

## NOTE ON MASS-OBSERVATION

MASS-OBSERVATION IS AN independent, scientific, fact-finding body, run from 82, Ladbroke Road, London, W.II. (Part 6517.) It has a team of trained, whole-time objective investigators and a nation-wide panel of voluntary informants.

For five years it has documented the processes of social change, of political trend, of public and private opinion, in a series of books, bulletins, broadcasts and articles. It is concerned only:

- (1) with ascertaining the facts as accurately as possible;
- (2) with developing and improving the methods for ascertaining these facts;
- (3) with disseminating the ascertained facts as widely as possible.

Mass-Observation does not believe that social science can effectively operate only at the academic level. Its job is to study real life; and the people it studies are people who can be interested immediately in the results, which often directly concern their everyday lives.

Since it began with a handful of people and without any money Mass-Observation has become internationally known and recognized. Many political, social, commercial and official bodies have used it, in peace and war.

# THE PUB AND THE PEOPLE

## *A Worktown Study*

by

MASS-OBSERVATION

LONDON  
VICTOR GOLLANCZ LTD  
1943

feelings of aristocratic anti-mass. "Crowds are only powerful for destruction," he said (p. xix), and (p. 6) "What really takes place is a combination followed by the creation of new characteristics." Of these the latter statement approximates more nearly to observed fact; but there is no creation of novelty, rather a simple mechanics of numerical effect such as we have seen in the speed of drinking a gill of beer. Pub space: Saturday night: more money: more people: less space: more drinking: faster drinking: more effect: more drunks: more noise: song: maybe brawl: more police cases. The people are people just the same, the drunks drunks, the beer beer. The relative quantities of each alter, but there is no evidence so far for McDougall's mystical obscure "sympathetic induction".

"Primitive" or "savage" society is full of restrictions, conventions, tabus. And its way of life is rigid. There are no alternatives to it. Our society, though increasingly offering alternative ways of living and thinking, is no less full of conventions and restrictions. But they are conventions and restrictions imposed in a different way than those of primitive societies—purchasing power instead of magical power giving one the power to override them or make use of them, convention being enforced more by economic than religious sanctions. And while in primitive societies there are ritual and socially accepted occasions of breakdowns of tabu, our "feasts", holidays, etc., don't work out in quite the same way. Today in England, for instance, there is no occasion when the breakdown of sexual tabus and conventions is "officially" recognized, though Christmas (above), New Year, Easter and Holy Trinity come near it. In the life of the ordinary Worktownner no occasion arises when he is officially sanctioned and encouraged to dance in the streets, unless the Monarchy is involved in some ritual climax. But it is all right for him to do it in Blackpool, and he often does, not necessarily because he has been drinking a lot, but because a lot of people have got drunk and don't care any longer for the social conventions that forbid them to dance in the streets.

The conclusion to which evidence points is, just as there are two aspects of pub-going—social and alcoholic—that cannot really be separated from each other, so there are two aspects of drunkenness—individual and social—that are inseparably connected. And on occasions these two aspects are synthesised in the form of "social intoxication."

## VIII

### SINGERS AND PIANISTS: BOOKIES AND PROSTITUTES

THERE ARE PEOPLE who go to pubs to make money. One type, singers and pianists, are paid or otherwise rewarded by the landlord; their function is that of attracting other people to the pub. The other sort, bookies and prostitutes, also act as attractions to sections of pub-goers; but they make money from the drinkers and not from the landlords.

#### MUSIC

Pub music plays, and has played, an important role. Says the report of the Worktown Temperance Society for 1852, giving an example "illustrative of the evil effects of singing saloons":

Two young women . . . visited one of the singing saloons for the first time. One of them attracted the attention of a young man there, a perfect stranger to her; he artfully persuaded her to leave the room in his company. The sad result was, she became a mother.

There do not appear to be any figures, either for that time or for today, of the effect of pub music and singing on the birth rate. And it does not appear likely that the present declining birth rate can be correlated with the decline of pub music! Today the authorities tend rather to correlate it with drunkenness. Says the Worktown Chief Constable in his report for 1936:

I am rather inclined to believe that the increase (of drunks) may be to some extent attributed to the attractions—which include organized competitions, concerts, and variety entertainments . . .

