CHAPTER VII

TEMPERANCE MOVEMENT

Drinking toddy or arrack is a great social evil. It is bad for the individual as well as the society. The drunkard becomes addicted to alcohol in different ways. Mostly the people acquire this bad habit in an undesirable society. Some take to it as a status symbol in the beginning, but gradually they become addicts of it. Whatever may be the reasons for drinking, it is an evil practice for which no justification. Alcohol is a major contributory factor for many untimely deaths in the state, many crimes, and many fatal accidents.\(^1\) So the people of South Travancore decided to eradicate this evil practice from the society and started a movement for that purpose.

7.1 Causes for the Movement

Among the many ameliorative measures promulgated by the Congress Ministry when it took charge of the destiny of the nation in the various

\(^1\) Travancore Information and Listener, Vol.IX, No.2, p.67.
provinces, prohibition remain to be most courageous, far-sighted and praiseworthy legislation.\textsuperscript{2} The measure is one which was dearest to Gandhiji and is calculated to remove one of the most potent causes for the poverty and unhappiness of the less fortunate classes of the population in the industrial and rural areas.

The drinking habit was far more wide-spread among the industrial workers. The workers did abstain themselves from work in the factory on several days due to heavy drinking. Most of the people of Travancore were addicted to alcohol and they are not for the development of their knowledge. Several factories took steps to set right the workers those who were addicted to alcohol. They constituted commissions to discuss about this problem. The Commissions were of the opinion that the consumption of alcohol and particularly of spirituous liquors was a feature of the majority of industrial areas and had created considerable havoc in some of them.\textsuperscript{3} The Commission expressed the conviction that a reduction in the consumption of liquor would increase the welfare and efficiency of the industrial workers. Another recommendation of the Commission was that efforts should be made in all industrial centres to reduce the number of liquor shops and to restrict the hours of liquor sale.

\textsuperscript{2} Travancore Information Listner, Vol.IX, No.3, p.51.
While the Government had reduced the price of local spirits the evil habit of taking liquors had become more widespread. In 1930, due to picketing for six months, the liquor and drug shops were closed; Yet illicit distillation did not meet the demand. Mr. Mrinal Kanti Bose said in the course of his presidential address at the annual meeting of the Indian Miners’ association, Jharia, “Mahatma Gandhi could not stop the practice and the labour unions cannot, control. The evil could be brought under control only by State action – absolute prohibition”. The workers cannot find the bare necessaries of life, but drinks and drug have been made cheap for them so that they may maintain an existence of forgetfulness.

The total number of illicit – alcohol cases detected during the year 1948-’49 were 344. The total number of cases reported were 1324 during the year 1956. In 72 cases imprisonment alone was awarded in 858 cases both fine and imprisonment were awarded. Radical searches were conducted often by the staff members of the excise department. In the year 1956 alone 1530 searches and raids were conducted by them.

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5 Ibid.
7 Kerala State Administration Report, 1957-58, p.89.
8 Ibid., p.92.
7.2 The beginning of Temperance Movement

An earnest struggle against a very real and a very difficult problem in the social and personal life of the individuals and in the National life of the people was the Temperance Movement. The Nagpur City Congress Committee took a poll for and against liquor along with the local Municipal elections in August. The total number of electors present at the Municipal polling station was 2676 and from the total number of votes only 2343 were recorded. Only five voted in favour of liquor, six were indifferent and 2332 were against liquor.\(^9\) The example of Nagpur ought to be followed everywhere in India.

The movement finds its expression in two main directions. The power of the new Legislature to reverse or modify the Excise Policy of the Government had been recognized in every province.\(^10\) In nearly every case resolution in favour of restriction, were passed. The ultimate ideals of the movement were to introduce prohibition in the State. As a result there was widespread boycott of the liquor shops by the people, and an organized, effort to dissuade the drinking classes from visiting such places.

The methods adopted by the participants of the movement were strictly constitutional. The main inspirer of the movement was Gandhiji. He

repeatedly condemned every departure from peaceful propaganda. Almost all welcomed the voluntary abstinence of the people from strong drinks. Even then they felt that legislative action would be necessary to give full effect to public opinion in this matter. To support this movement throughout India, people were ready to contribute funds. The agitation against intoxicants was carried on vigorously in the State. It was in this circumstances the All India Temperance Conference was convened to discuss about the movement.

