

the Government for a license? Will you enable them to dispense this poison at so cheap a rate that a poor thoughtless creature may get drunk for threepence, and may purchase immediate death for a shilling? . . . The increase of the sale of distilled spirits," he continued, "and the propagation of all kinds of wickedness are the same. . . . It has been found by experience that *nothing can restrain the people from buying these liquors but such laws as hinder them from being sold.*"

On the same occasion, Lord Chesterfield truthfully remarked: "Luxury, my lords, is to be taxed, but *vice prohibited*, let the difficulty of the law be what it will. None, my lords, ever heard, in any nation, of a tax upon theft or adultery, because a tax implies a license for the use of that which is taxed to all who are willing to pay for it. Would not such a tax be wicked and scandalous? . . . It appears to me that the number of distillers should be no argument in their favour, for I never heard that a tax against theft was repealed or delayed because thieves were numerous. It appears to me, my lords, that really if so formidable a body are confederate against the virtue or the lives of their fellow-citizens, it is time to put an end and to interpose while it is yet in our power to stop the destruction. If their liquors are so delicious that the people are tempted to their own destruction, let us at least, my lords, secure them from their fatal draught by *bursting the vials* that contain them. Let us crush at once these *artists in human slaughter*, who have reconciled their countrymen to sickness and ruin, and spread over the pitfalls of debauchery such a bait as cannot be resisted."

Lord Hervey, on the same occasion, said: "Almost every legislator in the world, my lords, from whatever original he derived his authority, has exerted it in the *prohibition of such foods as tended to injure the health and destroy the vigour of the people* for whom he designed his institutions. The *prohibition* of those commodities which are instrumental to vice is not only dictated by policy, but by nature; for even the Indians have been able to discover that distilled spirits are pernicious to society, and that the use of them can only be hindered by