

## JAMES TYNTE AGG-GARDNER, ESQ., M.P., OF THE ORIGINAL BREWERY CHELTENHAM

Among the most noteworthy incidents concerned with the general election in February 1874,<sup>1</sup> none were more gratifying to the members of the Licensed Victualling interest than the numerous accessions to the list of brewers and distillers holding seats in the House of Commons, not only because by their triumphs certain and zealous supporters were gained for the trade whenever it became necessary to put forward or to enforce their views, but also on the wider and more purely patriotic ground that personal experience and intimate knowledge has convinced all Licensed Victuallers that few, if any, classes of men in the country can boast of more public spirit, of wider justice or more comprehensive views of general questions, or more thoroughness in the discharge of their duties than those referred to. That these qualities should be so generally possessed is by no means surprising. For, as a rule, the large brewer or distiller is not only endowed with wealth at least equal, if not superior, to that of the average county magnate who aspires to represent his native shire in business, and has thereby been enabled to gain all those advantages of education and knowledge of men and countries which only wealth can bestow, but he has generally, from his youth up, been taught that the great interests confided to his care will not allow him to vegetate on an ancestral estate like the son of an ordinary squire, but call for his active and immediate personal supervision. Thus he is led to mix with, and to know the habits and the wants of many sections of society whose very existence is unknown to the man who is born merely to the luxury without the responsibilities of riches. A careful study of the representatives of these two great branches of industry now occupying seats in the House of Commons would furnish numberless facts in illustration of this argument, and it is by no means impossible that we may at some future period devote

ourselves to the pleasant task of making their biographies familiar to our readers. It may be added that a confident impression that our readers would share our interest in these electoral triumphs led us to select for the present of our series of articles on the "Breweries of England," the one belonging to James Tynthe Agg-Gardner, Esq., who was the hero of one the most memorable and decisive of the many victories attributed by the followers of the late administration generally, and by Permissivites specially, to the influence of the trade.<sup>2</sup>

Cheltenham, the scene of this victory, is, by the unanimous consent of its inhabitants, declared to be the handsomest and cleanest town in England, and it must certainly be conceded that there are good grounds for the boast. In no place with which we are acquainted are the streets wider or better laid out; nowhere are there handsomer shops to be found; in very few places are there to be found rarer evidences of poverty amid the surrounding wealth; in no place but Regent-street or the Park, during the season, will there be encountered more handsome equipages within a given time and distance; and nowhere in the world is there a lovelier thoroughfare than the Promenade, with its rows of arching trees extending for a seemingly interminable distance from the Queen's Hotel. Yet flourishing as it is at this moment, only 150 years ago Cheltenham was an obscure village, the very name of which had probably never been heard of by a hundred people further away than Gloucester. But in 1710 a fortunate discovery was made by a resident, of the chemical and medicinal qualities of the now celebrated waters. Their fame spread rapidly. Invalids and quasi-invalids flocked from all parts of the country, and even from beyond the seas, to test the virtues of the chalybeate springs.<sup>3</sup> Of course, as they continued to come, it was necessary to provide

accommodation for them, and the town grew so quickly that when it was visited by George III, in 1788, he found it a flourishing and elaborately-ornamented town, the favourite resort of the wealthy Indian nabobs (as they used to be called in the last century), who had returned to England, after long absences in the territory of the Honourable Company, with many lacs of rupees, but no livers worth mentioning; on which last account it was they affected Cheltenham, the medicinal waters being believed to be specially beneficial to diseased livers.

At the time of the first Royal visit to the town, in 1788, one of the most prominent inhabitants was a very young man named John Gardner, who, if not the founder of the Original Brewery, was at least the first who raised it to the dignity of an important establishment. John Gardner was a man of immense energy and most fertile resources, and he, having discovered that if the medicinal springs were so valuable for liver complaints, the ordinary springs of Cheltenham were even more priceless for brewing purposes, so turned his knowledge to account, and gained so great a reputation for his beer throughout the whole of Gloucestershire and the neighbouring counties, that he naturally attracted rivals, and now there are almost as many breweries in Cheltenham as there are in Burton, which town greatly resembles it, both in geological character and in the composition of its water. These newer breweries are, however, for the most part, very small, the "Original" being the only one of real importance.