7.3 The Temperance Conference

The eleventh session of the All India Temperance Conference took place at the Victoria public Hall, Madras on 30th of December, 1914. B.N. Sharma who welcomed the delegates urged that it was the duty of the Government to wean away the people completely from the drinking habit. Rev. Herbert Anderson a sincere and devoted worker in the cause of Temperance, who presided on the occasion, began with reference to the work and result hitherto achieved by the movement and showed substantial results obtained in the year ending 1914.11 Lady Henry Somerset urged that all sections of the Temperance movement should be united in the support of such a measure.12 She also recommended to consolidate and reduce the number of retail licenses. Further she recommended to abolishing beer houses in the

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country. Following the conference, the volunteers started propaganda work throughout India and South Travancore also came under the propaganda map.

The 13th session of the All India Temperance Conference was held on the morning of 27th December 1917 in the Congress Pavilion in Lucknow. It was presided over by B.N. Sharma of Madras. There was large attendance of delegates and visitors. In the course of his speech, the President pointed out that the ideal of the temperance reformer should be abstinence. He pointed out that the drinking habit was not only injurious to the physical, moral and intellectual stamina of the people but was in absolute conflict with the injections of the great religious tenets of the Indian people. He appealed to the Government to take up remedial measures to wean away the people from the obnoxious habit, and in conclusion the President formulated a number of suggestions to minimize the consumption of alcohol. In the Conference the following suggestions were made:

1. Licensing boards should be immediately constituted in the cities with large population. Capital cities also should be brought under its purview.

2. Number of shops selling arracks should be reduced. But at the same time all possible steps should be taken for preventing illicit distillation

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13 Ibid.

or consumption or resort to the consumption of other unhealthy or other deleterious drugs.

3. The Bengal rule should be strictly adhered to, and the experiment of removing shops to sites outside municipal areas be tried on large scale.

4. Propaganda should be made in vernacular.

5. The opening hours of shops should be advanced so as to render it difficult to indulge in drinking before starting of the day and that shops be closed at sun set. It should be done in the rural areas in the beginning.

6. No intoxicating drinks should be sold to children and women.

7. Duty on foreign liquor be raised.

8. Sale of liquor should be brought under the control of the municipality of government, ticket system or any other systems be traced.\textsuperscript{15}

7.4 The Prohibition League

A resolution urging prohibition was passed by the Executive Committee of the Prohibition League of India. The resolution urged total prohibition of the alcohol liquors and poisonous drugs, except for medicinal and industrial purposes, and it should be the goal of the Excise Policy of the

Imperial Government, all Provincial Governments, and the Governments of Indian States. The committee was also of the opinion that at least a period of 10 years was necessary for the purpose of introducing national prohibition. The Committee also resolved that the Imperial and local Governments should be urged to recast as early as possible the Excise revenue from the country’s financial system. The resolution further demanded the immediate introduction of local opinion laws to ascertain the wishes of the people.\textsuperscript{16}

The Madras Temperance League, through its president, Sir T. Sadasiva Iyer issued circulars requesting all the various local authorities in the Madras Presidency to adopt resolutions in favour of prohibiting the sale of liquor within their respective jurisdictions.\textsuperscript{17} Many of the Boards and Municipalities convened meetings and adopted resolutions to this effect and forwarded them to the Government. The Madras Municipality had done a manly act by refusing to send any representatives to the Local Abkari Advisory Committee.\textsuperscript{18}

7.5 The Montford Reform and After

The movement towards prohibition slowly gained momentum after the introduction of Montford Reforms and resolutions to the effect that prohibition

\textsuperscript{17} The Modern Review, Vol. XXXVI, July – December 1924, pp.596-97.
\textsuperscript{18} Ibid.
should be declared as the ultimate goal of excise policy were passed by Legislative Councils in several provinces. A similar amended resolution originally moved by a non-official member was passed by the Central Legislative Assembly in September 1925 by a majority of thirty votes. The Indian National Congress adopted prohibition as one of the programmes of its fight. It also surfaced as one of the demands placed before the Viceroy in 1930 for the settlement of India problems.

