

CHAPTER V

THE PUBLIC HOUSE AND ITS IMPROVEMENT

The Public House as it is—Improved Public Houses—Disinterested Management—The Carlisle Experiment—The Influence of State Ownership and Control on Sobriety—The Future of State Ownership Schemes—The Bratt System of Control—Clubs.

THE PUBLIC HOUSE AS IT IS.

IN previous chapters the effects of drastic legislation involving partial or complete prohibition, the reduction in hours of sale and the increase in taxation, were discussed. In the present chapter the influence of milder reforms, including those which need no special legislation, will be considered. Before doing so it is desirable to say a little about the public house as it is. There are over 80,000 licensed houses in the country, and according to Mr. Ernest Selley, who has made a special study of them and of their frequenters,* they are used by well over half the adult population. In making his enquiry, Selley selected a number of towns in different parts of the country where particular industries predominated, such as coal, iron and steel, shipbuilding, engineering, docks, spinning, weaving, pottery, and hatmaking. He also visited towns where there was a mixture of industries, and a variety of residential districts, as well as villages up and down the country. He went as a casual customer, and rarely

* E. Selley, "The English Public House as it is." London, 1927.