Mr. John Gardner remained at the head of the establishment until his death in 1836, when he was nearly seventy years of age. Besides being a brewer, Mr. Gardner was also a banker, having been a partner in the house of Pitt, Gardner, Croome, Bowley, and Wood, which now forms the County of Gloucester Bank. This Mr. Pitt, who was then the principal partner in the bank, was the builder of Pittville, one of the pleasantest and most fashionable districts of the town, in which is the celebrated Pittville Spar, or Pump-room, beneath the dome of which the Cheltenham invalids quaff their morning and afternoon draughts. As an instance of John Gardner's energy and determination of character, a story is told which, although it dates only fifty years back, when he was by no means a young man, yet carries us beyond the era of railways and telegraphs into the age of postchaises and turnpikes. During the great financial crisis of 1825, at a time when banks were falling all over

England, many not so much because they were actually insolvent as in consequence of the impossibility of realising their securities, and two or three of those in Cheltenham had actually succumbed, it became apparent that the misfortunes of their neighbours were about to produce their natural effect on Pitt's. During a certain afternoon there had been many withdrawals, and a wholesale presentation of notes, and when the partners met in solemn conclave, as the doors were closed, all felt what none cared to be the first to announce, that the next morning would witness "a run on the bank." At last John Gardner asked what sum was necessary to stem the tide, and to restore public confidence. An amount was named large in itself, but hopelessly so when compared with the resources of the borough and county. It was impossible to procure the money save in London - perhaps even there - and there were, moreover, two hundred and fifty miles between the bank and safety. Nowadays this, of course, would simply mean a telegram first, and then a run up to town by the 6.20 train; but then it was a very different affair, and of all those present, John Gardner was the only one equal to the situation. With an asseveration that he would do it, couched in those forcible terms made familiar to us by the elderly gentlemen in comedies of two generations ago, Gardner ordered round a postchaise and four from the Fleece, pulled on his heavy topboots, stuffed his valise with securities, and offering the postboys a guinea a-mile for every stage that "beat fifteen miles an hour," started on his eventful journey alone. So gallantly were his efforts seconded by the eager and heavily-bribed postboys, that soon after midnight he was in London. Then financial agents, as they had not yet come to be called, discounters, and bankers, had to be disturbed from their slumbers. Gardner would take no denial; to all entreaties to return in business hours, his one reply was, "It will be too late," and at last his energy had broken through rule and convention, and the precious freight was safely stored in the postchaise. Now, perhaps, commenced the most intensely exciting portion of the adventure. It was a race against Time, and the old scythe-bearer has so many advantages; all accidents tell so utterly in his favour, that it is always dangerous to back the mortal in such a contest. And in this case the endurance of men, the surefootedness of the horses, the soundness of the coachbuilder's work, had all to be tested to the utmost. Gold and threats, abuse and praise, were lavishly bestowed on the postboys by their excited passenger, and the riders in their turn spared neither whip nor spur.

As the flying chaise passed through Gloucester, the clock struck the hour for opening the bank.

“If they have only trusted me!” muttered Gardner between his set teeth.

And they had trusted him. At the usual hour, though with many misgivings, the doors were thrown open, and the clerks were simply told to go on paying to the last. Immediately a crowd surged in clamouring eagerly for their rights. Gloomily the partners in the back parlour calculated how long the till would last; longer grew the face of the chief clerk as customer after customer, whose accounts had been practically undisturbed for years, drew out their balances, when suddenly with a tremendous clash and clatter a postchaise drew up outside the bank, and the somewhat gigantic form of John Gardner appeared in the doorway labouring under the weight of two heavy bags of guineas, while the postboy, similarly weighted, followed him in. By accident or design, as Gardner threw down his bags, one of them burst open, and the glittering golden mass rolled over the counter. No sooner was the money seen by the crowd of drawers than the truth was understood, and then and there three ringing cheers were given for John Gardner, and from that moment “the run on Pitt’s Bank” was over. But it was a near thing, for tradition tells that when the postchaise drew up to the door there was not another five pounds in the bank.