He, the Chief Constable, while recognizing that there had been a general increase in drunkenness throughout the country that year, pointed out that the local increase was higher than that of the national one. A glance at the diagrams already given, will show



that his interpretation, though clearly offered in the best of good faith, was a mistaken one, since there was not a straightforward correlation between national prosperity indices and those of Worktown, and the national increase in employment and drunkenness since the lowest period of the slump (1932) had taken place less regularly in Worktown. None the less the Chief Constable circulated a letter to all licensees prohibiting the employment of singers and variety artists in their houses, and he says in his report, since then "the practices have apparently ceased". Apparently is the operative word.

In the parlours of most pubs there is a piano. All customers are welcome to play it, and sing with it, and on week-end nights playing and singing is usually going on. Above many pianos a placard will be found, saying "Voluntary playing only allowed". This is usually a sign that on at least one night a week someone is being paid to play. In the lounge of almost all the really crowded and popular pubs there will be a pianist playing for most of the evening on week-ends. And from week to week it is usually the same pianist. It is not likely that such regularity is unrewarded. Although it is not necessarily paid. Writes a barman:

The pianist is the most important person in the pub concert room. He is generally a light that has failed, whose indulgence in pleasures of the immediate surroundings keeps him from seeing further afield. In most pubs in these days business is bad and payment of good players is a matter of difficulty, so people play who are content to sit and tinkle all night for a few drinks providing a sort of wireless background to a buzz of conversation. To stimulate the artist a custom prevails in Lancashire. That the landlord treats one who has sung two songs. He must do or business suffers.

Anything from 7s. 6d. to half a crown a night is the fee for a pub pianist.

In the F. I got into conversation with the waiter-on who had been there 15 years and was aged 35. A very tough little chap. The new manager had been there only 12 months, and the waiter-on was very angry against him. He told me how this pub's business which was once the first in Worktown with 64 barrels of beer a week has now fallen right away, so he had made the new manager get in a pianist against police regulations—in fact he said to the manager, who is a very timid man "Oh

surely you know how to get a man to play and pay him and tell him to keep his mouth shut about it!" This pianist was an awfully seedy-looking object, but one of the finest that I have heard in Worktown and for an hour and a half he played beautifully, the most sentimental jazz tunes.

Before the official ban on paid entertainers, pubs would hire good variety artists and advertise them. Some are remembered and discussed today, one in particular has become an almost legendary figure.

Fish and chip shop, man of about 40, proprietor, and observer talk about singing. Man says that it has been stopped in the pubs here. "Done the town a lot of harm." "It's taking the money out of Worktown" says fishman. But they go on to say it got to be a bit of a scandal. They were advertising for auditions in the pubs and girls came along got up as if they were going on the stage. They refer to V.Y. who was famous for a comic number "when they clapped her she used to pull out her tit and clap on it—she 'ad fine big ones too . . ." And he made an indicative sketching gesture with his hands.

This girl used to sing at the pub referred to in the previous report. She emigrated to another town nearby, and for quite a long time many Worktowners used to go over to visit the pub where she operated there.

A landlord who was asked whether he thought music made people drink more said:

"Where there's entertainment there's more drinking." He also said of the Chief Constable "He used to send his men round in plain clothes to see if they were playing for money." And he told a story about one cop who dressed up as a navy and went to a pub. "He stayed all day there. He sang for them when he left 'I shall come home when the ebb tide flows', and next day he raided 'em."

More than a year after the prohibition of this paid entertainment, when the 1937 drunk figures were announced (nearly 25 per cent increase) a further statement was made by the Chief Constable, who said (Report to Watch Committee for 1937, published 1938):

It has now become apparent that certain licensed houses are again catering for this form of entertainment, and various  
Rp



subterfuges are being adopted to assist the licensees to break the law.

And he adds:

While no attempt will be made to suppress the occasional use of a piano on week-days in the case where friends meeting in a public house may play and sing for the entertainment of one another, the practice of holding what amounts to weekly concerts must cease.

It was too early to see what the effects of this would be before the war stopped this study. The initial effects of the original edict were more widespread than might be imagined. The pub concerts were a great attraction for people from the suburbs and surrounding villages who came into the town at week-ends on shopping excursions.

