

ers of Canada that such action be taken because the farmers are complaining to-day that they are obliged to pay too much for their seed grain. I submit further to the House that the farmers are not getting the benefit of the increased prices of these materials through the consumption of whisky and beer; the benefit is all going into the hands of speculators. From the information which I have been able to obtain we have consumed—let me hope, not in this country—but there has been consumed in this country in the manufacture of liquor in the year 1916, 2,353,273 bushels of barley, 589,394 bushels of corn, and 123,801 bushels of rye, making a total of 3,066,468 bushels. I appeal to the House whether it would not be better that the consumers of Canada, those who seek food, those who actually need it, those who are earning small salaries to-day, should get the benefit rather than the distillers and the brewers, whose only object can be to gain large profits and increase their wealth at the expense of the people of Canada.

My last remark is that with more economy and less wasteful expenditure on the part of the Government there would be less taxation upon the consumers and producers, and more money in the pockets of our people to meet the increased cost of living. But unmindful of the real needs of the people, and thinking only of raising money to meet the necessities of the hour, the Government have gone on increasing taxation without trying to discover where they could curtail expenditure. I am now pointing out to the Government one way in which the production of this country can be saved from waste and used directly for the benefit of the people of Canada, and if only this one suggestion were adopted, the people of this country would not be called upon to pay quite as much for their foodstuffs; the distillers and brewers and speculators would not make the profits they are now making, and the people of this country would have more foodstuffs at their command.

The Minister of Trade and Commerce, who was in Washington recently, has given an interview since his return to the Montreal Daily Mail of May 7, 1917, as follows:—

Food supplies, labour, and ship building were the chief matters which were dealt with by Sir George Foster; finance and tonnage production will be the principal matters which will engage the attention of Sir Thomas White.

Joint Action on Food Prices.

The Minister of Trade and Commerce states that as soon as Congress gives President Wilson

the necessary authority, by the passage of measures now in the House of Representatives and the Senate, there will be joint action by Canada and the United States for the regulation of food prices, for co-operation in the supply of agricultural labour, and for co-operation in the production of tonnage required to offset the activities of German submarines.

Sir George said that the decision was reached early in the conference at Washington, but there would have to be joint action by Canada and the United States in order to most effectively solve the problems in which the North American continent is interested through the war. The War Measures Act gives the Canadian Government the authority which it requires, but Congress has to provide the American Government with similar power before anything effective can be done. Sir George expressed the opinion that Congress would pass the Bills unanimously.

There is a frank admission, and I have no reason to doubt the report that the Government have power under the War Measures Act to enact legislation immediately, by Order in Council, embodying the substance of the motion now before the House. The same thing is being done in other countries. Down in the Argentine Republic even more drastic measures have been taken. I quote from the Montreal Gazette of May 7, 1917:—

Ottawa, May 6.—A further report, in response to inquiries regarding an article stating that the Argentine Republic was seriously menaced by famine, has been received by the Department of Trade and Commerce from Mr. George Mallet, of Valparaiso, Chile.

Mr. Mallet says that the information contained in his first article was telegraphed from Buenos Aires to responsible newspapers in Chile, and was also published in papers in Argentina. In view of the subsequent abnormal exportation of wheat from Argentina, he says, the alarmist story of famine menace would almost appear to have been a hasty exaggeration of the actual facts, were it not for the supporting evidence which is everywhere apparent, on a careful review of the question. He points out that the Government of Argentina has found it necessary to issue a decree with astonishing rapidity prohibiting the exportation of grain so indispensable for home consumption. "The failure of the harvest in the principal grain zone lying between Uruguay, Paraguay and the Andes, naturally produced considerable alarm," he says, "totally eclipsing the favorable prospects of the Province of Buenos Aires, which have subsequently been brought to light. This is, however, not of sufficient importance to counterbalance the losses in the remaining provinces."

Without taking up unnecessarily the time of the House, I now submit this motion, trusting that it will appeal to the judgment and intelligence of every hon. member of this House.

Mr. J. J. HUGHES (Kings, P.E.I.): I wish to go on record as supporting this motion, though I would like to see it even wider. The Government has received this