There is abundant evidence, from all the accounts of the founder of the Cheltenham Brewery, that he was a man blessed with a vast amount of energy of the kind that is infectious. He was always entering heart and soul into some beneficial undertaking himself, and - a more difficult and rarer task - inducing others to follow him. He and Cheltenham were proud of each other, and indeed the history of the town and of his family seem from his time to have been so closely intertwined as to be almost synonymous. Some seven years after the adventure just alluded to, namely 1818, vast additions had been made to the brewery, which then took a foremost place among the local industries. John Gardner, too, besides being a large contributor to all local speculations, had been made a magistrate and a town commissioner, and when the first Reform Bill gave Cheltenham a voice in Parliament, a requisition to stand, signed by most of the leading inhabitants of the borough, was presented to him, and this was repeated on the only subsequent

election previous to his death. But although not unambitious of legislatorial honours John Gardner declined to stand, on grounds easily understood then, though we fear they would be somewhat incomprehensible nowadays. It was generally felt that to the influence of the Berkeleys, the great Whig magnates of the county, was to be attributed the apportionment of representative to Cheltenham; and the Berkeleys in return seemed to think they had a right to monopolise the representation, and had always a cadet ready to send to the House. Mr. John Gardner seems to have tacitly admitted their right, although he was politically opposed to them; and steadily refused to stand against a Berkeley, avowing openly that the patronage of the great family was more valuable to the town than his services could possibly be. Although we may think his views on this point mistaken, it is impossible to avoid respecting the motives which influenced his decision.

In 1834 the brewery was again enlarged, but in 1836 Mr. John Gardner, then in his seventieth year, died, to be succeeded by his sister and his nephew, Mr. James Agg-Gardner, Mr. John Gardner had no children, but his sister, Mary Gardner, married Mr. James Agg, a retired member of the East Indian Civil Service, who on his return to England had settled at Cheltenham, purchased the Hewletts estate, in the immediate neighbourhood of the town, and was made a justice of the peace of the county. The issue of this marriage included a son, James, who, as already stated, succeeded his uncle John in the proprietorship of the brewery, assuming in compliance with the terms of the will, and in accordance with Royal licence for that purpose had and obtained, the name of Gardner, in addition to his original surname of Agg.

A few years later the connection between the town of Cheltenham and the Gardner family was to be drawn yet closer, in a manner that proved greatly to the advantage of the town. In 1843 the second Lord Sherborne, representative of the ancient family of the Duttons, of Sherborne, Bibury and Northleach, in Gloucestershire, wished to dispose of his manor of Cheltenham, of which his ancestors had been lords since 1628, when the first of the Duttons connected with the town had purchased it for £1200. Mrs. Mary and Mr. James Agg-Gardner would not permit the chance to escape, but the 205 years that had elapsed had made a vast difference in the value of the manor, and for what had cost the Duttons £1200

the Gardners had to pay no less than £39,000. It is we fear incontestable that the lords of Sherborne had been satisfied to receive from Cheltenham all to which they were entitled, and to render nothing in return, which is perhaps one of the causes for the utter lack of progress in the place until the accidental discovery of the springs, and for its failure to establish itself subsequently as a market town of an importance at all corresponding with its wealth and population. But the Gardners remembered that property has its duties as well as its rights, and after they had acquired the Manor, spared no pause to advance the prosperity of the town. For the market, which belonged to the manor, very much was done. The market-houses were improved, and every inducement was held out for the transaction of business; although the market is even now, by no means what it should be in such a town, it has at least made a greater advance during the past thirty years than in the two centuries preceding.

