

joining the association knows exactly on what terms he is joining, and these parties, I understand, are the ones about whom the hon. member (John Haggart) is concerned. And, if they know the terms of the by-laws and regulations, I do not see how they could be injured.

Mr. JOHN HAGGART. The by-laws and regulations might be such that parties would not wish to join. But every one should have an equal right to join.

Mr. A. H. CLARKE. I think they have.

Mr. JOHN HAGGART. No; this is a combination of certain persons for certain purposes and may be exclusive.

Mr. A. H. CLARKE. Section 6 provides for those 'who may become members'. And not only mill men, but farmers may join. At first it was confined to mill men, but now the Bill is extended to farmers as well. That will be found in section 5 of the Bill as it now appears.

Mr. PUGSLEY. It occurred to me, on reading the Bill over, that if the measure provided for a larger capital, it would be one of the most favourable arrangements for a millers' trust against the farmers that one could possibly imagine. It provides that all the millers in Canada may become members of the Millers' Association, and, in that way, they could do what, under the present law, they could not do, that is, fix the price at which they would buy the grain from the farmers.

Mr. A. H. CLARKE. Paragraph (d) expressly forbids that.

Mr. PUGSLEY. I think not. That relates only to arbitration proceedings. This would become a company of which all the mill-owners in Canada could be members, and they could regulate the price which they would pay to the farmers for their grain. It seems to me to be a wrong principle to incorporate a company to enable all the purchasers of grain—for the farmers must look to the mill-owners as their customers—to make a legal combination which they could not do without some such special Act as this. This would be a recognition of the desirability and propriety of forming a trust, and I do not think that parliament would accede to that without very careful consideration. I listened to section 3 of the original Act, as read by the hon. member for East Grey (Mr. Sproule), and it seemed to me that that section met all reasonable requirements. But I think that before we make such a very great alteration in the Act of incorporation, we ought to have very clear reasons for making that change. By this Bill it is proposed to strike out at once all the safeguards which parliament seems to have thought necessary to place in the original Act of incorporation.

I think we ought to have very strong reasons presented to us before we do so.

Mr. BLAIN. May I ask the hon. member for South Essex (Mr. A. H. Clarke) if any representative farmers appeared before the special committee, or were they particularly invited?

Mr. A. H. CLARKE. No person appeared except the representative of the association.

Mr. BLAIN. I appeal to my hon. friend (Mr. Fielding) who is leading the House, that there is certainly sufficient opposition to this Bill to justify us in asking that it be left for further consideration. The special committee, of necessity, was a small one. No doubt, they have gone into the matter very carefully—I am not offering any criticism of their action whatever—but the great mass of the members on both sides have had no opportunity of looking into this matter, and I am sure that it is a matter that requires very careful consideration. The Minister of the Interior (Mr. Oliver), and the Minister of Public Works (Mr. Pugsley) have pointed out grave objections and grave reasons why this should not become law, and, for myself, I think that I and other members should have an opportunity of consulting the farmers to learn whether they do or do not regard this as a combine.

Mr. JOHN HAGGART. I do not wish to be thought to be opposed to the principle of the Bill. I can understand the absolute necessity, in some cases, of a Bill of this kind. The small mill owners, if they are to exist at all, can exist only by some form of arrangement of this kind for the purchasing and selling of grain. The hon. member who is chairman of the committee says that this Bill is not exclusive, that any one has the right to join and participate in its advantages. But I see an absolute necessity of some arrangement, or of the formation of some company on the line of this Bill, if they are going to carry on business at all in competition with larger concerns.

Mr. OLIVER. I would not wish to be understood as urging anything against the millers of Ontario, either small or large, organizing to defend their interest in a proper way, and I am not saying that this Bill is an attempt on their part to organize improperly. But there is a feature of this Bill that claims attention. There is no doubt that the purpose of the Bill is not, as my hon. friend from South Essex (Mr. Clarke) says, to increase competition, but to eliminate competition so far as possible in the buying of grain. Now that is something that claims the attention of those who are interested in the selling of grain, and we ask therefore, that it be made per-