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'The Drunkard's Raggit Wean': Broadside Culture and the Politics of Temperance Verse

« *The Drunkard's Raggit Wean* » : la culture des imprimés placardés et la politique de la poésie de la tempérance

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Résumés

Français English

Cet article examine la diffusion d'un poème-chanson très connu prônant la tempérance - au sens de modération dans la consommation de boissons alcoolisées - intitulé « *The Drunkard's Raggit Wean* » et composé par le poète de Glasgow John Crawford. En s'attachant à la fonction d'« écrit exposé » ou de pamphlet de ce poème et à sa réimpression dans la presse papier et autres lieux de diffusion, cet essai met en avant l'impact et la popularité sans failles de ce type d'écrit placardé dans la période victorienne et souligne l'importance de la poésie prônant la tempérance dans la culture populaire de cette époque.

This article examines the circulation of a well-known temperance poem and song by Glasgow poet John Crawford, 'The Drunkard's Raggit Wean', considering its function as a broadside and its reprinting in the newspaper press and other venues. It argues for the significance and continued popularity of broadsides in the mid-Victorian period, and highlights the importance of temperance verse in this period's popular culture.

Entrées d'index

Mots-clés : poésie, « écrit placardé », journal, tempérance, écossais

Keywords: poetry, broadside, newspaper, temperance, Scottish



Texte intégral

- 1 'The Drunkard's Raggit Wean', a poem little known or read today, was arguably one of Victorian Scotland's best-known productions. Written by James Paul Crawford, a Glasgow tailor and later an official at the Govan Poorhouse, under the pseudonym 'Paul Rookford', the poem presents a tragic image of a young child suffering want and cold due to his parents' intemperance. It opens:

A wee bit ragged laddie gangs wand'rin through the street.
Wadin' through the snaw wi' his wee hackit feet,
Shiv'rin i' the cald blast, greetin' wi' the pain,
Wha's the puir wee callan?—he's a drunkard's raggit wean (l.1-4)¹ (see fig. 1)

- 2 After the first two stanzas build up a desolate picture of the lonely child, isolated from his peers, who 'kens nae father's luv, and . . . kens nae mither's care', (l.13) the poem turns in stanza three to an exhortation to the reader to take action. It is up to the community to prevent this lost child from falling into sin and crime, to 'try an' turn that sinfu' mither's heart, / And try to get the faither to act a faither's part', by 'making' them give up drink (l.21-23). In itself, as I argue here, this poem is a significant part of Victorian working-class verse culture in its sentimental deployment of child suffering to aid a social and political cause, that of the mid-Victorian temperance movement. But in the context of contemporary popular print culture and its material form, it accrues additional significance from its importance as street verse, sold as an anonymous halfpenny or penny broadside and circulated as such across Britain and beyond.

Fig. 1: 'The Drunkard's Raggit Wean'. Glasgow: James Lindsay, n.d.



The DRUNKARD'S RAGGIT WEAN.

A wee bit raggit laddie gangs wan'rin' through the street.
Wadin' through the snaw wi' his wee hackit feet,
Shiv'rin i' the cald blast, greetin' wi' the pain,
Wha's the puir wee callin'?—he's a drunkard's raggit wean.
He stan's at ilka door, and he keeks wi' wistfu' e'e,
To see the crowd around the fire, a' laughin' loud wi' glee ;
But he daurna venture ben. though his heart be e'er so fain.



For he manna play wi' ither bairns, the drunkard's raggit wean.

Oh see the wee bit bairnie, his heart is unco fou,
 The sleet is blawin' cald, and he's dreepit through and through;
 He's speering for his mither, and he wun'ers whaur she's gane,
 But oh, his mither she forgets her puir wee raggit wean.
 He kens nae faither's luv, and he kens nae mither's care,
 To soothe his wee bit sorrows, and kame his tautit hair;
 To kiss him when he waukens, or smooth his bed at e'en,
 An' oh, he fears his father's face—the drunkard's raggit wean.

