

plies to the agent, and the agent deals with the application; but the agent's powers are to be restricted by regulations made by Order in Council. Is that right?

Mr. MEIGHEN: Yes.

Mr. BUREAU: Then section 5 provides that "the form and the terms of the note and security to be taken by the bank from any entrant" are to be determined by regulations made by the Governor in Council. Similarly, with respect to "the terms of the guarantee which may be made to any bank hereunder." First, then, the entrant has to go to the agent and, in some cases, win him over before he can win his case. It would be a very easy thing for the agent to fall back on the regulations and say, "I can only deal with your application in a certain way. Although in my opinion your application should be granted, there is an Order in Council providing that in such and such a part of the country and by such and such agents the matter shall be dealt with only in such and such a way." If the man conforms with all the requirements, there is still another way in which he can be put off. He may go to the bank, but the term and form of his note may be such that the bank will say, "We do not care about accepting this note, because it is not in our usual line of business." Would it not be better for the Bill to provide that the man who has his patent, has so many acres under cultivation and so much security put up, shall be advanced ten, fifteen, twenty or thirty per cent of the value of the improvements on his land, or shall be advanced an amount depending on the security he offers. Every man would know then where he stood; every one would know his rights, and the security would be better.

Mr. MEIGHEN: The hon. gentleman misapprehends the Act altogether. The security the man puts up is the security of the crop to be grown with the seed; he does not put up any other security. We take that as a lien against the loan, but it bears no relation to the value of the land; the only security that does bear relation is the crop itself, which necessarily bears a relation to the seed advanced. Now, if this power on the part of the Crown to grant or refuse loans was an inherent evil, the evil has been in existence for over twenty years past.

Mr. BUREAU: That does not make it any better.

Mr. MEIGHEN: That is the way it has always been done, and in my humble judgment

[Mr. Bureau.]

ment it is the best way. I do not know any rules that could be laid down entitling a man absolutely to a loan, which would be an improvement on the present system; because there might be cases outside those rules just as there might be cases outside the strict wording of the Act. We want to provide for all cases. If there be complaint that the Government have not advanced money to homesteaders this year or last year or any year back to 1915, I have never heard of it. We always do unless there is some special reason for not doing so, and since I have been Minister of the Interior I do not know of any such special reason ever cropping up.

Mr. BUREAU: The minister says that the advance is made on the crop. A certain value must be put on the crop, in order to make the advance.

Mr. MEIGHEN: Oh, no.

Mr. BUREAU: What is the advance made on? Is it a haphazard matter? If a farmer has twenty acres of ground which he is going to put under cultivation, will he get as much as a farmer who is going to put one hundred acres under cultivation?

Mr. MEIGHEN: No.

Mr. BUREAU: Then there must be some basis on which to estimate the value of the expected crop. Why not say: If there is a certain acreage—if that is the basis the department decides to go on—the farmer shall be entitled to get so much per cent? The matter should not be left in the hands of agents of the department or to action by Order in Council.

Mr. MAHARG: I am afraid the hon. gentleman is not a farmer.

Mr. BUREAU: I am sorry I am not.

Mr. MAHARG: If you were to lay down the rule that you would give a certain percentage for a certain number of acres, then by reason of climatic conditions and so on one man might have to sow two bushels to the acre whereas another man might have to sow only a bushel and a half or a bushel. How would the hon. member regulate that?

Mr. BUREAU: I would regulate that on the crop of the year before. If climatic conditions exist, they must have existed the year before. If a man got thirty bushels an acre last year, the chances are that he will get thirty bushels this year.

Mr. MAHARG: Thousands of farmers may not have a bushel an acre this year.