

the farmer, might be considered by that committee. And for what purpose? So that the committee could call before them persons who could give evidence or information, and also consider papers that would assist them in reporting to the House suggestions to be carried out in the interest of the great farming class. That committee was established. It is a large committee. I believe that every farmer in this House is a member of that committee. What could be clearer than that it is to such a committee that this Bill should be referred? Agriculturists are more interested in the subject of this Bill than are any other class; and the farmers on the Agricultural Committee would be more likely to pay direct attention to it than would any class in this House. For that reason, it has been the rule to send questions of this nature to that committee. But the Minister of Agriculture, for reasons best known to himself, sees fit to avoid sending this Bill to the Committee on Agriculture. When a Bill comes up that is of interest to the railways, what is done with it? For instance, a Bill comes up relating to cattle-guards. The farmers are interested in that Bill on the one hand and the railways on the other. That Bill is sent to the Railway Committee, where railway interests always seem to be dominant. The government insist on sending it to that committee. And with what result? Such Bills are nearly always killed in the Railway Committee. Or, when a Bill is introduced in regard to ditches and water-courses, giving property owners the right to drain across the railways, though the farmers are interested, the Bill goes to the Railway Committee on railways, where the railway interests are dominant. So, when a Bill is introduced in this House which affects the interests of only one class, the agriculturists of this country, why is it not sent to the Committee on Agriculture?

The Minister of Agriculture refuses to allow that Bill to go there, and I say he discredits the committee that he is responsible for appointing every session of parliament. He discredits the agriculturists on that committee and says by his conduct that he is not prepared to trust them, intimating that either they are not intelligent enough to do what would be in the interests of the farmers, as otherwise he would entrust them with the consideration of this Bill. It was for that purpose this committee was appointed. Years ago we had Bill after Bill in which the farmers were interested, every one of which were sent to that committee, but when the present Minister of Agriculture took charge of the department, he who professes to be so great a friend of the farmer, he will not allow these Bills to go to the Agricultural Committee where we could take evidence and present the findings of the Committee to the House. The other day the minister said, speaking of

this committee, that the Committee of the Whole House was much better. But no one knows better than himself the disadvantage of discussing questions of that nature before a Committee of the Whole House. What are the disadvantages? One is that you cannot bring the farmers here and get their opinion on it, but you can bring them before the Agricultural Committee. You cannot bring the seedsmen here and ask them questions before a Committee of the Whole House, but you can do so before the Agricultural Committee. You cannot take their evidence here, but there you can take the evidence of all parties concerned. While you might name a private committee that would be perhaps equally valuable with the Agricultural Committee, still I hold that the Agricultural Committee is the proper one to deal with this Bill, where it can be considered from a farmers' standpoint, and where the farmers themselves can be asked their views upon it. If, after doing this, we could manage to prepare a Bill that would accomplish the object the minister has in view, it would be desirable to do so. I am not opposing the Bill, because I believe it to be one of great importance, but I desire to see the Bill, when it is passed, made workable so that it will be a real advantage to the farmers and to the seedsmen in carrying on their operations.

Mr. HENDERSON. I simply desire to say that I am anxious that the Bill before the House should, if passed at all, be passed in the very best possible form. I am desirous that the farmers of this country should be put in a position to secure the best and the cleanest seeds that can be obtained. While I propose to vote in favour of this amendment, I distinctly desire it to be understood that I am in no way opposed to the Bill. The effect of this amendment may be to delay its passage for a short time, but I hope it will also have the effect of further perfecting the measure and making it what I trust the Minister of Agriculture desires it should be, a good Bill, a Bill in the interests of the agriculturists of this country. While I support the amendment, I do not wish to be understood as being in any way opposed to the Bill.

Mr. INGRAM. I desire to duplicate the words just spoken by my hon. friend from Halton (Mr. Henderson).

Mr. WM. WRIGHT. When this Bill was in committee I expressed the conviction that it would be found unworkable if it became law. I think the penalty clause of the Bill is objectionable. It provides a penalty for selling seed as No. 1 which does not come up to the requirements of this measure. I want to ask the Minister of Agriculture whether he knows that seed is sold by the wholesale seedsmen of this Dominion as No. 1. I know from personal experience that some of the largest wholesale seedsmen in the country do not sell seeds

Mr. SPROULE.