

Mr. MEIGHEN. He cannot deal in grain, that is quite true. But would my hon. friend say that a man could not be interested in two such companies?

Mr. KNOWLES. Yes.

Mr. MEIGHEN. Then he is going much further than his amendment goes. I for one, would not be a party to such legislation, if I could help it. Look at the confusion it would land us in. But let me point out that the hon. gentleman's amendment does not go that far. His amendment says that no person who is interested in any sense whatever in the one shall be interested in any sense whatever in the other; that is to say, that no person if he is so interested, can deal in grain. But the company can do it. The company is a distinct entity in the eyes of the law, and unless one company holds shares in the other company, the two companies can go on doing business. Of course, if one company holds shares in the other, then they could not, under the clause as it stands, or under the amendment. Now the hon. member for Moosejaw (Mr. Knowles) says: Go on and make it a penalty for a man to own a share in a storage company who also owns a share in an elevator company. He cannot seriously ask us to pass that legislation. He will search the records of any civilized country in vain for any law of that sort. A man can own stock in any company he wants to buy in. Take the case of an innocent party who holds some shares in an elevator company. He finds himself hard up, and desires to sell. He cannot go to John Smith and ask him to buy it, because he would have to look up John Smith's assets to make sure that he does not own shares in the storage company. Also, suppose I own stock in a storage company, and my son holds some stock in an elevator company. I die, and my son becomes the heir, and he at once becomes a criminal in the eyes of the law. It would be utterly absurd. I cannot now bring to my imagination a picture of all the embarrassing situations that would be created, and the confusion that would arise would be much greater than the calamity we are seeking to avert. It seems to me utterly absurd to say that a man could not have so much as one share in a million dollar elevator company, and at the same time have one share in a million dollar grain company. It might be reasonable, if you could do it without too much confusion, to say that no one person shall hold a majority of the shares in both. But that again would be impossible of enforcement. In the first place, the amendment proposed by the hon. member, does not, in any sense, eliminate the objections raised; and secondly, if he went further, as seems to be his intention, it would give rise to a state

of affairs more intolerable than that which now exists.

Mr. KNOWLES. It is true that the legislation I suggest would be unusual, but I do not think it would have that absurd effect he thinks it would when he says that the heir of a shareholder in both companies would be automatically criminal. If men have shares in a storage company and also in a company dealing in grain, let them get out of the one or the other. That is the tenor of 123, and it is no more unreasonable than the legislation of the minister. The minister says that no man can be interested in an elevator and buy one bushel of grain without being criminal. The principle is the same and the philosophy is the same. The member for Portage la Prairie, I suppose, thinks that the minister's legislation would at least be harmless. But the minister's legislation is the same kind as my amendment, and with the same motive, only it does not go so far in making provision against clever evasions, which I am endeavouring to prevent. My amendment says that no person who is in any way interested in an elevator shall be in any way interested in buying or selling grain, and that means as a shareholder in either. I think this parliament has power to make it an offence to be interested in buying or selling grain under those circumstances.

Mr. MEIGHEN. Would my hon. friend tell the committee what would result supposing A was interested in both?

Mr. KNOWLES. I think he would be liable to the penalty under the law. If he becomes a shareholder in a company, it is his business to know what the business of that company is. The amendment says that no person who is in any way interested in an elevator should be in any way interested in the buying or selling of grain; it would, as a matter of law, of course, be that he would have to be aware of the fact that he was wrongfully so holding stock in two companies, as no man can unconsciously commit a crime.

Mr. MEIGHEN. There is no penalty provided in this clause.

Mr. KNOWLES. There is a penalty provided in the Bill for the infraction of any of the provisions of this Grain Act.

Mr. MEIGHEN. Will my hon. friend name the clause?

Mr. KNOWLES. 242 says:

Every person is guilty of an offence and liable to a penalty... who, while owning, managing, operating or being otherwise interested in any terminal elevator, buys or sells grain at any point in the western inspection division contrary to the provisions of section 123 of this Act.