

Mr. TOLMIE: In this case Nova Scotia was represented by Mr. McMahon, and the secretary of the Nova Scotia Fruit Growers' Association.

Mr. FIELDING: Those are very excellent gentlemen, and I thank my hon. friend for the information. I am satisfied myself, and I am sure the House is equally satisfied that the hon. gentleman has only good objects in proposing these changes. The minister will see, however, that he is rather running up against—the sentiment of the House, shall I call it? There has been a good deal of talk in recent times with respect to government by Order in Council—

Mr. BUREAU: Hear, hear.

Mr. FIELDING:—in fact, a few days ago an hon. gentleman on the Government side spoke very strongly against the ministry undertaking to do things by regulation. It is a very embarrassing question, but I think my hon. friend's object is good; and with the assurance that the fruit growers of my own province have been consulted in the matter, I have no desire to do otherwise than give my consent to the Bill.

Mr. BUREAU: It is not a question with me of consulting the fruit growers of Quebec, but it is a question of principle. What reason has the minister for taking into his own hands the power of regulating the packing of fruit in Canada? Did anybody ask for this alteration?

Mr. TOLMIE: Yes.

Mr. BUREAU: The only reason the minister gives is that the regulations enacted after the conference of 1918 will force the Nova Scotia people to lengthen the staves of their barrels. If that is the only thing that has given rise to the proposed change, I would propose that we legislate so as to allow the Nova Scotia fruit growers to have a package which will conform with the usage heretofore followed in that province, and to have smaller barrels to pack their fruit in. I am not willing to abandon the privileges of Parliament simply for the purpose of shortening the staves of a barrel by one-half or three-quarters of an inch. I would not consent to the changes proposed except the minister were able to show that they were demanded by the fruit growers throughout the Dominion. It appears, however, that the only objection comes from Nova Scotia that it would involve shortening the staves in the barrels there. I do not think that is sufficient.

[Mr. Fielding.]

Mr. TOLMIE: The change in the barrel is not due to any personal whim of either the minister or any of the officials of the fruit branch, but to a request from Nova Scotia that the barrel be standardized.

Mr. McCOIG: Will the barrel be of the same size in Nova Scotia as in the other provinces under the new regulation?

Mr. TOLMIE: The same capacity.

Mr. BUREAU: What is the use of the change? If Nova Scotia is forced to change its barrel the minister certainly cannot allege that that change is required because Nova Scotia is affected by the legislation.

Mr. TOLMIE: In Nova Scotia, where soft wood is used both for heads and staves, it is necessary to increase the length of staves in order to secure the legal capacity. The experience of the Fruit Branch is that these matters are of a highly technical nature and that it is far more practicable to have them adjusted after consulting the growers and others interested than to wait for a session of Parliament.

Mr. SEXSMITH: Has Nova Scotia now the same size barrel as Ontario?

Mr. TOLMIE: The same capacity.

Mr. ROBB: The legislation of 1918 was not put through hastily; it was preceded by careful consultation with the different fruit growers throughout all the provinces. Now, a year later, the minister suggests another change, not so much at the instance of the fruit growers and fruit dealers as at the instance of those who manufacture the barrels and packages. Have we any assurance that the minister will not soon come before us again asking us for further changes? All these changes involve additional cost and add to the high cost of living. Barrels that were used in previous years in the domestic trade can be used again this year. Barrels are very scarce and are very expensive, the price having almost doubled within the last five years. The minister may enact legislation that will make absolutely useless the barrels that were used last year, and that additional cost will ultimately come back on the consumer. It seems to me that the minister should make haste slowly and not grant legislation from year to year simply to suit the whims of the manufacturer of packages.

Mr. TOLMIE: The whole movement is designed to standardize fruit barrels all over the continent. It was made at the instiga-