Oh pity the wee bit laddie, sae guileless and sae young,
 The oath that lea's his faither's lips 'ill settle on his tongue;
 An' sinfu' words his mither speaks, his infant lips 'ill stain,
 For oh, there's nane to guid the bairn, the drunkard's raggit wean.
 Then surely we micht try an' turn that sinfu' mither's heart,
 And try to get the faither to act a faither's part;
 And mak them lea'e the drunkard's cup, and never taste again,
 And cherish wi' a parent's care, the puir we raggit wean.

Sold by JAMES LINDSAY, Printer and Wholesale Stationer,
 &c., 9 King Street, off Trongate, Glasgow. Shops and Hawkers
 suplied on Liberal Terms. Upwards of 5,000 sorts always on
 hand; also, a great variety of Picture-Books, Song-Books,
 Histories, &c.

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- 3 A broadside is defined as 'a single sheet of paper printed on one side, with text in verse or prose, frequently illustrated with a woodcut image' (Atkinson and Roud) and might comprise news and current affairs (particularly accounts of crimes and executions), comic or satiric prose, stories or poems for children, and assorted ballads and other forms of verse. As Robert Collison notes, broadsides were often 'intended for pasting on walls, and so they were, on the walls of alehouses as well as those of cottages and farm kitchens', so that one broadside might be seen by many beyond its original purchaser (Collison 2). Broadside ballads were sold and sung in the streets of Britain for centuries, and much of the scholarly work on their significance has concentrated on periods earlier than the Victorian.² Around the mid-Victorian period, broadsides 'gradually declined in popularity' (Vicinus 9). Historians agree that their fate was sealed when the repeal of the stamp and paper duties enabled the rise of the cheap popular press, with its ability to provide affordable up-to-date news and features thanks to new technological developments in communications and printing. Established publishers' shops specializing in broadsides, like the well-known 'Poet's Box' in Glasgow and Dundee, managed to survive until the end of the century, and the many local printers throughout Britain continued to print broadsides as a sideline, but the wider culture of street sellers of broadsides (such as the famous 'Hawkie' of Glasgow, one of few to record his autobiography (see Strathesk)) and of travelling packmen who would distribute them in country districts had largely died out by the late Victorian period.
- 4 As a broadside, 'The Drunkard's Raggit Wean' indicates the 'new emphasis on realism' in the industrial ballads of the Victorian period noted by Martha Vicinus (16). It is among the most frequent survivals from its time. The copy used here was published by James Lindsay of King Street, Glasgow, who, as Adam McNaughtan notes, was particularly active in the 1850s (170). 'The Drunkard's Raggit Wean' was, however, issued and reissued by many other broadside publishers for at least three decades after its first appearance, and multiple copies have been preserved in collections across Britain. It is not only held by all the major Scottish broadside collections, including those in the National Library of Scotland (NLS) in Edinburgh, the Mitchell Library, Glasgow, and the Lamb collection at Dundee Central Library, but also appears several



times in the Bodleian's collection with publishers from London and the North of England and in the Sheffield University Library Hewins collection, again with a London publisher (Carnell 22). Like most broadside verse—including reprinted poems by established names, such as 'Come into the Garden, Maud' by Alfred Tennyson, also popular in the late 1850s—it appeared anonymously, occasionally with a song tune ('Castles in the Air') attached. It was printed either alone, as in Lindsay's version, or with another, usually unrelated, poem on a sheet with decorative borders, an illustrative woodcut, or both. The illustration on Lindsay's version is particularly inappropriate, picturing an apparently well-cared-for child playing with a dog, though it is potentially interesting in suggesting that 'The Drunkard's Raggit Wean' might visually signal itself as part of the sub-genre of broadside verse aimed at child readers. As an artefact of broadside culture, there is nothing unusual about this poem as material object. But 'The Drunkard's Raggit Wean' is a particularly vital example of popular print culture from the mid-Victorian period because it is *simultaneously* a song published for respectable youth-temperance societies, a street song, and an extremely popular newspaper poem, marking not so much the smooth transition from one form to another but the messy intersections of older and emerging forms.

