THE NEW BEER WAR TAX.

Sir.—I was astonished to read the statement of Mr. Lloyd George that the brewers had not objected to the unfair war tax which has been placed upon beer.

The indignation of the trade, as a whole, is only to be equalled by the indignation of the beer-drinking public.

To any thinking mind the following output of the Portsmouth United Breweries for the second and fourth weeks in November, the first entirely without the war tax, and the second with the war tax, will prove that the increase is not going to realize to the Exchequer the amount anticipated by the Chancellor.

For the week ended November 24th, 1914, 2,435 barrels at 7s. 9d. duty amounts to £253.

For the week ended November 28th, 1914, 857 barrels at 7s. 9d. plus 15s. 3d. amounts to £1,031.

This gives Mr. Lloyd George an increase of £800 on one week, and for this £80 a sound business is destroyed, the property depreciated to at least one-fifth of its original value, salaries reduced, and the number of employees reduced to the extent of 130.

In addition to this there are no fewer than 250 customers who are traders seriously injured, with nothing but ruin staring them in the face.

Speaking for one brewery alone, is it worth £80 per week to destroy the commercial value of a sound business?

Is it worth £80 to destroy the financial soundness of 220 honest traders who endeavour to be loyal and support their country on all occasions?

And may I ask, is it worth the relatively paltry sum to destroy a national business, to put an end to honest beer-drinking, and to encourage the working men to increase spirit drinking, which has already taken place?

The United States Legislation is doing everything in its power to dissipate spirit drinking and to promote the use of beer, which is looked upon as food, and which is recognised by users of beer in this country in the same light.

I am,

Your obedient Servant,

W. T. DUGREE.
Craneswater,
Portsmouth. November 30th, 1914.

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THE NEW BEER WAR TAX.

Sir,—In times of “piping peace” public houses and music halls are regarded as our twin bulwarks of the national safety values. They anima a vent for the exhaustence of those patriots whose “Minds of Giving Day” begin and end at the front of the bar.

What were correspondents, Mr. W. T. Dupree, terms “honest beer-drinking,” certainly unendangers valour, but pining by his sentiments it does inspire sufficient public spirit to part with “a baunder” (bought half-panny) that final coin for which the Scotchman said to have sold their King, and for begetting which “honest beer-drinkers” are willing to sell our sacred cause of liberty and empire.

When a drink in it is without, hence the advertising leaflets demanding “honest beer drinking” for national efficiency and the scorn with which they mantled the hated war economy.

But oh Great Britain, what a change comes over the spirit of their dreams when the bill in the glass of a half-panny per half pint pips-out of the truth with the awful cry—“What King and country wants!?”

Also that in such a moment “honest beer drinking” should cease to cheer and inspire. The spite no doubt is willing, but the flesh is weak.

Mr. W. T. Dupree loses sight of the great cause in deploiring the small effect on his trade. Let me assure him there are others who suffer, but disdain to wring in face of the country, especially while millions of men, far from grouch over having to part with half-panny, are sacrificing life and limb in the sacred cause of liberty. In such a cause we like to pay, pay, and never leave off paying.

Once Mr. Dupree thinks of the noble example set by our French and Russian allies in the cause of temperance the thought of those uncertain millions of pounds will melt out of his mind the £80 which he desires least, though it is to be spent to protect his rights as a Briton.

Mr. Dupree says “in such a moment a relatively paltry sum to destroy a national business,” if that operation were approved by a politician at the present crisis it is limited to one that would be in the affirmative for the sake of the happy families a week be too week for our police and maintenance, less poverty, drunkenness and national disease, and decent homes for our women and children.

If, as Mr. Dupree asserts, “The tax on beer encourages working men to increase spirit drinking” then this fact should prove a possible “ban robb” to Mr. Lloyd George, who should lose no time in increasing the spirit tax so as to put a stop to the evil of which your correspondent so justly complains.

Mr. Dupree should keep up singing to his “instant beer drinkers”—“Beer, beer, pleasurable beer, with the sake of it Down with a pint of it!”—so as to supply the “silver bullet” which will preserve our bags.

Yours truly,

JEROME DEUGMAN.
North Birt.
December 23, 1914.