

West. Mr. Bell, the secretary of the Winnipeg Board of Trade and also of the grain exchange at that place, came down here a short time ago asking on behalf of those boards for this special grading. I do not profess to understand the question myself, but, as the leader of the Opposition has said, I suppose the boards of trade are best qualified to deal with it.

Mr. MILLS (Bothwell). I suppose the object of fixing standards for grain is to obtain a standard by which you can compare the grain of the North-West with grain all over the world, where it is grown for the market. If you fix a special grade, then it seems to me it does not mean anything. I cannot see what purpose it is intended to serve. If, for instance, the wheat is unripe, or frozen, or affected in some particular way so that you cannot classify it as under first, or second, or any other grade, I suppose it would be sufficiently designated by mentioning its defect, but I do not see how you are going to classify it so that it will be to any advantage to the agriculturist or to any other interested in it as an article of merchandise.

Mr. COSTIGAN. I may say that I am influenced specially in this matter by the opinions of those who ought to know about the requirements of that country, the boards of trade. We have our grades established so high, that in special years a very large proportion of the crop would be rejected according to those grades. We have either to make an exception and leave the high standards untouched and permanent, making this exceptional ruling for a special crop, or we have to lower the general grades which Parliament has established, which would have a very bad effect.

Mr. MILLS (Bothwell). You would not have to come down in the standard.

Mr. COSTIGAN. Yes: because these grades are fixed at the request of the North-West people themselves in order to meet the average crop of that country, which is an excellent crop, as hon. gentlemen know, in quality, in weight, in colour, and everything of that kind. Parliament has made the grades higher in the North-West than they are in Chicago. Now, if we do not agree to the suggestion in this respect, not to give the official character of inspection to this kind of grain, but to make this a commercial grade for a special purpose and only for that one season, you will have to abandon the high grades under all circumstances.

Mr. MILLS (Bothwell). Why should you touch the grades if you fix the standard according to the quality of the crop? If this does not come up to that standard it is not the less an article of merchandise, but is of an inferior quality, which the purchaser is able to judge for himself. You do not help him in the least by undertaking to fix an artificial grade which he cannot compare with anything else. He must see the grain itself before he can judge.

Mr. CHARLTON. We are not likely to have the grading of wheat in the great markets of the world affected by the views of the boards of trade of Winnipeg and the little towns in the North-West. Wheat is graded in Chicago, in New York, in Liverpool and the other markets of the world, and the grading is established there, and it is absurd to suppose that you can establish a standard which is fluctuating and goes up and down

according to circumstances. If you have a crop of frosted wheat one year and very little No. 1 hard, you are proposing to make special standards for that year. That is a perfect absurdity. The wheat has to be sold in the markets of the world on the established grade in those markets, and you cannot make any grading in the North-West which will mitigate the results of not having your wheat up to the standards of the corn markets of the world. You may adopt the ordinary standards of grading, and I think the adoption of any other rule will beget mischievous consequences.

Mr. TROW. I think any rule adopted by Parliament for the grading of wheat in the North-West has a tendency to an imposition on the settlers and is altogether in favour of the buyers, who take advantage of those who sell on account of the grading.

Mr. CHARLTON. It is like a scheme to make a fiat dollar serve the purpose of a coin. I think the Minister of Inland Revenue had better let the usages of the world apply to the North-West, and I believe he will find it will be to the advantage of that country.

Mr. DAVIN. I think my hon. friends are entirely mistaken as to the way in which this clause would operate. Last year we had a good crop in the North-West, and we had a large amount of very peculiar wheat. It had not filled out in consequence of the absence of June rains, and some of the buyers at first graded it as if it was frosted wheat. They graded it low. By-and-bye, it went over to England, and there it was found to be of the very first quality, but it was only late in the season that anything like a proper price was given for this wheat. If we had had this legislation then, that wheat could have been graded specially in the way provided for in this clause. Nearly every year we have wheat in the North-West that should be thus specially graded, and I know that in my constituency there is a strong desire to have such legislation as this passed.

Mr. McMULLEN. I think this is very dangerous legislation. I would like to know if the Boards of Trade of Toronto and Montreal and other places throughout this Dominion have been consulted in relation to this matter. We are not here to legislate simply in the interests of Manitoba and the North-West or what they may conceive to be their interests, but we are legislating here in the interests of the whole Dominion. This grain which may be marked No. 1 of this Dominion under an enactment passed here, may grade very much lower when it is placed on the commercial boards in Toronto, Montreal and other points, and I think it is going to militate against the success of the North-West rather than in its favour to pass this provision. I agree with the member for Perth (Mr. Trow) that the members of the boards of trade and those who deal in wheat in the North-West will take the advantages which this Bill will give them in securing from the producers their wheat at perhaps a less price than they otherwise would do.

Mr. COSTIGAN. He did not say that.

Mr. MACDONALD (Winnipeg). It will operate the other way.

Mr. McMULLEN. I cannot see how that can be. Why should we introduce legislation affecting only the North-West? I should like to know if