

Mr. A. H. CLARKE. The Bill is merely in his name; he does not know any more about it than any of us.

Mr. OLIVER. While I have the highest respect for my hon. friend from South Essex (Mr. Clarke). I think he has hardly stated accurately the position taken by those who are criticising this Bill. There is no objection to any number of gentlemen coming to this parliament and securing incorporation for the purpose of buying, selling and dealing in grain, probably in the very terms which are contained in this Bill; but there is no reason why gentlemen who already have certain powers for another purpose should come here and obtain the legislation which they would be entitled to have if they were not associated together for that other purpose. As it appears to me, these gentlemen are getting the advantage of two separate and different situations by legislation in the one Bill, and the amendments to it. I submit that that is dangerous, looked at from the standpoint of the public interest. There is no reason why, if these gentlemen want to buy and sell grain, they should not come here and get incorporation as a company to buy and sell grain; but, on the other hand, there is no reason why, in order that they may do that, they should come as a Millers' Association, and ask that the Millers' Association shall have power to buy and sell grain.

Mr. SPROULE. The trouble seems to be what I referred to in the first place. Any one outside of that association who desires to buy a carload of grain cannot get it unless he orders it through the association, and comes to their terms, no matter what they are. I am speaking from my own experience. You may buy grain in the west at a reasonable price for shipment to Ontario, but you cannot get it shipped except through the association otherwise, unless you pay an exorbitant freight rate. The railway company would not agree to deliver your grain in two, three, or four months. There is no use in attempting to handle grain in that way. I am not saying that this association is responsible for that, or whether it influences the railway companies or not; but I do know that grain that was ordered in the west did not reach Ontario for two and a half or three months. Such delay destroys the chance of any one getting any profit out of the business, and many who desire to have the grain do not order it because they cannot depend on getting it. If this association is responsible for that, then I think we are giving them too much power.

Mr. NESBITT. As I understand those speaking for the members of the association, they have no desire to hinder an independent miller from getting grain at any price he can get it at. Their desire is

Mr. ARMSTRONG.

through organization to assist the smaller millers throughout the country, who cannot buy in the quantities that the large millers can, to buy unitedly. With regard to what the hon. member for East Grey (Mr. Sproule) has said about holding up independent parties, it seems to me there should be no difficulty of that kind, because any person who is held up can apply to the Railway Board, set forth the facts, and get redress. It is quite impossible, in my judgment, for any association to hold up those who are independent of it, and make them pay a higher freight rate or delay shipment. If the members of this association want to buy grain for the purpose of distribution among themselves, I do not see why we should not allow them to do so. As to their calling themselves an association instead of a company, that is an immaterial distinction, and so long as their objects are legitimate, I do not see why we should not pass the Bill. I have no interest in the Bill further than to see that justice is done to the smaller millers throughout the country.

Mr. SPROULE. If a man wants a carload of grain, he is not going to waste his time going before the Railway Board, if he cannot get it.

Mr. NESBITT. He need not waste time. He need only write a letter.

Mr. SPROULE. If you are ordering a carload of grain from the west, and you are told that the only way you can get it through is through one of these associations, you begin to think that the association has some influence with the railway company that it should not have. I am not sure how far the association is responsible, but I am sure that you could not get the grain or know when it would be shipped, and besides, you would have to pay a higher freight rate on it. These are two objectionable features to the man who wants to buy, and if this association exercises such influence with the railways, I think it is a bad one.

Mr. JOHN HAGGART. The object of the association may be a very good one, and very likely is, namely, that a lot of millers may combine together for the purpose of competing with the large milling companies like Ogilvie's, or the Lake of the Woods Company in purchasing grain; but, on the other hand, it may be an injury. You do not know the terms on which these parties combine together. Some individual in the combine may not have as much interest as others. The House ought to know particularly what fees the association is allowed to charge, and it might be right to limit it in that respect, so that it would be obliged to give equal rights to all who hold stock in the association. The object is a perfectly good one. The association en-