

which had been adopted were not sufficient, that they were not accomplishing what was desired, namely, efficiency and sobriety, among the workers of the shipyards; and the statement was made, I think with absolute truth, that the loss of time was very largely due to drunkenness. Sir, the increased wages of the workers of Great Britain, which in one sense have been a blessing, were turning out to be a curse, in so far as they were leading the men into the greater use of intoxicating liquors, and consequent increased drunkenness.

In France, the manufacture and sale of absinthe and other strong liquors have been prohibited, and I need not weary the House with further quotations dealing with the problem in that country.

I shall draw the attention of the House to some figures relating to the economic phase of this problem, as it refers to Great Britain and to Canada. In 1913, the last normal year, the British people spent £166,000,000 on intoxicating liquors, while they spent only £80,000,000 on bread, and £74,000,000 on the army and navy. Let us consider these figures for a moment. Prior to the outbreak of war, we heard a great deal of adverse comment on the huge expenditures on armaments, and the British Parliament was urged to curtail these expenditures. The total expenditure on armaments, was, as I have said, £74,000,000, while the annual expenditure on intoxicating liquors was £166,000,000, more than double the amount spent on the army and the navy. In other words, the expenditure on liquors\* exceeded all the expenditures on the army and navy and on bread by £12,000,000.

As regard Canada, I have some figures which I wish the House to consider. The consumption of liquor for the year ending March 31, 1914, was 67,000,000 gallons, at a cost of \$103,000,000. In this House at the present time, we are endeavouring to devise ways and means of providing sufficient funds to enable us to carry on our part in the great war, and our friends of the Opposition have, from time to time, offered suggestions and criticism on that subject. But, Mr. Speaker, here we have a sum spent upon a luxury, or, to put the best construction upon it, upon a whim, the sum of \$103,000,000, enough in itself to enable us to contribute a large share towards the conduct of the war.

Let me say a word on the subject from an industrial standpoint. We are told that if prohibition is brought about a large num-

ber of men will be thrown out of work, and that capital investments will be destroyed. What are the facts? We find that the capital investment in brewing and distilling in Canada is \$43,237,000, and that in other industries the capital investment is \$1,204,000,000. When we consider the question of employees we find that the number of people employed in brewing and distilling in the whole of Canada is 4,688, while in other industries the number employed is 466,438. In other words, for every person employed in brewing and distilling there is \$9,223 of capital invested, while in other manufacturing industries for every person employed there is only \$2,582 in capital invested. I shall have something to say a little later on this question of vested interests.

I come to another phase of the question, which is probably the reason for objection to prohibition more than any other, and that is the cry of personal liberty. I have received, as I presume almost every member of this House has received, sheaves of cheaply printed literature signed by the Personal Liberty League, but giving no names. This literature is circulated with the object of stirring up in the minds of the people of this country opposition to prohibition on the ground that such a measure aims at the sacred personal rights of individuals in this country. I have just this to say: that those persons who talk of personal liberty have mistaken the name; they are asking not for personal liberty, but for personal license. They are asking for the license individually to do things which may be injurious to society as a whole. I hold that there is no such thing as personal liberty apart from a person's social responsibilities. When the practice of an individual right, or an institution founded upon it, becomes a great social problem, or when it directly affects the welfare of the nation, then the whole of society has a right to step in and decide to what extent that institution or practice shall be allowed. Let me give an illustrative incident. Two years ago last Christmas, in Vancouver, I was called to the police station. The chief of police had in charge a woman and her four children, three little boys and a little girl, and he wanted to know what we could do to help these people. I asked him what was the matter, and I ask any hon. member in this House, or anybody out of this House, to say whether he will place his personal liberty before his social responsibility to justify in action in the light of the facts

[Mr. Stevens.]