

export is a wise one, notwithstanding what my hon. friend from North Oxford (Mr. Nesbitt) says, because the minister has explained that there are very many difficulties in the way of branding for export, in which trade you have to meet the consumer in the way in which he wants to be met rather than the way in which you might want to meet him. A number of boxes of cheese might be originally intended for export, but one of them might be taken out, and if the package was not branded, the law would be violated. The minister should have some provision by which the innocent producer will not be liable to a penalty.

Mr. CURRIE: So far as the consumers of this country are concerned, this resolution is one of the best that has appeared this session before this Parliament, and I am much surprised at hon. members opposite endeavouring to raise fancied objections to this measure which is founded upon a broad principle, namely, that when a man buys something, the name of the seller and the weight, measure or quantity of the contents of the package should be shown on it. A small amendment to either the resolution or the Bill would meet all the objections raised.

We all know that the poor people are being robbed out of thousands of dollars every day on account of dishonest weighing. We provide that scales must be used, and we pay large sums of money to provide for officials to constantly test these scales; but in nine cases out of ten, when a housewife goes into a grocery or butcher shop to buy something, instead of being sold an article by weight, as she is entitled to, it is sold to her by price, and there are shops in this country where the overage is divided between the proprietor and the clerks. For instance, a housewife goes into a shop to buy a piece of steak. She asks the price. She is told that the price is forty cents a pound. She says that she wants about half a pound. The man cuts the steak, throws it on the scales and makes a lightning calculation whereby he defrauds her of two or three cents, stating that it is thirty cents' worth. The housewife goes away thinking she has thirty cents worth, whereas she has only twenty-seven cents worth according to the price quoted.

Mr. GRAHAM: This resolution would not affect that.

Mr. CURRIE: It will affect that. There should be a provision that the package

containing food or other commodities should have the contents marked on it and have attached to it the name and address of the fillers, the weight, measure or quantity, and so forth. When a butcher sells a piece of meat, he should be compelled to make out a bill and wrap it up in the package, and that bill should contain the exact weight of the meat. The same is true in the case of cheese. The matter will then be a question between the actual consumer and the seller. The question is not so much one of the weight of butter or cheese that goes into cold storage. Every one knows that the ultimate consumer is supposed to get the weight of cheese he pays for. There is a certain shrinkage allowed on cheese put into cold storage. Legislation of this kind is required to put a stop to the rascally practice that has grown up throughout this country of selling by price. Suppose a housewife goes into a store and asks for some oatmeal. The clerk says: Here is a 25-cent package. She buys it. The package is done up nicely, but as a matter of fact, the housewife gets only about 15 cents' worth of oatmeal. Canned goods and packages done up and parcelled should have on them not only the English weights and measures, but at the same time the metric weights and measures. After having had experience with the metric system, I feel satisfied that, as our coinage is on a decimal system, if the people got into the habit of using the metric weights and measures, along with our dollars and cents, they would continue using them. Under the present system, it is difficult for a woman of ordinary intelligence to calculate rapidly what she is getting.

As it is now, it takes the ordinary man or woman quite a little time to calculate how much twelve and a half ounces of butter, for instance, at 38 cents a pound would cost. This difficulty will be largely avoided if we adopt the metric system, which is in force in every country of the world except the United States, Canada and Great Britain. Objections against the system are futile. The system has been forced into use in almost every country in the world, and this country is consequently at a great disadvantage in selling canned fruit and things of that kind, because the weight is not printed according to the metric system. I think if this resolution were amended to compel the seller to mention the weight as well as the price on the label, it would save a great deal of trouble and be of great advantage. All the grocers in this country are not as honest as those with whom my