7.6 The Temperance Agitation in South Travancore

During the first decade of the 20th century the Temperance agitation had spread far and wide especially in the Travancore State and the response it evoked had sufficient passionate zeal in it to sustain the hope that it had the potential for development into a political movement. On several occasions Temperance agitators indulged in criticism of the Government by associating it with the evils of intemperance. The temperance agitation gathered momentum day by day and at last it generated into a sustained and organized political movement. Equally significant was the fact that the mass support which the temperance agitation generated was achieved without the assistance

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of any such existing political organizations.\textsuperscript{21} A Temperance Society was formed in Nagercoil by Mr. Duthie and his friends.\textsuperscript{22}

There were several encouraging signs in connection with the movement for prohibition. The Travancore Legislative Council passed a resolution calling for the prohibition of the liquor traffic. In the course of the decade nearly all the unofficial Indian members supported the recommendation of a committee of enquiry. The prohibition committee members decided to conduct the picketing of liquor shops and the prevention of drinking.\textsuperscript{23}

T.A. Abdullah a former minister in the Travancore- Cochin State in 1949 was a member of the Indian National Congress from 1920 and picketed liquor shops at Alleppey.\textsuperscript{24} One Appu Thekkedathu from Edakkadamsom was imprisoned for 15 days for having participated in Salt Satyagraha in 1931 and immediately released and he engaged himself in picketing liquor shops.\textsuperscript{25} C.P. Elango from Nagercoil protested against the arrest of Gandhiji in 1930 and on release did propaganda work against intoxicating liquors and again he

\textsuperscript{23} \textit{Modern Review}, Vol.XII., 1927, pp.617-618.
\textsuperscript{24} Karunakaran Nair, K., \textit{Who is who of freedom fighters of Kerala}, 1975, p.4.
\textsuperscript{25} \textit{Ibid.}, p.38.
was imprisoned.\textsuperscript{26} Another noted Congress worker who participated in the Temperance movement was K. Kesava Pillai.\textsuperscript{27}

Yet another noted Temperance worker who was roughly manhandled for having participated in the Temperance movement was V. Raman Pillai of Thiruvithancode. Joseph Augustine who participated in the Travancore State Congress Movement for responsible government in 1938, engaged in the picketing of liquor shops. He was sentenced to a term of imprisonment under section 90 Cr. C.P. for political activities.\textsuperscript{28} R. Raman Nair of Chirakkadavu village participated in the Temperance Movement in 1922.\textsuperscript{29} V. Sadanandan, N. Setu Madava Panikkar, V.K. Sivaraman and G.S. Unnuthan were the other important Temperance workers in Travancore.

It is seen from the police report that in connection with the Gandhi Jayanthi Day Celebrations at Kottar, handbills in Tamil were distributed by small children requesting the shopkeeper to close the shops.\textsuperscript{30} Despite the instructions no shops were closed and business went on as usual. A few small boys of the S.M.R.V. School, Vadaseri got out of their school in a group and

\textsuperscript{26} Ibid., p.108.
\textsuperscript{27} Ibid., p.222.
\textsuperscript{28} Ibid., p.418.
\textsuperscript{29} Ibid., p.506.
\textsuperscript{30} File No. D. Dis 3400/44, 1944 (Letter from the Inspector of police, Kottar to the District Magistrate, Trivandrum, dated 02.10.1944).
came to T.M. School, Krishnancoil on the way and asked the headmaster to close the institution; but the Headmaster refused to do so. From there they went to St. Francis School, Nagercoil and shouted loudly, and the school authorities fearing trouble closed the school and allowed the students to go home. From there the gathering went their way to S.L.B. School, Ramavarmapuram and an abortive attempt for a strike was made. But as soon as the crowd entered the first floor of the school building, the Headmaster asked them to keep away, and the school authorities informed the police and the Assistant Superintendent of Police and Inspector of Police arrived on the spot, and this had the desired effect. The students were asked to go away peacefully and nothing untoward had happened. Then the crowd went to the Desikavinayagar School, Kottar; but it was afternoon recess time, and so went away from there.  