Now:

Pub in X. Singing and music are of course permitted here; one pub has a jazz band. Until Chief Constable stopped singing in Worktown many went there at week-end to drink; the buses were packed. Now this movement has stopped. On the other hand plenty of Worktowners come out to drink in X. The people here are agricultural labourers, and also bleach workers. A man says to observer that Worktown "seems dead-like, no life in it, no music, no singin',—nothin'." He says none of them keep to one pub, but they have a local round and tend to end up here. "There's a good crowd 'ere—not the same as it is in Worktown."

The effects of this are both economic and cultural. The people of these villages are tending no longer to look on Worktown as a centre for enjoying themselves. The whole focal effect of Worktown, whose population of some 170,000 is about a quarter of its generally assumed "shopping area", has been upset, its week-end function of bringing people in to shop, cinema and drink, from the many small hamlets all round. And the effect has actually been reversed even from Worktown centre. Says a publican:

"It's taking thousands of pounds out to surrounding places and going to the pubs there, where music is permitted, to drink and sing."

A trip round the outskirts on the following Friday confirmed this; landlords of surrounding hamlets said there were Worktown people in, and that many more came over on Saturdays.

In banning organized music the Chief Constable—whose powers in such matters are considerable, though subject to the Watch Committee, the Anglican churchwarden chairman of which goes on his summer holidays with his family along with the C.C. and his family—has hit a vital element in pub culture, one which each evening transformed the individual units of drinkers in all rooms into a harmonizing whole, who send themselves often into a sweat with laughter and melody. Worktown people love music of simple sort. They love singing. There is nowhere else where they may sing the songs of their own choosing. In a town which has practically no native painting or poetry or literature, the curtailing of music is a serious matter intellectually. And the action has evidently done nothing either to stop drinking or drunkenness. It has practically nothing to do with either—far less than darts, dominoes or the Police Sports, which is the biggest local sporting betting-cum-booze-up of the year. But in making such decisions it is doubtful whether those responsible, despite their intelligent and sincere interest, are competent to make judgments based on understanding either of drinking people or drinking fact. The Chief Constable of Worktown is a teetotaler. Neither he nor the Chairman of the Watch Committee, nor the religious leaders who are active in restricting pub activities, ever go into Worktown pubs. Indeed, nine out of ten of all the well-to-do in Worktown never go into pubs.

Those well-offs who drink do so at home or (a large number) in the Golf Clubs, which are open all hours, including Sunday (excepting the Municipal Golf Course, where Sunday golf is prohibited). Such a position is typical of the contemporary English scene, where those who legislate for the poorer sections of the community have little accurate knowledge of what they are doing or where it will lead. Classic example was that of the recent Royal Commission on Gambling, which called nearly a hundred witnesses, representing every sort of interested organization imaginable, but not a single ordinary person, not a punter. In an almost casual sentence it advised that the whole of Football Pool betting be made illegal; it called no witness who had filled in a pool form. It can have had no *social* understanding of what it was doing; its conclusions cannot have been



arrived at on the basis of impartial analysis, objective human facts, or social realities. Naturally, the Commission, like so many such Commissions, produced a report which could not and cannot properly be put into practice, at least with useful effect. The local police are in the same boat. On crime they know their stuff well enough. When they start tampering with the normal, inhibiting pleasures generally regarded as "legitimate", complications are bound to ensue. The pub is the one "normal" place which the police can closely control and command. They are unable to tell churches that they must not have Liturgical Services or Sung Eucharists.

So far few Worktown pubs have radios. When they become popular the pub atmosphere will have changed quite a bit. For the radio does not cater especially for large, amorphous groups who come to *participate*. The pub-goer is not just a listener and looker. He is active in drinking and talking about all sorts of subjects and with all sorts of people, many of whom he would never meet in any other way. So he or she needs accompaniment rather than complete entertainment, at least for most of the time. Music in the background, songs which everyone knows, largely sentimental songs.