Mr. James Agg-Gardner was less considerate than his uncle of the claims of the Berkeleys, and twice stood against a scion of the family for the honour of representing his native town in Parliament. But the influence of the lords of Berkeley Castle was too strong for him, and he was both times defeated, but by so small a majority that he was by no means disgraced; and after the second contest his disappointed supporters, to mark their esteem for their candidate personally, and for the gallant fight he had made against the undue influence exercised by the great champions of the ballot, presented him with a costly service of plate. Mr. J. Agg-Gardner seems indeed to have enjoyed a rare amount of respect from his fellow-townsmen, by whom he was appointed to every office in their power he would consent to fill, and his death on the 12th of March, 1858, at the early age of fifty-three, was the cause of universal mourning throughout the town and neighbourhood. As an instance of the importance attached to the sad event it may be mentioned that the local paper devoted no less than five columns to a description of his funeral, which was attended with such marks of public sympathy and respect, and attracted such concourse of persons as has never been seen in Cheltenham before or since. The funeral procession extended from Pittville to the suburbs of Prestbury, a distance of one mile and three-quarters, and comprised, *cum multis aliis*, the high baliff, the constable, the chairman of the board of town commissioners and his colleagues, and all the principal public

officers of Cheltenham, besides some five or six hundred of the gentry and leading tradesmen of the district, two hundred Odd Fellows, one hundred Foresters, and some sixty of the deceased gentlemen's servants, and on the day of the funeral every house in the town was closed. Immediately afterwards a public subscription was opened for the purpose of placing a memorial window in the parish church, which window, be it added, is the most artistic feature in the building.

Mr. James Agg-Gardner married one of four sisters, daughters of Mr. R. Hopkyns-Northey, of Buckinghamshire, and niece of Mr. Thomas Fortescue, of Suffolk Hall, Cheltenham, who were all destined to make what the world would call fortunate, and what, we may add, without violating the secrets of private life, proved happy matrimonial alliances. One, as we have intimated, became Mrs. Agg-Gardner; a second, Lady Boston; a third, Lady de Saumarez; and the fourth, Mrs. Pratt Tynte. Consequently, the present member for Cheltenham, and sole proprietor of the brewery, James Tynte Agg-Gardner, Esq., who succeeded his father at the early age of twelve years, is a first cousin of the present holders of the peerages of De Saumarez and Boston. His family is also closely allied with most of the distinguished houses of Gloucestershire and the neighbouring counties, and it can well be imagined that Mr. J.T. Agg-Gardner is not less proud of the energetic John Gardner, from whom he derives great wealth, and the power of calling himself the largest single-handed brewer in the world, than of any of his more aristocratic connections. After going through a course of private tuition, the subject of our sketch went to Eton, and afterwards to Cambridge, where he graduated B.A., and was subsequently called to the bar, and joined the Midland Circuit, but has never practised. In December, 1868, in answer to an influentially-signed requisition, he contested the representation of Cheltenham in the Conservative interest with Mr. Bernhard Samuelson, of Banbury, an advanced Radical and semi-Permissivite. But at that time the temporary enthusiasm evoked by Mr. Gladstone's Irish Church speeches overbore all opposition in very many boroughs, and Mr. Agg-Gardner was only able to poll 1460 against his opponent's 1648. Such a defeat, however, possessed considerable elements of success in the future, and so it proved, for when Mr. Gladstone dissolved Parliament so suddenly at the beginning of last year the same opponents contested the seat, with the result that at the close of the poll Mr. Agg-



JAMES TYNTE AGG-GARDNER, ESQ., M.P.,  
OF THE "ORIGINAL BREWERY," CHELTENHAM.

Gardner was found to have polled 2121 against his opponents 1842, this majority of 279 being the largest recorded in the history of Cheltenham. The result is specially deserving of record, as being the first election in the town under the ballot, of which the head of the Berkeley family was the champion for so many years, and thus furnishing a striking illustration of the “engineer hoist with his own petard,” the only previous occasion on which the family nominee had been defeated being in 1864, when Mr. Charles Schreiber won the seat by the narrow majority of twenty-eight, and the management of this election reflects much credit on Mr. F. Stroud, solicitor, of Cheltenham, who on this occasion was Mr. Agg-Gardner’s sole agent.

