

Directly accessible to the bar is first-class cloak-room accommodation and a comfortable smoke-room. The lounge is practically in front centre. Next the lounge, but separated by a movable partition, is the café. This room has a separate entrance and no intoxicants are served in it." Unfortunately improved public houses, even on a much more modest scale than this, are few and far between, and form less than 1 per cent. of the whole. Many or most of our present public houses are so situated as to be incapable of alteration or extension except at enormous cost, and especially so in the poorer working-class districts. Moreover, it is to be remembered that nine-tenths of all the public houses are tied to brewery companies, who are not philanthropists, but are out to reap the biggest dividends possible for their shareholders. "If the brewer is to get a fair return on his money it is essential that he sell liquor rather than refreshments, for on the former he gets the wholesale as well as the greater part of the retail profit, whilst on the latter he can only get a retail profit at a considerably increased cost of distribution owing to the necessity for employing many more servants and waiters."* However, some members of the trade are sufficiently far-sighted to build improved public houses which do not yield an immediate return on the capital outlay.

The chairman of a large and progressive brewery company told his shareholders that "the return on the capital expended in such new (improved) premises is at present a meagre one, but we are building for the future, confident that our policy . . . not only will tend to strengthen the defence of the industry by the

* Cf. "Alliance Year Book," 1927, p. 128.