5 Most broadside verse dealing with contemporary events or subjects of local interest was written either by publishers or booksellers themselves or by itinerant poets who expected to be paid about a shilling for a quick composition on a set topic (Shepard 80; Collison 3; Vicinus 10). Anyone with a decent set of verses could, however, potentially present it to a local bookseller and hope to get a small fee if the work was judged marketable enough. Or, respectable artisan poets might prefer to post verses to a local newspaper sympathetic to their politics or religion, where they would receive no payment but would have their authorship acknowledged and could arguably accrue more cultural capital. In Crawford's case, 'The Drunkard's Raggit Wean' probably first appeared in a cheap Glasgow anthology of temperance verse and song called *The Crystal Fount*: a surviving fifth edition from 1858 contains a number of poems by 'Rookford' and specifically notes below the title 'The Drunkard's Raggit Wean' that it was 'Written for this work' (15).³ Since *The Crystal Fount* verses were intended for the use of 'juvenile' temperance meetings, child readers and performers constitute the original intended audience for the poem. Crawford had been an ardent temperance advocate from childhood, even 'before the name "teetotal" was invented', and, according to D. H. Edwards's brief biography, he was heavily involved in editing as well as contributing to *The Crystal Fount* (374). Scottish cities in the 1850s were saturated with temperance publications: Dawson Burn's history of temperance noted that in 1855 the Scottish Temperance League reported that it had published 'above ten million pages of literature' (1: 386) in that year alone, much of which would have been given away on the streets. The title page of *The Crystal Fount*, which states that it had reached a fifth edition of thirty thousand copies, gives an indication of its popularity.

6 The note in *The Crystal Fount* suggests that by 1858 'The Drunkard's Raggit Wean' was already circulating widely enough that the author or editor sought to reclaim its status as a *Crystal Fount* contribution. An 1882 newspaper account in the Dundee press (in which the author, Hamilton Nimmo, notes that 'The Drunkard's Raggit Wean' was 'one of the first songs the present writer, when a laddie herding kye over a quarter of a century ago, committed fully to memory' [7]) dates the composition of the poem to September 1855, noting in a widely circulated anecdote that Crawford said he had composed it during a service in his Presbyterian church in Glasgow (Nimmo 7). The culture of rapid reprinting meant that within two months it had escaped *The Crystal Fount* and moved into newspaper (and most likely also broadside) print culture, in the process losing its author and shifting its readership. Broadside are undated, so the first dated publication of 'The Drunkard's Raggit Wean' that I have located is in the *Stirling Observer* of 15 November 1855, where the poem is signed 'Paul Rookford' and, as in *The Crystal Fount*, indicates as its accompaniment the tune 'Castles in the Air'. By January 1856, the poem must have been widely known in temperance circles, since the Scottish Temperance League's periodical for children, the *Adviser*, published a 'New Year's



Song' by Crawford with the note 'by the author of "The Drunkard's Raggit Wean"' (Crawford 7); by April 1856, it was being performed in a Dundee concert—with no suggestion that it was new to the audience ('Literary Institute of Dundee Concert' 2). Thereafter, the digitization of historical newspapers gives us a taste of the poem's extraordinary and far-reaching circulation: it was reprinted from the *Liverpool Albion* in New Zealand's *Lyttelton Times* of 7 November 1857; moved directly from the *Belfast Newsletter* of 4 February 1857 to the *Bradford Observer* of 5 February 1857; sung at a temperance meeting at Blyth, three decades later, on 25 February 1888; and again reprinted in Pennsylvania's *Daily Republican* on 27 July 1891 and on the 'Old Favorites' page of Portland's *Sunday Oregonian* as late as 2 September 1917. Not surprisingly, it also evidently appeared in numerous temperance journals and periodicals, such as the *Australian Band of Hope Journal* of 15 August 1857. None of these later examples give either Crawford's name or pseudonym, and several reprint a headnote (attributed to the *Liverpool Albion* by the *Lyttelton Times*, elsewhere unattributed) stating that the poem was purchased for a halfpenny by a visitor to Glasgow who heard 'the plaintive notes of a child singing the following song', thus providing a new origin story for 'The Drunkard's Raggit Wean' in traditional Scottish oral street culture. Crawford's authorship was an open secret in Scotland, as suggested by a letter to the *People's Journal* in 1865 reminding the editor that 'Paul Rookford' was Crawford's pseudonym ('To Correspondents' 2), but it would not have been known to these cohorts of international readers and performers.

