

regulated competition in each licensing area. Let them combine to defeat this common enemy—if conceivable and possible, under a unified command. Together they should achieve a resounding victory. Intemperance could be still further reduced, alcoholic disease could be almost eliminated, national efficiency could be enhanced, and the trade could be prosperous and secure, through the avoidance of wasteful competitive expenditure.

That this paradoxical combination is no unattainable ideal is proved by the fact that since 1913 drunkenness has diminished by 60 per cent. whilst the profits of Brewery Companies have increased by 90 per cent. Not an unsatisfactory result, even allowing for the change in the value of money and for capital additions. Clearly the endeavour of reformers must be to attain the advantages of united management without the disadvantages and dangers of State purchase. There is no insuperable difficulty in attaining this combination provided that the principle of unity of direction is attained within each area. If the licensee of a given area is secure from undesirable competition, he can proceed to reforms which are commercially impossible if he is exposed to be undercut by a less well-conducted rival. He will no longer have the inducement to develop his trade by a redundant number of licensed houses. On the contrary, his interest will lead him to economise rent, overhead charges, heating and light by concentrating business in a number of public houses under the most efficient management. It goes without saying that severe public control by the licensing authority will be necessary, and that the non-attainment of the