In the evening a crowd of about 2,000 people gathered at the Nagercoil Municipal maiden. The organizers of the meeting were expecting Mr. Barathi from Madurai to address the gathering. Dr. M.E. Naidu and Mr. Pavalar were waiting for the arrival of Mr. Barathi; but he did not turn up, and so they went to the meeting place. Six large photos of Gandhiji decorated with flowers and flags were kept on the dais. The meeting commenced at

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31 *Letter from Inspector of Police, Kottar to the District Magistrate, Trivandrum, dated 02.10.1944.*
about 6.45 p.m. and Mr. Muthukaruppu Pillai took the Chair. Subramonia Pillai, a local Congress worker spoke about the attitude of the Communists regarding the celebration of Gandhi Jayanthi. The crowd hooted at him and he had to stop the speech owing to the disturbance from the audience. The President then rose up and while he was speaking about the different programmers like picketing toddy shops etc, there was a heavy down pour of rain and the gathering dispersed, and the meeting was adjourned to 3-10-1944 as announced by Mr. Sivan Pillai.32

7.7 The Prohibition Enforcement Act

Thus from all parts of Travancore and from every section of the society welcome news was coming about the determination of the people to make an end of the liquor traffic. There was spontaneous uprising of all classes against the continuance of this evil in their midst. The result proved a fair amount of success of the prohibition movement. The prohibition bill was drafted almost exactly on the types of the Madras Act. Sri. C. Rajagopalachari was also advocating the cause of prohibition in the Taluks of Thovala, Agasteeswaram, Kalkulam, Vilavancode, Neyyattinkara and Shenkottah on the 1st of Chingom 1124 (1949). According to this Bill the Government prohibited the manufacture of liquor in any form.

The intention of the Travancore Prohibition Bill was to introduce prohibition and control the manufacture, sale and consumption of intoxicating liquors in the State. The aims and objectives of the Bill was to bring about prohibition as early as possible except for medical, scientific, industrial and such like purposes. According to this Bill imports, exports, transports, possession of liquor and manufacture of liquor were strictly prohibited in the State. The cultivation of the hemp plant or collecting any portion of such plant were also strictly punished. Producing toddy was not permitted. The manufacture of liquor or any intoxicating drug or bottles of any liquor kept for sale were severely warned. In the case of an offence under the Prohibition Act punishments varying from 6 months to 2 years imprisonment or fine upto Rs.5,000 or both were awarded. Due to this the state suffered a loss of rupees 343.4 lakhs.

The prohibition enforcement work in six taluks of Thovala, Agasteeswaram, kalkulam, Vilavancode, Neyyattinkara and Shencottai was started soon after the inauguration of prohibition in those taluks on the 1st Chingom 1124 (1949). The enforcement staff composed of the Excise and Police officers of the locality. An Assistant Superintendent of Police and an

33 Letter from Inspector of Police, Kottar to the District Magistrate, Trivandrum, dated 02.10.1944.
Inspector of Police were also specially appointed for enforcement work. They formed a special party with six Head Constables and 24 Constables. Besides additional staff consisting of 11 Head Constables, 44 Constables were also sanctioned for the Police Stations. In the forest regions of the Prohibition areas the officers of the Forest Department were also entrusted with prohibition enforcement work. In addition to the above staff, the Excise Inspector and the staff of the C.I.D. wing were attending to prevent any defective work in the prohibition areas.

The Prohibition Committee members of the Nagercoil Pakuthy were M. Bhoothalingam Pillai, E.V. Subramaniya Iyer, Sankara Kumara Pillai of Kottar, E.K. Iyyava Nadar, Erulappapuram, V.S. Maluk Mudali Sahib of Kottar, S. Muniswamy of Kottar and A.C. Sundaram Pillai. Among them N. Bhoothalingam Pillai was the President of the committee and A.C. Sundaram Pillai was its secretary.

