

FOUR PROPOSITIONS.

The first is this: Whenever private property is taken for public use, the public ought to pay for that property; it is an injustice if payment is not made. Second: Whenever private property which is not to be put to an injurious use, so far as the public is concerned, continues in that state of not injuring or harming the public interest, the Government has a right to protect it, and it has a right to claim the protection of the Government. Third: Wherever or whenever private property devotes itself to the injury of the public, the Government and the public have a right to inhibit that use of the property, and, if that fails, to confiscate the property. My fourth proposition is this: That wherever general legislation is needed for the public good, even though that general legislation affects private investments injuriously, that private property must stand it, and it must pay its own loss, as it does, even though that private property is used, not against the public good, but in accordance with the public advantage. I see that an hon. member shakes his head to that proposition, and as he did not shake his head to the three preceding propositions, I conclude that I have three-fourths of him at least. Let me see if I cannot get the other quarter. The principle I laid down last was this, that the Government has a right to legislate for the general good irrespective of individual loss and without compensation, even though private property used to the public advantage may be injuriously affected thereby. Has it or has it not? Let me go back, Sir, to the time of the Corn Laws in Great Britain. Let us ask what was the bold question before the people then. It was this: Whether the public advantage should be helped by having the tax taken off corn, or whether, on the other hand, the landed interest should be kept with larger profits and more exclusive markets for corn, even though the public advantage should be lessened thereby. The Corn Laws were abolished, and the landed interests had to suffer; but there was no talk of compensation. That is an illustration of the principle that, if legislation is for the general good, private property, even though it be injuriously affected, has to sustain the loss, and gets no compensation. Let us take fiscal regulations. There is scarcely a regulation with respect to fiscal matters which will not injuriously affect some department of trade or of business. You cannot make tariff legislation without injuring and harming some certain interest; and yet it is never contended that, in the making of those fiscal laws, there should be the idea of compensating the interests which suffer thereby. If they suffer, they must stand it. The general good of the country is supposed to require the legislation. Again: I take railways and steamboats. Here is a railway which runs from Montreal to Toronto. There are a number of small towns along the route of the railway; towns which, before the road was projected or built, had in prospect, and also in essence, a trade, and prospectively a larger trade, in connection with the navigation of the lakes. The railway was built; it took the traffic, and instead of the lake traffic continuing to grow, it has gone down, and some of those towns to-day are feeling the effects of the railway construction, and are not enjoying those special advantages which they were enjoying in essence and in prospect at that time. Yet not one of those towns comes here for compensation, although each suffered in its private town interest; yet the general good was enhanced, and private interest had to suffer for the public good. Take factory legislation; and I call the attention of the hon. member for Grey to this matter. Suppose this year, or last year, a factory went into operation under the existing law, and suppose that this year there was introduced factory legislation which made it necessary for the factory owner to do certain things. The inspector goes down to the factory, and he says: Have you fire-escapes properly organized in your factory? No. Legislation which has been passed since you entered into your business says you must have those, and you must put them in and pay the expense yourself. Have you the machinery properly protected? No. The recent legislation plainly says you must have it so protected, and you must pay the expense yourself. Now, Sir, the factory man has no right or reason to come to this Parliament, and put his argument thus: I engaged in my business under certain conditions, made so by existing legislation; I took it with those conditions in prospect; I calculated what the profit would be after paying the expenses required to meet the existing conditions. Now you have gone to work and disturbed those, and by new legislation brought a great deal of expense upon me, and I demand that you should compensate me for that additional trouble and expense involved on me on account of the change you have made in your legislation. No such thing happens. My hon. friend says that Parliament does not take his factory from him. Now, I wish to put this point to my hon. friend: I say that in justice and in truth it does not make the least difference in the principle whether you so legislate as to completely take away all the profits from that factory, or whether you simply legislate to take away ten dollars profits from that factory. The principle is exactly the same, if you are talking of principle. The principle is, on its broad foundation, simply this: That where you legislate to the detriment of a trade or interest, you are bound to pay a reasonable compensation for that detriment; and on the grounds of justice it makes no difference whether the legislation gives a loss of \$100,000 or a loss of \$10. If you go to the ground of expediency or to other grounds, you may find a difference, and you may apply some different rule. But we are arguing, as we heard yesterday, on the ground of even, honorable justice; and on this ground the amount of loss that is entailed makes no difference with reference to the principle.

ON WHAT THE QUESTION TURNS.

