

It is certainly remarkable that measures which have relieved this country of three-fifths of the opprobrium of drunkenness which prevailed fifteen years ago—which have therefore realised the temperance objective of that date to a vast extent—and have diminished the charges against the drink trade in a like degree, have been allowed to pass unnoticed.

Dr. Vernon's book will, it may be hoped, contribute to modify this position. He has treated the available evidence in a scientific and impartial spirit, and his pages will thoroughly repay perusal. I can praise his method and his independence of preconceived opinion the more unreservedly as I am not prepared—without further examination—to endorse all the details of his suggested scheme of differential taxation, ingenious as they may be. The principal merit of his scheme is that it can be introduced at any time, either in stages or in a complete form, and it might at once begin to exert some influence in promoting sobriety.

It has the further merit of giving a general direction to tax reform, but the effect of such a reform would have to be considered in connection with commercial relationships with foreign powers. Dr. Vernon's proposals might cause difficulty. They might, on the other hand, afford an instrument of negotiation.

In addition, I consider that the present situation is amenable to treatment (*a*) by a maintenance of the measures already tried and found so remarkably effective—viz., physiological restriction of hours and adequate taxation; (*b*) certain administrative changes in the licensing system.

If the two hostile camps, Trade and Temperance, only knew it, they have one common enemy—ill-