

drink. I have no doubt he finds something to assuage his thirst as people do in every land under the sun.

As to the desirability of adopting the Norwegian system, I have very serious doubts. All kinds of legislation have been passed to do away with the evils arising from the consumption of intoxicating drink, but success has attained them just in proportion to the prohibitory element in them. In my opinion the evil of strong drink is to be measured by the amount of drink consumed. Looking at it from every standpoint, weighing up what may be said in its favour, and what may be said against it, I have come to the conclusion that a prohibitory law will at any rate do more good than harm, and in consequence I am quite willing to see an attempt made by this Parliament to enact it. Therefore any legislation that the Government may introduce with the view of lessening the evil or of prohibiting it altogether will meet with my hearty support. In the meantime, I support the resolution moved by the hon. member for Vancouver (Mr. Stevens).

Mr. JACQUES BUREAU (Three Rivers and St. Maurice): I want to say just a word. I have been strongly opposed to prohibition in the town of Three Rivers for various reasons: first, as the honorable member for St. Hyacinthe (Mr. Gauthier) said, because I do not believe in encroaching on individual liberty; second, for local reasons, one of them the financial condition of the town since the conflagration of 1908; and third, I do not believe that prohibition prohibits. Some honorable gentlemen have expressed rather queer views. I heard speakers this afternoon express sorrow for the poor miserable drunkard who went home, licked his wife and threw out his children, and their cry was: punish the hotel keeper, however nice he may be, or however well he may educate and treat his children. They say: we want to stop the use of liquor, and to do that we are going to stop the sale; that is, they propose to make it a crime on the part of the vendor, because the article he sells is per se wrong, immoral, or subject to legislation, while at the same time they are going to let the purchaser go scot free, when he is the offender. I will support this resolution if it is amended, but it is up to the Minister of Justice to amend it so that I can support it. If it is the drunkard who does evil, let us punish him. Let us put in the Criminal Code a provision that whosoever shall

have in his possession drink, or shall offer a drink, or accept a drink, or otherwise have intoxicants to dispose of, shall be punished by a fine for the first offence. Increase the fine the second time, and put the man in jail the third time. Do that, and I think you will not have to abolish the bar, nor expropriate the distilleries, nor buy out the breweries. And such a law you can enforce. There is a great economic principle that this Parliament, or anybody else, cannot tamper with. The law of supply and demand operates; as long as there is a demand for whisky they will find a way to supply it. Moonshiners and boot leggers will carry on their operations as in those parts of the United States where there is absolute prohibition. Stop the demand and the brewers and distillers which turn out the supply will soon cease.

Some people will say: Bureau is reasoning ad absurdum in that matter. It may be, but my reasoning is no more absurd than the proposal to punish the man who sells an article, on the ground that the sale is an immoral transaction, and to let free the buyer of the article, the man who really does the wrong, who goes home, beats his wife, and turns his children out of doors to starve. On the other hand, here is a man who is running a good hotel, who has a large family of children whom he educates and makes happy, and yet, in the form in which the temperance question is put before the House, this man is represented as a wrong-doer. As the resolution stands, I hold my position on the ground of individual liberty. But we are under special conditions. During the war we are called upon to make sacrifices, and I think the biggest sacrifice a man can make is the sacrifice of his liberty, since that is worth his life. Let us make the sacrifice, but let us make it properly. If you have two parties to an immoral contract, and both have entered willingly into that contract, punish them both. If you are going to punish only one, and that the one whom I consider less guilty than the other, I do not want to support the measure.

Mr. J. J. HUGHES: Would you give the provinces power to pass such laws?

Mr. BUREAU: If they are going to have the same kind of prohibition that they have in the province of Quebec, no.

Mr. HUGHES: Would you give the provinces power to prohibit the manufacture and importation of liquor?