At present, therefore, the musical side of pub culture is getting involved in a sense of guilt and repression, another one of the several already associated with the pub. Pianists are still being paid, but in secret; two reports on this:

C. Arms. 9 p.m. Approx. 70 in all rooms; 35 in main singing room, where an old man, black suit, bald, pince-nez, plays piano and sings, making cracks in music hall patter style between songs. (Rector of Stiffkey, just deceased, was mentioned.) All join in the singing, very loudly indeed, also those in the next room, who usually finish a whole bar later than in here. The entertainer is an ex-pro. and in observer's opinion is certainly paid by the landlord.

Best room. Piano being played by young woman in brown dress, who has glass of Guinness at her side on the end of the keyboard. Over the piano is the notice "Voluntary playing only". Two young men are fraternizing with the pianist, then exchange jokes with the landlord. The pianist says to him "You look tired" and he says "I am tired, me 'eart's broke". She plays loudly and sings "Somebody stole my heart away". The young men join in loudly, slapping their

knees and beating time with their feet. Then she plays another jazz tune, and then some old ones, such as Burlington Bertie, which are very well received.

All observers report that the sentimental and old-fashioned songs go much the best, and also the sad sort of Irish songs are popular. And though mostly jazz songs are played and sung, the evening nearly always finishes with old-fashioned ones.

Sufficient examples of ordinary voluntary pub singing have been given in reports in earlier sections. We are able to give the pub pianist's point of view, written by himself—the account actually is of a Christmas club, and also contains material relevant to our next subject:

About the end of August the ladies frequenting the parlour decided to have a saving up club for Christmas. Some of them wanted to have curios as well. (See later about this.) . . . Anyway, the landlady objected, so this was just a saving club, no limit. Five of them drew out their money before the time. The remainder were paid out last night (Dec. 22). They all turned up for their money and the landlady paid for the contents of a large potato pie, which was made by a customer. She no doubt was actuated by the thought of a presence of so much money, and the hope that some of it might be spent in the house. Ladies drifted in about 8 onwards, until the appropriate moment, everyone being paid out, the pie made its appearance. This was sold at twopence per plate, the money pooled in front of the secretary. This pie was sold in all parts of the house. While this was going on a weary and neglected professor of music was thumping tunes out of a dilapidated piano.<sup>1</sup> The pie finished, it was decided that each contribute to the accumulated heap of pence, then to have Guinness round until it was finished. Tense moments were experienced when the drinks were being paid for. The last round was bought before anything like a convivial atmosphere prevailed. Everyone was satisfied when it was suggested that the three-pence left over should go to buy the pianistic drudge a beer. He responded to the noble gesture by playing Christmas carols, Noel, and Christmas Bells. There was singing of a community type and a little dancing. Time was called, and round empty tables talk centred round the family life and the good old times. They drifted out in ones and twos, the pianist

<sup>1</sup> This piano once had a gallon of beer poured into its works by a drunk. The writer is the only person who can produce anything recognizable as music from it.



gathered up his music, patted the dog, and made his way home full of potato pie and free beer!

#### BOOKIES

Betting is important in the pub, takes various forms. One form is centred around activities that take place *within* the pub. This is dealt with later. Another form centres round activities that take place *outside* the pub. Betting of this kind involves the largest sums, and is carried on through the medium of the bookmaker and his runner.

Writes a landlord:

Betting is forbidden by most pubs, but the pubs that do the best trade are those that have a means for that entertainment, a good bookie is a great asset to a pub.

This is corroborated by the following, written for us by a local drinker, who was asked to write up what he knew about a leading local pub bookie:

This man, known as Nero, employs about 170 runners in Worktown and district but has no particular pub where he stays for a long time. At one time when singing was allowed to have full swing in Worktown he used to follow a niece of his around wherever she was engaged in that capacity. It is always noticeable when he enters a public house where any of his agents are employed. He is a tall man, thick set, with thick gold chain very prominent, he also has the usual cigar and a very prominent display of gold rings on his fingers I personally have counted as many as six rings on both hands and when he is drinking usually rests one hand on the counter to display the same. He is always welcomed by the landlord owing to the fact that through his business he is responsible for probably half the custom that enters these places. The word goes round the house that Nero has arrived and all the customers in the lobby get as close as possible so that they can be in the first order. The vaults clients usually voice their protest through the agent who very often is permanently placed there and the drinks are on Nero. He usually has a large following of relatives but these are deteriorating at present owing to the fact that they are employed as checkers and trusted servants to get the slips in from agents, consequently one or two of them have been putting slips in after the race has been won, so poor Nero can't even trust himself now. He is expected to contribute to all annual picnics or bowling handicaps the usual contribution being £1 so that his prestige runs

