

Apush reformers in the antebellum era

[Food & Diet](#), [Alcohol](#)



Issue that he focused on: Temperance, or the virtue to help society to moderate the attraction to substances like alcohol, and excessive use. Why was this issue so important to him? : Father Theobald Mathew was a strong believer in the theory that alcohol is the number one drug in The United States, and it does affect us in some way. He was one of the first to truly realize that alcohol is a depressant, and it affects the function of the body, mind and emotion. This being said he discovered that one in three deaths on the road, and one in four domestic abuse cases, involve the use and or abuse of alcohol.

Even children as young as twelve were becoming drinkers. In his home country of Ireland, a place where drinking is thought of as a common pastime, an independent national survey of Irish attitudes to alcohol by Alcohol Action Ireland in 2006 found that 82% of people felt that our current alcohol consumption levels are a problem. He felt that we as a society need to succumb to the temperance movement, with regard to drunkenness, harm to self, to others, and protection of children and families.

Methods he used to promote this cause: Father Theobald Mathew was called upon by William Martin. William Martin founded the Cork Total Abstinence Society in 1835, and he had heard of Mathew, the best known and most influential priest. Together they discovered that if the causes were removed the effects would cease. With the words " Here goes in the name of God", Fr. Theobald Mathew signed, and became president of the Cork Total Abstinence Society on April 10th 1838, and his Campaign began. He was convinced that only abstinence was the cure for drunkenness.

Mathew presented a pledge for the people of society to promise to “ abstain from all intoxicating drinks, except used medically and by order of a medical man, and to discountenance the cause and practice of intemperance. ” Was he successful? Father Theobald Mathew was successful in convincing America that the temperance reform on alcohol is an important issue. After just ten months over six thousand citizens had taken and agreed to his pledge. By the end of 1839 it was estimated that approximately 60, 000 citizens had pledged.