

population employed largely on unskilled labour, it has been found by Dr. Alfred Salter,* as the result of a very careful survey, that in 1925 the average weekly expenditure on intoxicants was 16s. to 20s. per family, whilst the average wage received by adult male workers was slightly under £3. It may, in excuse, be pointed out that this large expenditure is due in no small measure to high taxation, but unfortunately lower taxation means increased consumption, and a corresponding rise in drunkenness and other evils.

But is there no way of avoiding these conflicting dangers and difficulties? Most men would be only too pleased if matters could be so arranged that nobody ever drank to excess, and nobody spent more than a reasonable proportion of his wages on what is a perfectly legitimate form of pleasure. Many temperance advocates say that the only safe and certain method of avoiding excessive drinking is to adopt complete prohibition. This is perfectly true, if complete prohibition could really be introduced, but this has hitherto proved to be quite impossible. As we shall see in the next chapter, the legal enforcement of complete prohibition sets up a fresh train of evils which, in the opinion of many, are more serious than the evils they are designed to suppress. Men who have acquired a liking for alcoholic liquors are not prepared to give them up in consequence of legal enactments. The mere fact of compulsion sometimes spurs them to extreme measures which they would not dream of adopting if they were treated in less cavalier fashion. Within limits they are open to persuasion, but re-

* A. Salter, *Brit. Journ. Inebriety*, 1927, p. 67.