very high to the people who buys his cigars and rings. The agent also holds a position of esteem in the pub especially during the dinner hour of a working day the position is that the client wants a bet and the runner being in the pub causes the client to enter to make his bet and this helps the landlord to make a sale. There is also the fact that a client that has a method of selecting winners and enters the pub to receive his winnings very often calls for a drink and the agent receives one also so that one can see how profitable an agent can be to the Licensee. I personally would suggest that instead of a brewery advertising "Guinness is Good" it would be better to say "Nero's agent calls here". The agent also has a great deal to do with arranging domino sweeps, bowling handicaps, picnics, etc.; money lending is also another feature of his business because he works on a weekly basis of payment with the bookmaker all winnings being paid in at week-end so that the agent has always a surplus of money during the week, this enables him to lend money to his clients. So that we can weigh all the facts together and find that the agent is more prominently placed in the pub than the Licensee himself. The Licensee therefore has to give a great deal of Latitude to the agent so that when he puts his betting dice on the table the licensee has to close one eye and be content to have his card posted up "No betting allowed".

This account covers the whole field of bookies' pub activities. As the writer says, betting is usually done in the dinner hour:

Middy, vault. The bookie's runner comes in and has argument with the landlady about her yesterday's doubles. Betting slips and newspapers are produced. She then makes bets on the day's races. The runner has a gill of mild.

Of course, all this is illegal. Transactions usually take place unobtrusively, like this:

Vault, 5 men with caps and scarves, talking about work and wages. Man, blue suit, no hat, comes in, says nothing, gives half a crown to a chap. Blue suit leans against door for a little. Nothing has been said so far. Then the man to whom the half-crown had been given says, husky and questioning, "Pint?" and goes to bar and gets a pint for blue suit.

But the police are aware of it, though perhaps not exactly when, where and who. Our old friend P.C. Thirsty bets heavily



in his local pub. At this pub the local bookie sometimes doesn't come round at midday, but sends his wife instead. Barman suggests that he knows the place is being watched on those occasions.

Though almost every pub has regular betting, convictions are rare. It is an accepted breach of the law, and one that the police themselves often commit. In the following case a landlord in a small pub on the edge of Worktown was fined £10 and costs (4s.) "for permitting the use of a betting house"—the bookie was not penalized; ditto the bookie's runner. The press report of the police court case reads:

A man named X—then said in the presence of Y: "I've got a good thing for the 4.30 race at Pontefract. I have a friend who sends me tips." X wrote out a betting slip and showed it to the officers. Y (the landlord) was still in the room, about six feet away.

Z then shouted across the room "Be sharp with that bet. You are going to be too late." Z then went to the table where the officers were seated, produced a betting clock, and taking a betting slip and money, put them into a betting clock bag. Between 2.30 and 3.13 the majority of men present wrote out betting slips. . . . On the following Saturday . . . in the room were 15 men and the man Z was sitting at a table about three yards from the licensee. Z was counting about 15 betting slips at the table, and did something with them that the officers could not observe. Sporting papers were also in the room, and the licensee was present at the whole of the time, except when serving drinks.

When Dt. Insp. —, Sergt. —, and other officers, executed a search warrant at 2.50 on June 12th Z had in his pocket three betting clocks. He was seen to tear up some betting slips and throw them under the seat. In two of the clocks were 35 betting slips, representing 131 bets ranging from 3d. to 1s. 6d. to a total value of £3.

When charged Y said "They did it all unknown to me. I knew the fellow Z came in, but I never saw a bet passed." Gambling brought no reward to the licensee. There was a notice prohibiting betting. It was detrimental to the licensee, and put him in danger of losing his house and his occupation. He had been a licensee three and a half years, and did not gamble, and had never seen a betting clock. He did not hear the remark about the betting clock. If he had he would have ordered the man out.

Incidentally, in a main street in the centre of Worktown there is a large cigarette shop that doesn't sell any cigarettes; there are dummies in the window, and the counter inside is only used for passing bets over; everybody knows about this, including the police, since anybody can walk in.