Mr. Agg-Gardner’s Parliamentary career has hardly yet commenced. It will suffice therefore to say that during the debates and divisions on the Licensing Act of last session, he voted always on the right side, and as he enjoys a well-deserved reputation as a capital after-dinner and platform speaker, we may fairly look forward to his making a prominent figure in the House of Commons, especially when it is remembered that he is not yet nine-and-twenty. Mr. Disraeli has a reputation for drawing out young members, and it is more than probable he will not long permit any real or assumed indifference to display, that may exist in the mind of the young member for Cheltenham to interfere with the powers, which those who know him best are most confident he possesses, being devoted to the service of the country. In private life, as in public, Mr. J.T. Agg-Gardner seems to have a great future before him, for in spite of the proverb that “no man is a hero in his *valet de chambre*,” and that a prophet has no honour in his own country, it is precisely among those dependent on him, and among his fellow townsmen, that he is held in the highest estimation. Already Mr J.T. Agg-Gardner has acquired an enviable reputation in Cheltenham for a far-reaching spirit of philanthropy and benevolence, wisely tempered by judgment and discretion, qualities not often found in combination in one so young, and accordingly to be the more highly praised.

In all his associations with the charities and other institutions connected with Licensed Victuallers, Mr. Agg-Gardner has at all times displayed the most unbounded liberality. In 1873 he presented to the Cheltenham Licensed Victuallers’ Association a valuable plot of ground for the erection of an asylum, which has been

built from the very satisfactory designs of Mr. Darby, a local architect, and made, besides, a very handsome contribution towards the building fund. In October of the year named, the foundation-stone of the asylum was laid by the Duke of Beaufort, on which occasion Mr. Agg-Gardner invited upwards of two hundred of the nobility, gentry, and Licensed Victuallers of the town and county to a sumptuous luncheon at the Assembly Room after the ceremony. Last year he took the chair at the annual dinner of the Cheltenham Licensed Victuallers’ Association, on which occasion he was supported by one of the most numerous and brilliant gatherings ever assembled at an association dinner. This year, as we recorded last week, when Reginald Yorke, one of the members for the county, presided, Mr. Agg-Gardner was again present, and proved his sympathy with the benevolent objects of the Association in the most practical manner. In the course of the proceedings it was stated by the secretary that the usefulness of the asylum was much clogged by the heavy building debt which still encumbered it, and he called on those present to make an earnest effort to get rid of the liability. His appeal was soon responded to, for Mr. Agg-Gardner, while responding to a toast immediately afterwards, took occasion to remark that having presented the ground for the asylum, he did not like to see its usefulness crippled, and he would therefore take the extinction of the debt upon himself. At the same time, with the good sense which, as we have before remarked, underlies his genuine philanthropy, he impressed upon his hearers that when the institution was delivered to them free from debt it would be their duty to keep it so. In concluding this brief biographical sketch of Mr. J.T. Agg-Gardner, let it be repeated that he can boast of possessing the largest brewery in England, and probably therefore in the world, which is the sole and entire property of one man.

What this brewery is like we will now attempt briefly to describe, without any attempt to enter into the mere technicalities of brewing itself, save in so far as there are any special peculiarities in the processes adopted, as for the most part brewing in any one place is brewing all the world over.

The “Original Brewery” is situated in the High-street of Cheltenham, with the Grammar School on one side and the Fleece Hotel on the other, being thus conveniently placed between an ancient seat of learning and a perhaps

equally ancient house of entertainment; for the Fleece certainly dates back to a period when Cheltenham was yet an obscure village, a bedroom which was pulled down quite recently by Mr. Shinner, the general manager of the brewery, in order to enlarge and improve the hotel, having been slept in by no less a personage than Oliver Cromwell. The grammar school is of more certain date, having been founded by one Richard Pate in 1586 during the great revival of learning, of which England was the scene during the glorious reign of Queen Elizabeth. At that time, most probably all the ground at the back of the Grammar School was open meadow land, and the scholars of the days of Elizabeth frequently played where now are the cellars, malting-houses, and the other apartments of the Original Brewery. As already remarked there is some uncertainty as to the exact date of the establishment of this business, but it is certain it was in existence when George the Third visited the town in 1788, and from 1795 until the present day the books of the house are preserved in an unbroken series. The greater portion of the buildings, however, are comparatively new additions, and alterations have been effected from time to time to keep pace with the rapid and constant enlargement of the business. On entering by the archway from the High-street the visitor sees before him a range of handsome and commodious offices erected some three years since from the design and under the personal superintendence of Mr. Price, the resident builder, of whom more anon.