7 Broadside printers were happy to use popular anthologies or newspaper poems as sources, and it seems probable that an enterprising Glasgow printer selected the prospective greatest hits from *The Crystal Fount* and added them to his stock, where they would have coexisted happily with a substantial number of drinking and satirical anti-temperance songs. In tracing the poem's early appearance as a broadside, though, we cannot discount the possibility that it initially moved from oral performance—having been sung at a temperance meeting, perhaps—into broadside form. The Glasgow Poet's Box, for instance, specialized in providing customers with broadside copies of songs they had heard: request any song, and if the proprietor, Matthew Leitch, 'did not have it in stock, he promised he would quickly acquire it' (McNaughtan 174). In oral form, 'The Drunkard's Raggit Wean' was sung in Scotland at least until 1907, when it was recorded by folk song collector Gavin Greig.⁴ Besides its ambiguous status as broadside, newspaper, and anthology poem, then, 'The Drunkard's Raggit Wean' also typifies the ambiguous generic relationship between song and poem in the period, as well as the shifts between printed and oral culture that, as Chris Wright has recently argued, are essential in understanding 'the processes that have shaped Scottish song traditions' (76).

8 The tune to which the verses were initially set, 'Castles in the Air', was a variant of a traditional tune associated with a highly popular 1840s poem by Edinburgh poet James Ballantine, who was well known by reputation and person in Glasgow's working-class literary community.⁵ Ballantine's 'Castles in the Air' imagines the speaker watching a 'bonnie, bonnie bairn' with his 'wee chubby face, and his touzie curly pow' (l.1, 5) gazing into a fire and daydreaming; this poem similarly had an international circulation via broadsides, newspapers, songbooks, sheet music, and anthologies (Ballantine, see also Blair). Deploying the tune for which Ballantine's poem was known creates a direct and poignant intertextual relationship between the warm and cosy child of 'Castles in the Air' and the suffering child of Crawford's poem, with the effect of showing how quickly the demon drink could change a child's domestic circumstances from comfortable to terrifying. It also situates Crawford's poem in direct relation to a thriving working-class verse culture centred on the hugely successful *Whistle-Binkie* anthologies of Scottish verse and song, published from David Robertson's bookshop on the Trongate, Glasgow (a street that intersects with King Street, home of the cheaper broadside booksellers) from 1832 onward. As I explore elsewhere, *Whistle-Binkie* was deeply invested in poems for and about children, such as William Thom's famous 'The Mitherless Bairn', both for their marketability and as a means of promoting working-



class domesticity and community.⁶ Ballantine was a leading contributor and close friend of Robertson. Crawford, who was born in 1825 and moved to Glasgow in 1840, was part of a younger circle of working-class poets than those associated with *Whistle-Binkie*, which was most influential in the 1830s and 1840s; he and his contemporaries would have grown up with its poems and songs.

- 9 The enormous popularity of 'The Drunkard's Raggit Wean' was thus due less to novelty than to familiarity. After the temperance and total abstinence movements shot to prominence in the 1830s, verse by working-class writers—such as John O'Neill's well-known 'The Drunkard' of 1842, illustrated by George Cruikshank—was recognized as a vital form of propaganda (see Burn 1: 241). To take only one local newspaper example, ten years before Crawford's poem, the *Dumfries Courier* reprinted a poem from the *Glasgow Citizen* titled 'The Wee Ragged Wean' by 'an uneducated journeyman smith', which also attributes a child's suffering to the father's intemperance and, like Crawford, ends each verse with the phrase 'the wee ragged wean' (McI 2). It is unlikely that there is direct influence here, though, simply because so many thousands of temperance works, in prose and verse, used the suffering child as a means to inspire readers to reform themselves or others. The harm that alcohol did in breaking up working-class families was perceived as one of the strongest arguments that the cause could muster. As a mid-century tract directed to working men by the Glasgow Temperance League stated,