It is, amongst pub-goers, a known thing that the bookie's runner acts as moneylender. Verification of this can only be laconic and unexciting, such as the following note given to us by a pub-goer who has helped with this work:

August 1st. Two instances of the bookmaker's runner lending money occurred at the V. Hotel on the above date about 9 p.m. Two regulars, one borrowing two bob, and the other one shilling.

But the connection between the speed of horses, credit, and the consumption of drink, manifests itself in other ways:

People drinking at table on one side of the room are very loud and cheerful. Little sharpfaced woman, very old, is rather drunk and talking bawdy about little men and copulation. The old woman says "What about flies, they do it all right" and everyone laughs. She tells a story about her husband (also a little man) urinating out of the bedroom window one night and nearly having a regrettable accident, owing to the window suddenly slamming down. She then says that she is going to G— tomorrow, to the barracks, where she will drink in the canteen with generals.

This group are drinking on credit, the man who orders the rounds writing them down on a piece of paper. He has won on a horse, and collects tomorrow, he says.

The illegality of pub betting, and the consequent surreptitiousness of the transactions, makes it easy for an outsider completely to overlook the place of the bookie and his agents in the pub. On the other hand it is easy, as does the writer of our report on Nero, to exaggerate the importance of the bookie as a pub figure. The real importance of pub betting in the life of the pub is that it makes possible for "week-end drinking" to take place amongst isolated groups on any night of the week, when a member of the group has come up on a long priced winner. The economic importance of the bookie, to the landlord, both as a "draw" to betting customers, and as source of rakeoff in drink profits on the occasions of big winnings, is self-evident.



## PROSTITUTION

In Worktown, a town in which strangers are not common, and whose transient population is small, prostitution does not flourish: the full-time prostitute is a rarity. The small band of them that exists are to be found in a few town centre pubs. They circulate within this limited orbit of a few hundred yards. One of these pubs in particular is regarded as their headquarters. A local pub-goer who spent an evening there acquiring what information he could, wrote the following account:

I received some very interesting conversation during my stay there, I got into touch with a man who spends on an average a pound per week on prostitutes. This man pointed out all the prostitutes as they came in and their methods of operation. In the first place he gave me to understand that a great deal of jealousy attached to this particular pub owing to the fact that where you find a dozen prostitutes in a particular pub at one time they watch one another for stealing their clients. They also observe what clients their rivals pick up. To give an instance of this he tells me a story about himself and two prostitutes that attended there regularly and he says "I always interrupts by saying I can get eight in a night" . . . An elderly prostitute then entered with a client I felt sorry for him because I know she has had about 3 packets.

When I asked him how much they charged he replied there are types that will do it for free drinks, those are the type that are married or receiving some income from elsewhere, then there are those who manage to scrape enough together by backstreet methods, prices varying from 2s. to 5s., but the real professional type that take their clients home charge from 10s. to any price according to what they think a client can pay.

Another local pub-goer gave us the following dossier on some of the pub whores:

*The Z*— Well noted for Married Women Type of Importuning.

*May X*. Resides in the vicinity of —. Visits the —. Can be seduced after two bottles of Guinness. Many boys have missed the last car to bed.

*Fannie Z*. Frequents the — in preference. Mother tells fortunes. Very low class type.

*Miss* —. Frequents (three pubs). Clean professional type. Always requires pay, before Business. Very generous will treat patron to a good drink. These women generally want 10s. and supper, have only one man a night, and let him sleep.

The most common type of pub prostitute is semi-professional, of the sort referred to above, girls who work and who sit about in pubs waiting to be picked up and stood drinks; they will go home with the men who stand them drinks, or rather let the men "see them home"—the town's irregular sex life is consummated in the back streets, which are narrow alleys running behind houses parallel to the road in which the houses stand. The peacetime street lights go out at 11.15 p.m. This makes casual intercourse uncomfortable, but available, and is one of the reasons why so few Worktowners have recourse to professional prostitutes.