In the rear of the offices we come first to the cellars, which will be pronounced at once by all who are familiar with the stores of the largest London brewers, to be exceptionally light, commodious, and conveniently arranged. To give an idea of the capacity of these cellars, and at the same time to show that the Cheltenham Brewery is by no means an unimportant establishment, it will be sufficient to remark here that last year at the close of the brewery season there were stored at one time 20,000 barrels of beer of various kinds. These cellars enjoy a special advantage from the fact that they are under the malting-house, the consequence being, that while by the perfect system of ventilation employed, they can always be kept cool as may be desired, they need never be allowed to get too cold, as that by regulating the temperature the beers are without trouble kept always in a capital condition. The malting-houses themselves, which are above the cellars, have

achieved a wide fame among maltsters throughout the country as perfect models of what such buildings should be. There is throughout an unflinching attention to details, and a practical application of new principles in such apparent trifles yet really important matters in a malting-house as doors and windows, floors, shoots, lifts, and other incidentals, that we were by no means surprised to learn that Mr. Price, the builder to whom we alluded above, has been requested to furnish plans for many malting-houses since. This gentleman, however, is an old servant of the "Original" Brewery, in the fortunes of which grows only out of long service, and his answer to all such applications is, that he has as much to do as he can attend to thoroughly. This may well be believed when it is stated that he has sometimes as many as 140 men employed in the building-yard and workshops attached to the brewery, and which are most perfect of their kind. Of course a large proportion of these are required for the repairs and rebuilding of the very large number of licensed houses "tied" to the brewery, among which are the Fleece, before mentioned, the Bell, and several other of the leading hotels of Cheltenham; besides a large proportion of the best inns, alike in that town and in the neighbouring city of Gloucester, and in Stroud, Upton, Tewkesbury, and elsewhere in the county. The malting-houses, which we have left for a moment, are now about six years old, having been commenced on the 27th of April, 1869, and opened complete in November of the same year, on which occasion the largest apartment was gaily decorated, and a dinner given by Mr. Agg-Gardner to the entire staff of the establishment, he taking the chair himself, and Mr. Price filling the vice-chair. It will be understood that owing to the long minority of the present proprietor, who was a ward in Chancery, the appointment of a general manager was absolutely necessary, and the gentleman who in the latter years of the minority was selected by the Court was Mr. Shinner, who has been ever since continued in the position by Mr. Agg-Gardner. The view taken by the Lord Chancellor of the responsibility and importance of Mr. Shinner's position is made patent by the fact that he was called upon to find security to the extent of £36,000. We think we may safely say that the Court of Chancery made a wise choice, as Mr. Shinner is evidently most highly respected alike in the brewery and among its customers, and as he has contrived during the last twelve years to spend the large sum of £75,000 in improvements in the premises and in the houses belonging to the brewery without affecting the

annual returns, it is evident that he has been not only a good and faithful, but also a wise and judicious steward.

But in spite of this large outlay, the business of brewing is by no means allowed to stand still. In the brewery proper, the chief of which department is Mr. Swann, and the arrangements of which are as perfect as everything else about the premises, the system followed being the same as at Burton; the increasing nature of the business is shown by the fact that four new fermenting tuns are at this moment being erected. By the way, it is worth mentioning that Mr. Swann prefers the old system of working to the new, and having tried all the new methods of mechanical aid has gone back to the old principle of manual labour. There can be no doubt of the superiority of this system provided the supervision be constant, but at the same time it is more expensive and would hardly be practicable in some of the very largest cooling rooms, while even here, where there are from 250 to 300 gallon barrels to attend to, the extra cost of labour must be considerable. We presume, however, that the result justifies the outlay or it would not be continued, and the possibility in a brewery of this size of keeping every process under the immediate eye as it were of the chief brewers, while yet the workings are sufficiently extensive to justify the use of all the best and most costly appliances, doubtless has much to do with the uniform excellence of the brewing. It is another illustration of the poet's