Have you, through your unfortunate love of strong drink, reduced a loving wife and family to poverty and wretchedness, and does the thought of this almost drive you to despair? Then let your mind dwell on the encouraging fact that many a family, once involved in misery through the intemperance of a parent, has again been made to rejoice in the enjoyment of comfort and respectability, through the same parent renouncing entirely and for ever the intoxicating cup. ('A Word With You!' 4)

- 10 This narrative of salvation through temperance is common in broadside temperance poems, such as Manchester poet John Critchley Prince's 'The Happy Change: A Temperance Rhyme' in which a wife waits at home with the children 'with a throbbing heart' to see if her husband will come back without entering the pub. She is overcome with joy when he does so, 'Hours ere his wonted time. / Sober, erect and thoughtful, too'. Henry Clay Work's 'Come Home, Father, or Little Mary's Song', like 'The Happy Change', is notable because it does not need to mention explicitly either alcohol or the pub: the reader's assumption is that a family left in a 'dark' house, the mother nursing a desperately sick child with 'no one to help her' but a young daughter, is suffering the effects of alcoholism. Poems spoken by children like 'Little Mary' were clearly perceived as especially affecting, and the innocent child who does not comprehend a father's (or, more rarely, a mother's) love of drink is a staple throughout temperance verse; further broadside examples include 'The Child's Warning' ('Father, dear, don't drink again' (l.8)) and 'The Poor Drunkard's Child' ('My clothes are all ragged and tattered and torn / I'm despised, dejected, forsaken and forlorn' (l.9-10)).

- 11 None of these poems, however, appear to have attained the popularity of 'The Drunkard's Raggit Wean'. In a demonstration of its influence, and of the eagerness of broadside writers to capitalize on its success, it attracted at least four response poems, each of which seeks to rework or transform its theme and ending. John Wilson's 'The Orphan Boy' opens thus:

I hear the people sing about a Drunkard's raggit wean
As I wander through the streets quite dejected and alane
Baith hungry, cauld and raggit, and nae frien's at a' hae I
And oh! there's few to pity me, a puir wee orphan boy. (l.1-4)

- 12 One implication here is that, after 'The Drunkard's Raggit Wean', there is no market for ordinary Scottish orphans—despite the fact that even unsatisfactory parents should be better than none—because charitable efforts are so focused on intemperance. The opening line of the poem also implies that those who take sentimental pleasure in the



plight of Crawford's fictional child are hypocritically ignoring the real homeless children in the city. Wilson was one of few well-known and established broadside ballad writers and printers in Scotland, and his verses might also seek to show his own longstanding status as a writer in the suffering-child genre, besides being a cynical attempt to advertise a relationship to a more successful poem. The three other poems are all continuations of Crawford's narrative that add the redemption arc so common in temperance narratives. John Barr's 'The Unco Change'—written and produced by Barr, a Glasgow printer, with a title probably deliberately designed to recall Prince's 'The Happy Change'—opens with a vision of the 'wean' after his parents have given up drink:

See yon braw bit laddie comin' runnin' down the street
Weel happit frae the caul' blast, an' a' sae clean an' neat:
His bonnet cocket on his head, his shoen sae tight an' clean—
There's an unco change com' e'er him now—the drunkard's raggit wean. (l.1-4)

- 13 By specifically emphasizing that the child is protected from the cold, Barr alludes to the famous opening of 'The Drunkard's Raggit Wean' without citing it directly: readers do not realize that the child is the same one from that poem until the end of the stanza. The unattributed 'An Answer to the Drunkard's Raggit Wean' also uses its opening lines to reference its source:

Did you ken yon raggit laddie that gaed about the street,
Wi' the tear in his e'e, it was for the want o' meat;
But his Faither's turned a Totaler, and frae drinkin' does abstain
They say nae mair he will be ca'd a Drunkard's Raggit Wean. (l.1-4)

- 14 In this broadside, whose references to the Crimean War imply its production relatively soon after 'The Drunkard's Raggit Wean', the author suggests that thanks to the parents' reform, their child is now top of his class at school and can look forward to a successful career in the army: 'Step by step he may get up, a General he may be'. (l.25) Investing in temperance, then, provides a way to secure Britain's military success in future conflicts by supplying bright working-class boys with a means to advancement. Finally, 'A Reformed Drunkard: An Answer to the Raggit Wean' takes a different approach to the popularity of its source by having a father directly state that Crawford's poem caused his reformation:

Wi' a sair heart I wander and think on days that's gane,
I hear the young anes singing o' the drunkard's raggit wean;
I ken the tales ower true, when I turn my e'en on hame,
Farewell unto the drunkard's cup, from drinking I'll refrain. (l.1-4)

- 15 'A Reformed Drunkard' presents 'The Drunkard's Raggit Wean' as hard-hitting realism capable of inspiring drunk parents to shame, self-awareness, and repentance, particularly when sung by children on the street. As in other re-imaginings of 'The Drunkard's Raggit Wean', its form is similar enough that it could be sung to the same tune, though unlike 'An Answer' and 'An Unco Change', it does not preserve the effective refrain of 'drunkard's raggit wean' in the fourth line of each stanza, saving it for the last line of the poem. Three of these four songs, in the copies held by the Bodleian and by the NLS, have no stated publisher (though the signatures of John Barr and John Wilson suggest a Scottish audience), and the fourth appeared from T. McIntosh of King Street, Calton, a bookseller on the same Glasgow street as Lindsay, though located at the less high-class eastern end.

- 16 Although at least one other temperance broadside, Work's 'Come Home Father', attracted a response ('Father Has Come Home'), no other surviving example of temperance broadside verse attracted four different responses. In a marketplace flooded with temperance literature and broadsides of all varieties and on very similar themes, what is it that made Crawford's poem stand out and achieve such success? In terms of potential audience, it may have attained wide circulation because it could be marketed to and performed by children, men, and women; the note in the *Adviser* cited



above assumes that its child readers, for instance, will know the poem, and the testimony of the 'Literary Institute' author in the *Dundee Courier* suggests its early circulation among young readers. 'The Drunkard's Raggit Wean' also benefits greatly from the striking immediacy of its opening lines—positioned, of course, in the city-street setting in which the broadside would also have been sung and sold—and their focus on the specifics of the child's physical and emotional suffering. Formally, the relatively long lines with a prevalence of unstressed beats move rapidly along, while a double stress on 'cald blast' in the third line perhaps reminds the reader of the contrast between this unsheltered, un-cared-for child and the emphasis on loving shelter in Robert Burns's famous 'O Wert Thou in the Cauld Blast'. Crawford's intelligent use of Scots is also an important factor, deployed in such a way that his verse retains regional identity without using dialect that would have been too difficult for contemporary English-speaking readers who were accustomed to the Scots of Burns and Walter Scott. The language significantly contributes to the seeming realism of a poem presented as direct observation by a working-class speaker, appealing to others of his or her community. Scots dialect in Victorian poetry, while often associated with comic and satirical verse, was popular from the 1840s onward in poems from the 'nursery verse' tradition, spoken by a parent addressing a young child. In this genre—which spread from *Whistle-Binkie* through the Scottish and international press—dialect signals not only class and nationality but also an informal, affectionate relationship between speaker and subject. Standard English, for example, has no good equivalent for 'wee' (used three times in the first four lines) with its suggestion of both smallness and youth, and, applied to a child, arguably carrying a greater sense of casual fondness than a term like 'little'. Scots terms in 'The Drunkard's Raggit Wean' are also particularly evocative of physical conditions, like 'dreepit' for 'soaked', which recalls the drops of rain and also contains 'dree' (in English, 'dreary'), or 'hackit', which means 'chapped' (of skin) but evokes the sense of being cut or hacked.