This type of amateur prostitute is mostly found in the pubs frequented by young people, referred to earlier. Here is an excerpt from a report from one of these pubs:

Next to observers were two young women wearing green coats, fur collars, thick make-up, veils. Also (a) a respectable looking young millworker, (b) thin, cheeky young man, and (c) man of about 30, pockmarked, with glasses. The girls try to get off with observers (who are both wearing prosperous overcoats) by saying at different times "Are you enjoying yourself?" "Been on whiskey all the evening then?" "Is your name Sattiwell?" and "Been here before?" After ten minutes the young man (b) got into conversation with these girls. (a) took longer. The girls paid for their own drinks; it was about this that (b) got into conversation. He said "You know the bargain, don't you—the price of two Guinneses and I'll take you home, front door or back". (Both observers felt that had it not been for the hope held out by their prosperous overcoats this offer would have been accepted.) But the girls left, unattended, at 10.5 p.m., having arrived at 8.41 and had only one drink, no cigarettes. They said twice "beggars can't be choosers you know". Just before they left (a) joined in backchatting to them, but they didn't take much notice of him.

Directly they had gone animated conversation developed, (a) saying "I knew you wouldn't get anywhere with 'em", at which (b) said vigorously he never expected to.



(c) "The only way you can get anything from them is for money." (Another man, sitting by, solitary, says "I weighed them up in three seconds." And he never spoke again.)

(a) declared it was impossible to get anything out of them anyway. (b) agreed. (c) said "There's about as much chance . . . (thinking hard) . . . as an Eskimo getting sunstroke." He then told a confused and improbable story about how at one time when he had a lot of money and was going on a trip up to London and wanted to take a girl with him, he dated up one of these girls for the week-end. (He got very confused with his dates, speaking of meeting her on various days.) But she said she wouldn't come unless he came across with a Guinness immediately. So, as he said "I took 'er at 'er word and didn't turn up meself on Wednesday."

(a) "They're just gold grubbers."

(b) (very cheerfully) "All they want is Guinness, 'ere every night for it."

(c) in the face of strong opposition, seemed to think that there was a chance of something further, though he admits "You pay for 'em inside the pub, you pay for 'em outside and by that time you're inside out". At the end he summed up, in his peculiarly difficult style "It's like a motorbike—pitting your skill against hers."

The interesting thing about this conversation, notes the observer, is that not one of them considered the possibility of *paying* for the girls; it was something outside the range of their ideas.

The observer's comment at the end of the report above shows the attitude of the ordinary Worktownier who wants a casual girl; and explains the small part played in the life of the pub by prostitution.

#### HAWKER PUB-GOERS

Hawkers have already been discussed, from a different angle. They form no groups, neither do they act as an attraction to pub-goers. But many in their private life capacity go to pubs. The 1931 census lists over 500 hawkers in Worktown. A pub opposite the open market is a special hangout for many of them.

Certain newspaper sellers, who have a regular pub round, are popular as individuals, and in a very limited sense can be said to be part of the pub social life. Most famous of these is an old, amusing, loud-shouting, back-chatting, paper-seller called "Chronicle Tommy"; his real name is unknown.

Where these hawkers differ from other pub-goers is that they are permitted to come in and go out again without having a drink. So are Salvation Army lassies. They are accepted as part of the Worktown landscape, though not necessarily with good grace. And it is significant that several prostitutes, in one pub particularly, do not drink alcohol unless they are with men. They drink grape-fruit, and it is "done" for them to do so, no one regards it as odd. They thus put themselves somewhat outside the pub life, dissociating themselves (partly for practical and physical reasons) from the basic pub item of alcohol. In the reverse direction, the bookie is generally expected to stand a round when he enters, acknowledging a special pub status. He is the centre of the betting, which comes second to drink as pub interest, first as an all-round working-class leisure interest generally. The methods of betting, raffing, sweeping, gambling, will be shown when, in the chapter after next, we describe the sporting life of the pub. Before that we must briefly examine the sub-groups with no definite money-seeking figure as centre, the secret societies and pub-clubs. The bookie, prostitute, pianist or hawker are persons out not so much to enjoy as to acquire; they come from outside, and focus certain human interests, of food, gamble, rhythm, news, sex, which are not catered for in the structure of the pub itself, or are actually forbidden by law in the pub. The sub-groups in the pub, subject of the next chapter, have similar interests, but run them from within the pub, with the assistance of appointed regulars, and the positive approval of the landlord.