*In medio tutissimus ibis.*<sup>4</sup>

In a very large brewery direct personal supervision everywhere is impossible. In a small one, only rough-and-ready methods will pay, but in what may best be described as a first-class provincial brewery with plenty of elbow-room and accommodation of all kinds, the happy means so ardently looked for by most of us seems to be attained.

Before quitting the brewery we ought to allude to one point, which by the way seems always to be brought before us when visiting an old and well-appointed brewery, and that is the lengthened term of service attained by so many of the employés. There are, perhaps, not many at the "Original Brewery" who can boast of such long service as can the old groom, who was for many years in the service of Mr. John Gardner, and is still to be seen about the premises enjoying the pension which

is the just reward of his long and faithful service; but twenty, thirty, and even forty years seems no unusual term, and one head of a department admitted to us apologetically that he was but a new comer, having only been fourteen years in the establishment.

Leaving the brewery, and walking some distance up the High-street, we reach, on the opposite side of the thoroughfare, a branch of Mr. Agg-Gardner's business, the introduction of which is due to Mr. Shinner. This is the wine and spirit department, which is kept entirely distinct from the original business, under the management, subject to Mr. Shinner's supervision, of Mr. Fenner. This business was founded by a well-known London house, and the offices and cellars were fitted up in the most expensive and convenient manner, while the stock of wines laid down were significant rather of Mincinglane than of "a town in the west countrie." But, whether owing to a lack of connection or to bad management, all these elaborate and well-intentioned preparations failed to entice custom, and after a few years the business was placed in the market; and Mr. Shinner, who saw the advantage it would be to the brewery, with its long list of attached house, bought it for Mr. Agg-Gardner.

What we have set down as the result of our visit to Cheltenham will, we are confident, more than explain to our readers why we have chosen the "Original Brewery" of this favourite and fashionable watering-place as the text for this week's article. This brewery has distinctions of its own, which specially mark it out for notice, for although not professing to vie with the more gigantic establishments of London and Burton, it has yet acquired for itself a reputation extending for fifty miles in every direction, of the highest possible character. It is, more essentially than can be said of any other house of the same extent, a personal enterprise, and the numerous Licensed Victuallers who have dealings with it speak in the warmest terms of the treatment they receive. That the beer brewed here is of excellent quality need not be urged, for to the Cheltenham Brewery, it is admitted, is owing the old proverb about the strength of the Glo'ster ale, and it is indeed a wonder that more London Licensed Victuallers who like a variety of draught do not offer Gardner's Cheltenham Ales to their customers. We throw out the idea to them as a suggestion to take up as they please. Then the personal qualities of Mr. J.T. Gardner, and the services he has rendered to the trade of his district, seem to us to deserve a commemoration



somewhat more extended than can be awarded by a mere passing report; while, lastly looking upon the return of this gentleman to Parliament as one of the earliest fruits of the organisation and unity we have ever so persistently urged on all members of the trade, we confess to a feeling of personal pleasure in presenting our readers with his portrait and this brief account of his brewery and himself.

*Published 13 February 1875*

## **Notes**

1. The 1874 United Kingdom general election saw the Conservatives, led by Disraeli, win the majority of seats in the House of Commons despite Gladstone's Liberal party gain the a majority of the votes cast. It was the first Conservative win in 33 years. Following the election Gladstone made his famous comment, 'we have been borne down in a torrent of gin and beer' due to the reaction against his 1872 Licensing Act which many perceived to be the reason for the Liberal's defeat.
2. Named after the so-called Permissive Bill of 1864 which was drawn up by the prohibitionist organisation, the United Kingdom Alliance, and introduced to parliament by Sir Wilfrid Lawson.
3. Mineral spring water containing salts of iron.
4. You shall go safest in the middle course.