The prohibition scheme for all the prohibition area was inaugurated in a fitting manner at Nagercoil on 1-1-1124 M.E, by Sri O.P. Ramaswamy Reddiar. The Hon’ble Ministers Sri. T.M. Varghese, Sri C. Kesavan, Sri. K.M. Kora and Sri P. Achuthan attended similar functions at Thuckalai.

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36 Letter from Inspector of Police, Kottar dated 2-10-44 to the District Magistrate, Trivandrum.
37 Ibid.
38 Ramanachandran, P., Sundaram Pillai, A.C., Life and Work, Trivandrum, p.59.
Kuzhithurai, Neyyattinkara and Shencottah respectively at 4 p.m. on the same day. The Excise Prohibition Commissioner advised the Secretary of Pakuthy Prohibition Committees to have meetings at places near big arrack shops and proceeded from there in procession to a central place in the Pakuthy where a large meeting could be conducted.

The Vadiveeswaram Pakuthy Committee which took the initiative to hold a meeting of the three Committees in the town undertook the prohibition inauguration celebration. A meeting was conducted in the Municipal Hall and on that day the Minister for prohibition explained about the programme of the Prohibition Committee. The proceedings of that day took place under the leadership of Mr. T.M. Chidambaram Pillai.

The main works of the Pakuthy Prohibition Committees were to open canteens near toddy shops, to conduct meetings, Bhajana parties and other entertainments. The number of prohibition offences detected from the Pakuthy and the names of officials or non-officials who had done any meritorious services in such detections were exposed.

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40. Ibid.
A public meeting was held under the auspices of the Prohibition Committee, Vadiveeswaram Pakuthy at Ootuvamadam Cherry on 6th Chingom 1124. All the Committee members participated in the meeting. Villagers from Ootuvamadam Cherry, Karuppulotrai Cherry and Eluppayadi gathered at the Ammancoil grounds. Mr. N. Bhoothalingam Pillai presided over the meeting. Messrs. Munisamy, S.V. Muhtu Karuppu Pillai, B. Markandan, A. Muthayya Sunderam and others spoke. Lastly a village Committee was formed for the welfare of the villagers. The meeting ended at 7.30 P.M.

Like the meeting at Ootuvamadam Cherry, other such meetings were conducted at Irualappapuram and Charakkalvilai. Entertainment programmes were conducted in those places. The Krishnancoil Kazhakam conducted a drama full of scenes about prohibition and National songs. The Prohibition Committee of Agasteeswaram taluk on 28-2-1124 convened a meeting at S.L.B. Primary school at 3 P.M. and the participants discussed the programme of ameliorative work. People were instructed by the Vadiveeswaram Pakuthy Prohibition Committee to open one or two tea shops at least near the place where the toddy or arrack shops were situated.

42 Letter from A.C. Sundaram Pillai to the Prohibition Commissioner, Trivandrum, dated 24.08.1948.
43 Letter No. 15 from the Rural Welfare Officer to the Secretary, Vadiveeswaram Pakuthy Prohibition Committee, dated 24-9-1948.
44 Ibid.
7.8 The Prohibition Act

According to the Travancore – Cochin Prohibition Act XIII of 1950 all publications of books, leaflets or periodicals or displays of any advertisement, commending and soliciting the use or offering any liquor and intoxicating drug other than the exempted drugs would be fined up to 1000/- rupees. Under the prohibition Act it was illegal to manufacture intoxicating liquors within the State territory or to import or export the same. Licenses for the sale of foreign spirits up to a certain quantity was allowed in the State for medical purpose. The action of the Travancore Government in making punishments by law for the use of intoxicating liquor by the people of the State, had already earned the appreciation of all concerned. All advocates of Temperance welcomed prohibition with great interest. The announcement of the Travancore Government Proclamation that in their territory, if anybody was found in a state of intoxication, or carrying liquor with him should be arrested and prosecuted and sentenced to rigorous imprisonment, if found guilty.

