

standard adopted by law. In the absence of law, farmers are interfered with by municipal regulations, which may vary every day. In Montreal, the regulation is, that a bag of potatoes must weigh 90 pounds. There is nothing, as the law stands, to prevent the adoption of a by-law by another municipality providing that a bag of potatoes shall contain 100 pounds, or anything to prevent another municipality adopting a different standard. It is a mode of selling that kind of produce, and it is just as rational to adopt a standard for that measurement as it is to adopt a standard for the bushel. In my Bill there is a second section to provide for the penalties that are already provided for by subsection 2 of section 16 of the Weights and Measures Act.

Mr. SPROULE. We go far enough when we make a standard bushel. The adoption of the amendment would lead to confusion. Our people move around the country, and may reside at one time in Quebec, another time in Ontario, or in the North-west, or in British Columbia, and if there is a standard bag in one province, it may not prevail in another. It is quite true there is at the present time a standard bushel, and it should be allowed to remain, but there is no necessity for making a standard bag which will be applicable only in the province of Quebec.

Mr. MACLEAN. I would suggest that, instead of complicating this measure, there should be a conference between the United States, Great Britain and Canada, looking to the adoption of a decimal system of weights and measures and of a uniform system applicable all over the world. I believe the time has arrived for such action to be taken, and that the Government should take up the matter. I believe there is a movement in England and in the United States looking to that end; and so, instead of making our system more complicated, we should seek to adopt a uniform system based on the decimal system for use throughout the Empire and the world.

Mr. WALLACE. I think the proposal of the hon. member for Laval (Mr. Fortin) would be utterly useless. It would not even remedy the grievance he has stated to the House. He has mentioned that the city of Montreal has passed a by-law making a bag of potatoes 90 pounds, or one bushel and a half. That by-law would, no doubt, remain in force, and the proposition of the hon. member would not affect it. What does the hon. gentleman propose? It is that a bag of potatoes shall not be less than 80 pounds in the province of Quebec. The weight may be more than that, of course. In other provinces, a bag would be 90 pounds, but it would be anything over 80 pounds in Quebec, and 90 pounds in the city of Montreal. I oppose the amendment for this reason, that it does not define what

weight a bag of potatoes shall have in the province of Quebec, for the amendment only provides that the weight shall not be less than 80 pounds.

Mr. FORTIN. It might be made to read, "80 pounds."

Mr. WALLACE. The amendment does not state what the weight shall be. It might be 85, 90 or 100 pounds. That would lead to a great deal of confusion. Another objection, and a very strong one, to my mind, is, that, under the proposed arrangement, a bushel of potatoes might have one weight in Quebec and another weight in all the other provinces. I do not think the proposal of the hon. gentleman would lead to anything beneficial, but would add to the confusion, and it should not be adopted.

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. Fisher). I do not think the opposition expressed by the hon. member for West York (Mr. Wallace) is quite fair in regard to the proposition of my hon. friend from Laval. The amendment is simply for the purpose of overcoming the regulation in a certain local market, which, by reason of a by-law, has injured seriously a large number of people living immediately around them. The proposal is, practically, that a new measure of weights and measures should be made. As a matter of practical working, it has been found very difficult to secure 90 pounds of potatoes in an ordinary bag. The result is, that a large number of perfectly innocent men, without any design or thought of wrong-doing, are laid open to prosecution, fine and confiscation of the produce they bring to that market. My hon. friend proposes to adopt a weight for a bag. He does not mean to say that a bushel and a half measure shall be 80 pounds, but that a bag of potatoes, when used as a unit of sale, shall weigh 80 pounds.

Mr. WALLACE. The hon. gentleman does not propose that.

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE. He proposes that a bag shall weigh at least 80 pounds. That simply is to say, that it shall not be less than 80 pounds. If grain is sold by the measured bushel, and it happens to weigh more than the fixed number of pounds, we know that does not contravene the law. A bushel of oats, by our standard, is 30 pounds.

An hon. MEMBER. Thirty-four pounds.

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE. Yes, of course; that was a slip of the tongue.

Mr. WALLACE. I thought a farmer would know the weight of a bushel of oats.

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE. I think the hon. member (Mr. Wallace) can recognize a slip of the tongue when he hears it, if he wants to. The measured bushel of oats although fixed by law at thirty-four