



**DEANE VILLAGE CLUB.**



# The Deane Village Club

## AND GYMNASIUM.

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*“The missing link in the social life of the working man.”*

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**H. S. PATTERSON,**

**VICAR OF DEANE, BOLTON, LANCASHIRE**

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DEANE VILLAGE CLUB



The present public-house system is the outcome of vitiated habits which it in turn panders to. Man's nature requires social intercourse, change, recreation, amusement, and mental activity, with a little excitement and bodily refreshment. These wants are great allies of the present system.

Now any effort at the emancipation of men from such slavery must recognise, gratify, and meet these legitimate and prominent elements and wants of our nature. There is a good side to the shield. There is a good tendency for virtue and self-improvement in man and we must appeal to it, awaken, bind and strengthen it.

But though the majority of the working classes may resist this demoralising system, yet the minority, with all their low conception of things, are getting more and more influential. They are not the best producers and they are the great wastrels. Their self-dependence is exchanged for a system that will make them equal to the industrious and sober. They form a kind of public opinion, and exercise a trade and political power far beyond their unorganised but sober fellow men.

Now we must organise virtue. We must reinforce the better side of human nature. We must supply to the sober a rational place of resort, recreation and amusement. We must supply exercise to the body so as to develop it and produce a sound mind in a sound body.

This can only be done by the co-operation of the working classes. By appealing to their wants and meeting them by all elevating and legitimate means.

The enlightenment and desire for improvement are sure allies in the human breast. We must and we can enlist these in our efforts, and only by so doing can we extend an elevating system of social amusement and improvement, which can alone form the basis



of a self-supporting system capable of competing successfully with the present public-house, and winning the people to higher and nobler tastes and habits.

Let me illustrate this by the village of Deane, with its population of say 1,000 people. We have four public houses, value £13,000, and two beerhouses, £2,000—£15,000. Thus there is a capital of about £1,500 devoted to the drinking and spend-powers of every 100 people. The interest on this capital, rates, excise, and expenses of management will require a huge *turn over* and a profit of over £2 a head, or £2,000. Here is the huge organisation of Bacchus.

Will legislation, local option, or reduction of licences transform our habits or improve our condition. If so or not, numerical limitation will only create a monopoly and enable this £15,000 to be invested in a huge Gin Palace of Varieties. I confess I tremble at such a prospect.

The solution of our social problem is to be found in a philanthropic effort, which will not only point out the path of emancipation from the present condition, but put within the reach of the working classes not only the means but the system which shall supply all their legitimate and natural wants and be at the same time *self-supporting*.

Machinery has supplanted muscular effort, and much physical exercise is necessary for bodily health and development, which must react favourably upon mind and spirits hence we need the gymnasium and manual recreation.

Education has quickened the activity of the mind, and hence the craving for social intercourse. Men are gregarious, social, and desire company. They are fagged and want recreation, amusement, and refreshment. They reflect and want knowledge and the means of self-improvement. All these human instincts only want scope and they



will prefer the path of virtue to that of vice. If the civilizing and elevating provision of the Village Club provides rational amusement and refreshment of body and mind free from the lowering and expensive public-house fare, they will choose it and adopt and support it by preference. The demand and supply are corelated here as well as in trade. This effort is not based upon pious wishes or a theoretical ideal. It is based upon known and universal want and the knowledge that a Temperance Village Club can supply every legitimate want of the working man as well and better than the public-house, with which it enters into competition. In asking only £550 as an investment on behalf of Temperance, in its combat with £15,000 invested in Drink, you may be reminded of David going against Goliath, but we are confident in the power of right; we have instances of success to justify us, and there are persons ready to work our club and pay us a rent for it before it is built.

*I may be asked, Why so extensive a scheme?* Experience in village clubs for 14 years proves that we must do more than educate or amuse. We must have good places for exercise, resort, and refreshment. They mutually support and strengthen each other and the whole.

**Our Gymnasium** will be available under instructors for men, girls, and children at suitable times on payment (moderate). This room, 50ft. by 20ft. will be available for concerts, lectures, social gatherings, &c.

**Our Refreshment Room** will supply good provision at reasonable cost, and in a tidy manner. Without this those who take exercise would be tempted to the public house. This will afford a room for social intercourse, and be open for visitors to Deane, wedding or mourning parties.



**Our Four Club Rooms** will be available for reading or news rooms for visitors, club meetings, township committees, &c., or private parties.

**Our Bath Room, Dressing Room, and Lavatories** will complete the comforts and usefulness of the Club.

**Our Bowling Green** will afford open-air recreation to the public in day-time and to members in non-working hours, upon moderate payment, and upon the condition that there be *no betting*.

**The Club** will be managed by a Committee of the members in a liberal spirit, which will not restrict any rational games or amusements conducive to the pleasure of those attending the institute.

The Club is founded and will be managed on commercial principles, and in evidence of this I can add that a person who has had experience with Spier & Pond has offered to work the club on the above lines, and pay a rent for it in addition.

May I say that the cost of this building is only one-fourth of the usual expenditure upon such a building, covering an area of 2,600 square feet. It is in the best Old English style of *black and white*, suited to an ancient village and commending itself by its exterior and interior fitness for its purpose. It gives good hopes of solving a great social problem, how to elevate the tastes of the working classes, and how to meet their legitimate wants and supply them with a *self-supporting Club*. We propose to spend say £550, and can already guarantee not only successful philanthropy, but by *letting* we can produce 5 per cent. even as a commercial venture, and thus open up the possibility of the working men's club competing successfully with, and, as in other places throughout the country, replacing the public-house in the life of our working



people and emancipating them from the degrading and deteriorating influence upon mind and body, and also purifying and elevating social life and those popular force which must largely control the political and social life of the nation in the future.

This building will be situated on Junction road, opposite the Church, which is a street of 300 yards and has the following public-houses:—The Vulcan, Queen Anne, New Brook Inn, and King's Head. Here the forces are against thrift and social progress.

The Vicar is prepared to give front building land for the club, value £100, and also set apart land for bowling green, tennis courts, &c., worth about £30 a year, under the conviction that action is absolutely necessary, not only in the interests of the working classes, but the commercial and vital welfare of society and the commonwealth.

If those who receive this appeal will generously come to our help we will get this institute in working order before the end of January, 1892. The young people are all working and I can commence with over 100 members. I may say that we have no other available building, as the Deane School Trustees will not allow the use of the school for such a purpose, and it is not adapted for it. The County Council grant for technical education can be taken up in this Club if we are in time, and this means £20 grant per annum.

Yours respectfully,

H. SHERIDAN PATTERSON.