

that I was then given. The husband of this woman and father of the children was a sober and industrious man for ninety per cent of his time, but about once a year he was likely to get off on a spree. He came into town on Christmas Eve to buy his children's Christmas cheer—this is not "sob stuff," as Mrs. Nellie McClung calls it, but is plain, simple fact. I know the man, and know that what I say of him is true. He had not had a drink for over a year; he was a man of provident habits, and had some little savings in his pocket. But the temptation of the open grog-shop was too much for him, and he got drunk, and in his drunken state of incapacity and irresponsibility he struck a policeman, which is a serious offence. He was brought up in the police court and sentenced to six months in prison. The result, of course, was that the family was deprived of its breadwinner, and this in the winter and during particularly hard times. That is not all. The children went to school, and the other children pointed their fingers at Johnny and Tommy and the rest; their father was a jail-bird. Now, I contend that a sober man, capable of controlling himself, has no right to plead his personal liberty—his personal license as I call it—as a reason for maintaining an institution whose operation brings about such a state of affairs for an innocent woman and her children. There is no argument strong enough to persuade me that such a condition is permissible, if it is within our power to obliterate it. And how can we obliterate it? Had there been no grog-shops staring that poor fellow in the face, he could have remained sober, for as I tell you he only got drunk once in a long while, when the temptation was too strong for him.

I have another illustration in connection with this argument of personal liberty. Shortly after the outbreak of the war, His Majesty the King said that so far as he and his household was concerned, in the interest of the efficiency of the nation in time of stress, liquor would be abolished. I do not think we can do better than follow the example of the King. The King made his personal liberty subservient to the social welfare; and I repeat that there is no such thing as personal liberty apart from social responsibility. That is a doctrine that we cannot insist upon too strongly. Another argument put forward is that prohibition should not be advanced when "the boys" are away at the front. I admit that

that is a strong argument when looked at in a casual way. But do the boys at the front expect us to suspend our responsibility in dealing with public problems? I think that on the contrary they expect us to concentrate the brain and energy of the nation into practical efficiency for the support of the boys who are fighting our battles. I do not suggest that we should take advantage of the absence of the boys at the front and pass some very far-reaching measure, giving them no opportunity to express their views upon it. Therefore it is that I propose, to the House and to the Government—and I trust they are going to act on this resolution—that the Government shall bring down the necessary legislation to give effect to the well-defined and well-expressed views of the people at this time, making provision in that legislation for submitting it to a vote when the boys come back, so that they can take part in confirming it or repealing it as the case may be. I would not deny to the boys at the front the right of voting on this question as a permanent measure, but I do say that it is our duty to deal with the problem in the interim and as a war measure. They talk about revolutionary measures; but what about the revolutionary measure put into effect by the British Parliament in connection with the English railways. In Great Britain to-day the railways are controlled, directed and administered by a committee of the Government; and I am told on the highest authority that the sentiment is spreading in favour of nationalizing the railways because of the success of the "experiment" undertaken during the period of this war. Why, the very war is a revolutionary war, and everything in connection with it is more or less revolutionary. There is no danger of revolution if you meet a problem and tackle it; what brings about revolution is the accumulation of wrongs and evils. Look back into history, and you will find that it was not one evil, not one action of the Government, but an accumulation of evils and wrongs, that has brought about every revolution. I lay upon this House the responsibility of dealing with this question now and, not seeking shelter in the shadow of the boys who are fighting our battles. They are doing their work nobly; as Mr. Best said in his letter, they are making the supreme sacrifice, while we sit here in comparative ease. It is for us to make our sacrifice, of personal liberty in the interests of the nation, just as the boys at the front are making their sacrifice.

I come now to the question of compensa-