The sale and consumption of all kinds of intoxicants and alcoholic liquors had been restricted in the prohibition zone. They were allowed to consume by addicts only under a licence system mostly on medical grounds.\(^{45}\)

During the first quarter of the 1124 M.E., 124 cases under the Prohibition Act

\(^{45}\) Prohibition Enquiry Committee, State Government’s Memoranda and other Documents, Delhi, 1956, p.53.
were detected. Out of these 96 ended in conviction, one was acquitted, and the remaining 27 were pending trial or investigation. Seventeen cases were sentenced to imprisonment, 46 cases were fined and for 33 cases both imprisonment and fine were awarded.\(^{46}\) The total fine awarded was Rs. 10,602. By way of encouragement to the enforcement staff including officers, 93 persons who did creditable work in the matter of detection of prohibition offences were rewarded money amounting to Rs. 680/-. 

In the year 1951, 259 cases were detected in the entire prohibition area. Imprisonment was awarded to 24 persons. The total amount of fine awarded amounted to Rs. 13,490/- out of which Rs. 13,205/- was realized.\(^{47}\) A sum of Rs. 277/- was awarded to the members of the enforcement staff who turned out good work towards the detection of cases.\(^{48}\) The enforcement staff in the prohibition area of the Travancore-Cochin State detected 2084 cases. They detected 4855 cases in the Malabar area.\(^{49}\) The total number of cases pending in the Travancore Cochin area at the beginning of the year was 1,026. The total number of cases disposed was 2144. 151 cases were sentenced to imprisonment and 1407 cases were fined.

\(^{46}\) *Travancore Information and Listener*, Vol. IX, March 1949, No.7, p.34.


\(^{48}\) Ibid.

In the prevention and detection of certain prohibition cases the Pakuthy Prohibition Committee members of the concerned locality had tendered help to the enforcement staff. Ameliorative staff under the prohibition scheme consisted of development officer who supervised the entire ameliorative activities under the general directions of the Prohibition Commissioner, two Assistant Development Officers, two Propaganda Officers, five Rural Welfare Officers, ten Village Guides and two Balled Singers. 86 Prohibition Taluks and a set of rules were constituted for the proper working of these Pakuthy Prohibition Committee.\textsuperscript{50} Taluk Prohibition Committees were also constituted with the representatives from the Pakuthy Prohibition Committees. The Government sanctioned a grant of Rs. 50/- to each of the Pakuthy Prohibition Committees.\textsuperscript{51} A 16 mm Talkie projector and a generator with loud speaker and gramophone pick up arrangements were secured for propaganda purpose and the necessary accessories fitted up in the Prohibition propaganda van. Arrangements were made for the purchase of an adequate stock of films on prohibition on rural welfare.

7.9 Remedial Measure

During the period immediately following the introduction of prohibition in the district several co-operative societies were organized for the

\textsuperscript{50} Travancore Information and listener, Vol. IX, March 1949, No.7, p.34.

\textsuperscript{51} Ibid.
manufacture of jaggery and through these societies a number of toddy tappers who were thrown out of employment got employed.\textsuperscript{52} Preliminary arrangements for registration of 16 co-operative societies were made in the entire prohibition area and 23 old societies were revived during the quarter.\textsuperscript{53} Out of these, 3 co-operative societies took up the Home Savings Scheme as their special item of work. There were 62 holders of Hundi Boxes under the above scheme. Measures were attempted to entire area under prohibition. Cottage industries were organized in 9 centres. Supply of agricultural implements and manure for improving agriculture were arranged by the Rural Welfare Officers in certain centres through the Agricultural Inspectors concerned. 61 canteens were newly opened to serve the ex-addicts. The ameliorative officers made a survey of the canteens and inspected their actual working. Grants aggregating to Rs. 430 were sanctioned to 13 canteens during the quarter.\textsuperscript{54}

The 23 jaggery manufacturing cooperative societies continued to function during the period and the quantity of jaggery produced under the cooperative scheme during the period was 207 tons and 7 lbs. The six candidates deputed for training as Palmgur Instructors in the Central Palmgur

\textsuperscript{52} A. Sreedhara Menon, \textit{Kerala District Gazetteers Quilon}, Trivandrum, 1964, p.647.
\textsuperscript{53} \textit{Travancore Information and Listener}, Vol. IX, March 1949, No.7, p.34.
\textsuperscript{54} \textit{Travancore Information and Listener}, Vol. IX, March 1949, No.7, p.35.
School at Guddalore returned after their course during this quarter and they were appointed as Palmgur Instructors at various centres in the prohibition area. They imparted instruction to the people engaged in Palmgur industry for the manufacture of jaggery on improved and scientific lines. These instructors were to work directly under the Palmgur Organizer and their administrative control was held by the Body of Revenue, Trivandrum. However, there was only one such cooperative society functioning in the Kottarakkara taluk.

