls and set about such a re-ordering of law as will bring them a cure.[75]

The C.T.S. executive committee declared of C.T.S.'s re-orientation, "It has saved the Church from the curse of Meroz;[76] from the disgrace of going down into history opposed to the greatest moral reform since the sixteenth century."[77]

Between 1916 and 1918 the Episcopal Church spoke with increasing unanimity in its advocacy for legal prohibition. In

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[75] "Physicians want Nation made 'Dry,'" *Temperance: A Monthly Journal of the Church Temperance Society* (June 1918): 5.

[76] "Curse ye Meroz, said the angel of the LORD, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; because they came not to the help of the LORD, to the help of the LORD against the mighty" (Judges 5:23).

[77] "A Statement by the Executive Committee of the Church Temperance Society," *Progress: A Monthly Journal of the Church Temperance Society* (May 1920): 1.

1916 General Convention had definitively endorsed outright prohibition, resolving, "That this Church places itself on record as favoring such action in our legislative assemblies as will conserve the large interests of temperance and the repression of the liquor traffic."[78] Three months before Nebraska became the final state to ratify the Eighteenth Amendment, all but two bishops of the Episcopal Church signed a letter to be read by their clergy on the Sunday before Advent, endorsing total abstinence and encouraging their parishioners to advocate for their states' ratification of the amendment.[79] Even the Anglo-Catholic bishop of Milwaukee, the Rt. Reverend William W. Webb, signed. Webb had once quipped, "I believe that the general tendency of the Episcopal Clergy is to favor, rather than oppose, the well-regulated saloon. The saloon, when at its best, certainly has many things in its favor. It is a gathering-place of people, and in many instances of good people."[80] What had changed Bishop Webb's attitude? The national emergency posed by the Great War proved to be a Damascene moment. The timing of bishops' epistle, to be read two weeks following the cessation of the First World War, was indicative of the single greatest motivation for the Episcopal Church's—and the nation's—conversion from temperance advocacy to prohibition lobbying.

From the outbreak of war in Europe, abstinence from beer and distilled spirits was seen as a patriotic duty to preserve national food resources. For this reason, the Rt. Reverend William Lawrence of Massachusetts urged his flock to totally abstain at its 1917 convention: "it is the duty of every patriot to abstain from the use of liquors, and thus to converse his strength . . . for the country."[81] Though Lawrence had formerly disparaged political reform as a godly cure for drunkenness, such principles were set

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[78] *Journal of the General Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America: Held in the City of St. Louis from October Eleventh to October twenty-Seventh, Inclusive, in the Year of Our Lord, 1916; with Appendices* (New York, 1917), 328, 343.

[79] "Bishops of the Church Unite in Important Letter to Clergy," *Temperance: A Monthly Journal of the Church Temperance Society* (November 1918): 8.

[80] Wasson, *Religion and Drink*, 194.

[81] "Plea for Prohibition: Bishop tells Episcopal Convention it is a National Duty," *Temperance: A Monthly Journal of the Church Temperance Society* (May 1917): 1.

aside with the advent of war.[82] Prohibition, then, became the only moral order of the day.

A more virulent strain of wartime prohibition advocacy emerged from anti-German sentiment. A former lieutenant governor of Wisconsin, John Strange, mused: "We have German enemies in this country too. And the worst of all our German enemies, the most treacherous, the most menacing are Pabst, Schlitz, Blatz, and Miller."[83] Likewise, a Methodist bishop remarked that the brutality of the German army "is, in all reasonableness, to be accounted for by their centuries of beer drinking which has deadened their moral sense and coarsened their moral fiber."[84] The Episcopal Church was not immune from Germanaphobia and the saloon appeared an easy target close to home. In 1918 the Rt. Reverend James Darlington, bishop of Harrisburg, published a particularly grim poem, "German Beer Making American Biers," its final verse reads:

> When this holy war is over and we can do then as we will;
> When incendiaries burn our food is no time for sitting still.
> Pass the law to hang the spy; pass prohibition too;
> Arrest the Prussian plotters and be quick with what you do.
> Each day's delay costs scores of lives, perhaps your son or mine
> "Clean out the foreign traitors," shouts back our firing line;
> Till the spy, the traitor, and the enemy poltroons
> Conspire no more in our million Deutsch saloons.[85]

Darlington felt no moral qualms about parroting a common perspective: to vote against prohibition was to accommodate traitors.

National prohibition's failure to cure alcoholism, as well as prohibition's ultimate repeal, may have resulted in present-day amnesia as to the Episcopal Church's involvement in the temperance movement. Nevertheless, the Episcopal Church's historic

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[82] William Lawrence, *Visions and Service: Fourteen Discourses Delivered in College Chapels* (Boston, 1896), 166.

[83] Maureen Ogle, *Ambitious Brew: The Story of American Beer* (New York, 2007), 173.

[84] Ibid.

[85] James Dardington, "German Beers Making American Biers, Or, Clean out the Saloons and the Spies Will Go" *Temperance: A Monthly Journal of the Church Temperance Society* (May 1918): 7.

engagement with the movement provided a rich legacy for future advocacy and mission toward those struggling with alcoholism. In the generation following the repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment, Episcopalians like the Reverend Samuel Shoemaker of Calvary Church, Manhattan, rejected prohibitionist dogmatism for pastoral care for those struggling to recover from the disease of alcoholism. Shoemaker was credited by Bill Wilson, the founder of Alcoholics Anonymous, with inspiring the twelve-step program.[86] Interestingly, Shoemaker's approach mirrors the sensitivities of early evangelical temperance advocates as well as those of the succeeding generation of broad church reformers in its compassionate concern for the human person coping with a physical and social disease.

In conclusion, far from being indifferent to the temperance cause, the Episcopal Church of the nineteenth and early-twentieth century was invested in curbing the abuse of alcohol through pastoral care and pragmatic social engagement. Rejecting outright legal prohibition until wartime politics made its adoption unavoidable, the Episcopal Church was largely suspicious of attempts to associate alcohol consumption with sin per se as well as abstinence with temperance. Instead its members pioneered an attitude that recognized alcoholism as a disease and social ill to be compassionately and sensibly treated.

[86] Bill Wilson (1955) quoted in Emmerich Vogt, *The Freedom of Love: Recovery and the Seven Deadly Sins* (Minneapolis, 2012), 128.