17 If 'The Drunkard's Raggit Wean' owes some of its success to an intelligent manipulation of linguistic and formal effects, however, it owes more simply to its appearance at exactly the right time and place, in terms of popular ideology and developments in print culture that enabled global circulation. It is a modern Victorian poem emerging from the heart of a major industrial city, as opposed to the eighteenth-century and earlier ballads still circulating on Victorian broadsides, and it speaks directly to the cultural, social, and political interests of the mid-Victorian period. Poems focused on a central character or characters painfully shut out from happy domesticity, written with the aim of effecting change by creating a feeling community of readers who share a sense of outrage at their fate, were among the most popular and best-known works from the 1840s to the 1860s. 'The Drunkard's Raggit Wean' stands with other moving depictions of working-class children that Crawford's readers would have known, including, for example, Charles Dickens's *Oliver Twist* (1837–39) and Elizabeth Barrett Browning's 'The Cry of the Children' (1844). Besides such fictional examples, the poem resonates with seemingly factual accounts of the state of street children in the rapidly growing cities of Glasgow and Edinburgh, which present this as a contemporary problem demanding urgent action. Thomas Guthrie's widely read *A Plea for the Ragged Schools* (1847), for example, opened with an anecdote about finding a typical child in the Grassmarket in Edinburgh ('he has neither shoes nor stockings; his naked feet are red, swollen, cracked, ulcerated with the cold, a thin, thread-worn jacket, with its gaping rents, is all that protects his breast' [9]) before continuing to warn his audience that such children 'whom we have left in ignorance, and starved into crime, must grow up into criminals' (15). It is this threat that similarly haunts the final stanzas of Crawford's poem: if nothing is done to break the cycle, then the children of drunkards are doomed to be drunkards or worse themselves.

18 Readers of all classes, the poem implies, therefore have a stake in helping working-class families to conform to an influential ideal of contented domesticity. Although this ideal could serve deeply conservative ends, it is important to appreciate that it was also firmly held by those with radical political views and that poetry like Crawford's



harnesses sentimentality to a reformist cause. James Nicholls argues that from the point when Joseph Livesey and the Preston Temperance Society introduced a total abstinence pledge in 1832, what had been a primarily middle-class movement 'was steam-rolled by a radical, energetic and visionary movement of largely working-class teetotallers. . . . Organized teetotalism was a revolutionary idea' (Nicholls 100). Glasgow adopted radical temperance early, and many of the leaders of the movement, such as its historian, self-educated working man Edward Morris (also himself a noted temperance poet), were passionate political reformers who saw temperance as a means to advance the people's cause against the wealthy and corrupt (see Morris 25, 74 and *passim*). Close friends and colleagues of Crawford, like the poet James Nicholson, would later advocate for progressive abstinence societies like the Good Templars, who allied temperance to equality in terms of gender, class, and race (see Fahey).

19 Self-improvement, aided by the community of temperance societies and individuals, was vital in demonstrating that the working classes deserved equal rights. Nicholls, Lilian Lewis Shiman, and most recently Annemarie McAllister all emphasize that in the working-class temperance movement, the key figure was the drunkard who could be saved and reformed, with Nicholls arguing that this figure 'struck a chord with large numbers of working people, not least because it suggested that both personal salvation and social transformation were in their hands rather than the hands of priests or politicians' (103; McAllister, 'On the Temperance Movement' *passim*; Shiman 25).⁷ 'The Drunkard's Raggit Wean' is important in this respect because it strongly suggests, in language as well as content, that it is 'we' (l.21), the working-class community, who have the power to help alcoholics to reform their behaviour. It is significant that the final lines of 'The Drunkard's Raggit Wean' ('An' mak' them lea' the drunkard's cup, an' never taste again, / An' cherish wi' a parent's care their puir wee raggit wean'. [l.23-4]) move from 'trying' to get the parents to acknowledge their responsibilities to 'mak[ing]' them give up drink. Crawford wrote his poem two years after the formation of the United Kingdom Alliance, a moment which marked a decisive move toward lobbying for legislation to 'outlaw all trading in intoxicating drinks' (Harrison 19). The Alliance's political cause offered a means for working-class communities to agitate for compulsory rather than voluntary abstinence, going beyond an ideal of individual or communal charity exercised on a personal level.