Now, the whole point between those prohibitionists who are in favor of compensation, and those others, be they prohibitionists or not, who are not in favor of compensation, hinges entirely, it seems to me, on this: Is the private property which is invested in the liquor traffic, from first to last, invested in that which works to the

public injury or to the public good? If it be invested in that which works to the public injury, on the principle which we have laid down, and which my hon. friend did not contradict, and I think will not contradict, the State has a right to inhibit that particular use of that property and that investment; it has the right to do it in the interests of the public, and on the ground that injury is being done as the outcome with reference to this traffic. If you contend that the investment in the traffic is not being used to the injury of the public, then you have a basis or ground for demanding compensation; but if, as we hold, this investment is for the injury of the public, we have good ground for which to contend that the State has a right to inhibit that use of it, and pay no compensation therefor. And I think I can challenge the production of a single instance in which property has been taken away by legislation, or the use of it inhibited, where that use was for the public injury, — a single instance where such legislation has taken place in which any compensation whatever has been given by the Government or Parliament which passed the legislation.

The fundamental principle, then, to be looked at is the difference in kind between this traffic and every other traffic. If this traffic were the same as the flour traffic, then, Sir, there would be a claim for compensation which no Parliament, no body of people, could overlook. Let us take the miller. There is the farmer who raises the grain; there is the carrier who takes it to the mill; there is the miller who grinds it; and from the time the farmer puts his first ounce of labor on it till it comes out as bread on the table of the consumer, every bit of labor put upon it has added real, actual value to the thing, and the product is increased in value by the labor which has been put on it. And when the consumers get it, they get that which is food, from which they make brain and muscle, out of which they produce again larger quantities and greater results than is merely represented by the value of it. And, Sir, in the train of this business there is no extraordinary disease; no extraordinary death, no extraordinary burdens of pauperism or crime that are entailed on the community.

A DESTRUCTIVE TRAFFIC.

But when we come to the liquor traffic there is a difference from first to last. From the time the farmer sows his grain until it is set before the consumer, I contend that every ounce of labor which is expended on it is labor which is wasted. It is labor which is worse than wasted, Sir. It is labor which is put on something which, in the end, is not only wasteful, but is worse — is destructive. And so there is no parallel between the miller's business and the distiller's business, so far as the rationale of the two businesses is concerned. Then what happens besides in this second business? Last year 2,384,424 bushels of grain were consumed in making the beer and alcoholic liquors consumed in this country. Can it be contended that the result, as it went into the hands of the consumers and was consumed, could at all be comparable for sustaining life and giving brain and muscle to the food which had been destroyed in order to make the substance itself? More than that — the labor was drawn from other and productive fields in the making and distribution of this product. More than that — ten thousand waste-banks were set up in this country in which the people of this country deposited of their earnings \$30,000,000 or thereabout, and from which the depositors took no principal home, and they got no interest for their deposits. It is so much money taken out from the people, and they get nothing that helps, and much that does incalculable injury, in return for it. Not only that, Sir, but the labor is destroyed and illness is produced as the direct result of this whole traffic. It is contended that in Great Britain, and it was contended on the authority and as the result of a Royal Commission to inquire into this matter, that one-sixth of the labor power of Great Britain was lost to the country because of the traffic in intoxicating liquors. That serves to show that a vast deal of labor is lost to the country because of the traffic. Now, I do not pretend to say how much it is in this country, but suppose we make a calculation which cannot be impugned on the ground of extravagance. Suppose that ten thousand drink-selling places in the course of a year take away the work of five thousand laborers or its equivalent. Suppose that the ten thousand places for the sale of intoxicating liquors take out of the productive labor of the country labor which would equal that of five thousand persons, and I think that is not an excessive estimate. — Those persons' labor is certainly worth in each case \$400 per year, and the five thousand multiplied by \$400 makes \$2,000,000, which will serve to show, on this low basis of calculation, the productive labor power destroyed by this traffic in each year. More than that — we know from vital statistics, from the results of researches which have been made by eminent scientific men and scientific bodies, that a great deal of life is sacrificed every year because of the traffic. Suppose we make the estimate that in the Dominion of Canada three thousand lives are sacrificed annually to this traffic, and that from these three thousand men ten years of prospective life is taken away from the country, which life they would have lived and in which they would have labored had it not been for their being prematurely cut off as the result of the traffic. Those ten years' life of three thousand persons is equivalent to thirty thousand years' labor; and that, at the same value of \$400 per year as before, would make a loss in labor-power of \$12,000,000 to this country each year. I am persuaded that any man may take these estimates, and though he may criticise them in many ways, he certainly will not have as the burden of his criticism that the estimate is too high. I present them merely to emphasize this fact, that the labor-power of the country has a serious drain put upon it as the result of this traffic.

More than that, Sir, — the burden of poverty and of crime which is laid upon the country, as a direct result of this traffic, is great. I wish to present just the barest outline of last year's statistics in Ontario alone with reference to that matter. I find that in the Province of Ontario last year there were committed to the common