To relieve the unemployment that may be caused among the tappers due to the introduction of prohibition and to encourage jaggery manufacturing industry, the taluks of Thovala, Agasteeswaram, Kalkulam, Vilavancode, Neyyattinkara and Shencottah were exempted from provisions of the Prohibition Act in respect of tapping of palmyra trees for sweet toddy. In general it cannot be said that prohibition had led to increased illicit distillation. It offered a good source of profit. It can be definitely stated that by the implementation of prohibition the evils of drinking could be removed and certain injurious habits wiped out.

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The sale and consumption of all kinds of intoxicants and alcoholic liquors had been restricted in the prohibition area. They were allowed to be consumed by addicts only under a licence system mostly on medical ground.\textsuperscript{58} The sale of essences which were being formerly misused had been completely prevented.\textsuperscript{59} Prohibition has salutary effect on the efficiency and well being of the labourers. Prohibition had done immense good to the poor classes who were formerly addicted to the evil drink. It had surely resulted in the improvement of their economic, social health and moral standards. Prohibition was a necessary step in raising the standard of living and consequently it had raised the economic status of the drinking classes. In their health and moral standard also there was steady improvement. But in the case of a few addicts who still carried on in their old ways, prohibition had adversely affected them economically and otherwise as the drink had became costly in the area. Women in general welcomed the prohibition and they were moral supporters. Prohibition had done away with unwholesome drunken brawls in many a home and thereby it was a source of relief to the womenfolk.

As for the workers’ condition it was a blessing to every working man in the country. Workers’ condition in the prohibition area had certainly improved

\textsuperscript{58} Prohibition Enquiry Committee State Government’s Memoranda and Other Documents, Delhi, 1956, p.53.

\textsuperscript{59} Prohibition Enquiry Committee State Government’s Memoranda and Other Documents, Delhi, 1956, p.53.
consequent to the introduction of the prohibition. This was evident from the amount of labour that had been turned out in disciplined and responsible way and prohibition had added to the efficiency of labour both in the rural and urban areas. The introduction of prohibition raised moral status and promoted the material of the common man. The addicts who had given up drinking had been benefited with regard to their health and their purses. By the introduction of prohibition it was estimated that the Government was loosing an excise revenue of Rs. 9,00,000/- and that after all only 10 percent to 15 percent of the population which had been addicted. The effects of the drink evil were disastrous and inflicted suffering on the families of the addicts.\textsuperscript{60}

The drinking habit will make disastrous effects on health and the addicts were not able to grow physically. There was growing antagonism against old drinking customs which marked the international conference of the old student federation against alcoholism during the last week of August 1929.\textsuperscript{61}

The Travancore Government which announced that prohibition was the main goal of their policy, found themselves in serious financial difficulty in trying to give effect to it. Whatever be the loss to the revenue it was the bounden duty of the public and the Temperance Society in Travancore to make people total abstainers. The remarks of K.P. Padmanabha Menon

\textsuperscript{60} Prohibition Enquiry Committee State Government’s Memoranda and other Documents, Delhi, 1956, p.53.

\textsuperscript{61} Modern Review, Vol. XLV, 1925, January-June, p.123.
regarding the evils of drinking apply admirably well to the present situation as well. “What is to be deplored”, says the author of the History of Kerala, “is that the habit once continued does not stop with a single glass and the differences between drinking and getting drunk is seldom kept in view. We have had instances of many a bright career being cut short too early because of free indulgences in spirituous liquor and unless the pernicious evil is nipped in the bud, it will indeed end in a national calamity.” 62 These words deserve to be taken to heart in the modern age when the evil is real and it is eating into the vitals of our social body.

62 Quoted in Sreedhara Menon’s Social and Cultural History of Kerala, p.128.