20 McAllister has recently suggested that the impact of the temperance movement on Victorian print culture is still underestimated (McAllister, 'Onward'), though her recent work, and that of Emma Liggins, has gone some way toward reassessing the impact of temperance periodicals, and Rob Breton has demonstrated the importance of forgotten works of temperance fiction. There is little to no mention of temperance broadsides, however, in existing literature either on broadside culture or on the history of temperance in Britain. Yet most working-class consumers—including, of course, those who disagreed with the movement's principles and would never have bought a temperance periodical—would have encountered temperance verse and song, as well as the movement's ideals, primarily in this cheap, readily available, and easily memorized and sung format. Moreover, scholars of broadside culture have not yet explored the crossover between broadsides and newspaper verse columns, though, as this one example suggests, investigating this crossover might show us less how the press extinguished broadside culture than how broadsides exploited the popular press's reach and vice versa. 'The Drunkard's Raggit Wean' escapes its author to become, literally and figuratively, portable property, a communal possession, a highlight of contemporary Scottish song equally comfortable on a concert program, in a mass temperance meeting, or on a street corner, and available for use and repurpose for fifty years and more after its first appearances. As a material artefact showing the reach and influence of mid-Victorian verse culture and its intersection with social, political, and religious ideologies, this broadside, rather than the major canonical poetic works of the 1850s, demands our scholarly attention.



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Notes

1 Quotations in the text are from the broadside published by James Lindsay, King Street, Glasgow. A list of broadside versions consulted is included in the Works Cited. Broadside editions used are from the Bodleian's 'Broadside Ballads Online', <http://ballads.bodleian.ox.ac.uk>, unless otherwise stated. Date ranges are those supplied in this collection. Where a broadside has an assigned number in the Roud Folksong Index, this is also given.

2 For a good overview of the field of broadside scholarship, and an emphasis on the relative lack of research into nineteenth-century broadsides, see Roud, 'Introduction' (Atkinson and Roud 1–17).

3 I am grateful to Sasha Dovzhyk for consulting this edition in the British Library on my behalf.

4 See the entry for this song in the Roud Folksong Index, record S143302, consulted on 19 January 2015: <http://www.vwml.org/record/RoudFS/S143302>. Logan suggests that 'The Drunkard's Raggit Wean' was 'made famous' as a song by the temperance singer Adam Gibson in the 1870s, though the evidence here suggests that it was popular at least a decade earlier (105).

5 The poem later acquired a new musical setting by Crawford's son, William Crawford. See Logan 104 for a reproduction.

6 A detailed discussion of the politics of *Whistle-Binkie* and of Scottish 'nursery verse' culture in this period is included in chapter two of my forthcoming monograph, *Working Verse in Victorian Scotland: Poetry, Press, Community*.

7 For an engaging counter-argument, see Breton, who suggests that a 'middle-class narrative' focused on the reform of individuals, rather than the wider social and political causes of intemperance, was resisted by Chartist fiction writers in their temperance narratives (143). This is not the case with the broadsides and other poems examined here, though they were largely produced after the heyday of Chartism.

8 These entries are arranged chronologically.

Table des illustrations



Titre	Fig. 1: 'The Drunkard's Raggit Wean'. Glasgow: James Lindsay, n.d.
URL	http://journals.openedition.org/cve/docannexe/image/2918/img-1.jpg
Fichier	image/jpeg, 998k

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actuellement la rédaction d'un nouvel ouvrage, Working Verse in Victorian Scotland: Poetry, Press, Community. De 2016 à 2018, avec des collègues de l'Université de Glasgow, elle est chercheur associé au projet 'The People's Voice: Scottish Political Poetry, Song and the Franchise', financé par le Carnegie Trust.

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