

At present the operation of the Grain Act has been confined to Manitoba and the Northwest, and I think has extended as far east as Fort William. This Act proposes to extend the control of the grain trade and inspection of the grain until it reaches the seaboard. Beyond that, of course, we cannot go. There have also been complaints made to us of the alleged shortage of grain—that is to say of the loss which is said to have been sustained in transport from Fort William to the seaboard. I think, as far as I can find out, those complaints were exaggerated a great deal, although very often no doubt there were cases of individual hardship. Still, the facts which were submitted to my department went to show that, apparently, not much more than on an average one bushel in 1,200 or 1,300 fell short, although there were no doubt individual cases where considerable loss may have been sustained. However that may be, we desire to avoid that, and we propose to appoint salaried officers, men who have hitherto been paid by fees, for the purpose of looking more carefully after the weighing of the grain when it is delivered at the lake ports on the eastern side. I may remark that many of the provisions which have been introduced by us and recommended by the Commission, have been pretty well tested in the adjoining States, where a Grain Act closely resembling that which we propose to introduce has been in force for a very considerable number of years. Of course, this being rather a technical measure, the details will have to be considered in committee rather than at the present stage, and as it is desirable if possible that we should take one stage now, and go into a Committee of the Whole as soon as possible, without further preface, I propose to move the second reading.

Hon. Mr. PERLEY—I do not see any of my colleagues from the west here, who I thought possibly would make a remark or two about the Bill. There is no doubt the farmers of the west, as well as their representatives in parliament, will appreciate any effort the government may make towards improving the handling of their grain from the time it leaves their farms until it is received in the elevators at Fort William,

and perhaps further than that. I have carefully examined the measure, and I may say that there are some few points on which I desire to suggest amendments when the Bill comes before the committee. I may say further, that I have sent a copy of the Bill to the west to the leading promoters of the 'Bill,' or to those who took an active part in having this legislation brought before parliament, and I have not had time to receive an answer from them as to how the Bill in its present shape will suit them. It will probably be the first of June before I receive information from them, so that we will be able to work intelligently on the Bill, so far as their opinions are concerned. I may say as regards the loss of grain in reaching the elevators at Fort William, I heard very grievous complaints a few years ago, and the farmers are not able themselves to tell—hardly an elevator man in the country is able to tell what he does lose if he loses anything. The grain is bought straight from the farmer, or the farmer brings his grain to the elevator and places it in a bin. It is not weighed, and no distinct tally of it is kept. He loads it to a line mark in the car, and he thinks he has a thousand bushels there, but when it arrives at Fort William it may be less, and he thinks the grain has been lost in transit. I am not able to form any correct conclusion on that point, although I have heard a great many of the farmers say they have lost a great deal of grain between the time it was put in the car at Wolseley or Indian Head, and the time it was unloaded at Fort William. I built an elevator a couple of years ago, in which I divided the space all into bins, carload lots. It is different from any other elevator in the country. Each bin just holds one carload. We weigh it into the bin and ship it into the car. We do not weigh it when we ship it out, but it is weighed when it is placed in the bin, and I do not hesitate to say that I have never known a case in which there was any discrepancy worth talking about. Therefore, I have concluded that the weighing of the wheat at Fort William has in the main been accurate according to our scales. But there is a greater grievance than that—a great grievance which is not