

the country at all; it would have been a much readier way of raising revenue, and it would also have removed a burden from the ordinary people who use great quantities of sugar. Some one pointed out that the rich man does not use more sugar than the ordinary man in proportion to their means; and as sugar is something that nearly every family uses, I would suggest that a more ready and reasonable way of raising revenue would be to increase the flotation of currency.

Mr. J. J. HUGHES: I understand that the increase in the price of wheat has been only ten cents per bushel and the increase in the price of flour has been \$1.35 per barrel. While the Government are considering prices, that is a matter that might receive consideration. Whether the millers by combine have been able to charge the consumers about eighty-five cents more a barrel than the increase in the price of wheat would warrant is a question that should receive some consideration. The wholesale price of a good grade of flour some three weeks ago before war was declared was \$5.15 per barrel, whereas at the present time the price for the same grade of flour is \$6.50 per barrel at the same place.

Mr. LALOR: Does the hon. member make the statement that wheat has advanced only ten cents per bushel?

Mr. HUGHES: That is what I understand.

Mr. LALOR: You are quite wrong.

Mr. NESBITT: Wheat with us has advanced twenty cents per bushel.

Mr. J. J. HUGHES: That will be \$1.00 per barrel, which makes the price of flour thirty-five cents per barrel too high. I understand that millers are importing wheat from the United States, paying twelve cents a bushel duty upon it; and I have been informed that that is only an excuse and that the wheat is obtainable in Canada.

Mr. HENDERSON: Did not the hon. gentleman only last session or a few sessions ago vote for the free importation of wheat into Canada?

Mr. J. J. HUGHES: I say it would be better to have free wheat now in the interests of the consumer.

Some hon. MEMBERS: What about the farmers?

Mr. J. J. HUGHES: If the farmers are holding up the millers, expecting a higher price and taking advantage of the situation, I do not think they should be allowed to do so. I would, under such circumstances, bring wheat free into Canada. I do not think that anybody should be allowed to take advantage of the present condition of affairs to charge the people more than an article is worth. If my hon. friend is correct in saying that there has been an advance of twenty cents a bushel in wheat, five bushels making a barrel of flour, that would mean a dollar increase in a barrel of flour. I presume the Government desire to do whatever they can to assure reasonable prices to the people, and so I bring these points to their attention as showing that there is something wrong, particularly with regard to flour, one of the necessities of life.

Mr. A. K. MACLEAN: I desire to say a word in regard to the sugar duties in addition to what has been said by others. I doubt very much that the Government will receive the revenue from sugar which they have in mind, and I doubt also that the imposition of an increased sugar tax at this time will meet with favour in the country. I quite grant that sugar is always a pretty good article to tax if you desire to raise revenue by customs duty. I think that all countries of the world with the exception of two now impose tariff taxation upon sugar. It is considered by many a desirable subject for taxation, for the additional reason that the whole revenue collected goes immediately into the treasury, and there is very little cost in collecting it. However, I think that the conditions to-day are not favourable to the increased duties upon sugar. In France, Germany, Austria and Russia large quantities of beet-root sugar are produced. I do not know what their production for this year will be, but certainly it is expected by the sugar manufacturers that there will be a considerable diminution in the world's total production of raw sugar. I know it is in the minds of Canadian manufacturers of sugar that, regardless of the proposed additional tax, the price of the article is bound to go up. I was informed by one manufacturer of sugar that ten cents a pound was not an improbable price for sugar within a very short time in Canada. I think it is quite true that the manufacturers to-day are fulfilling their contracts at the prices made and are not endeavouring to increase them in working off their present stocks. But