

eral delegates asked him if he could not compete in wheat. Mr. Bennett replied that he could compete in wheat, but there were a great many other things in which he could not compete against the cheap labor of foreign countries.

Roderick McKenzie said everybody knew where he stood on Free Trade, but the question was how they were to get it. It had been said that they must go outside Canada to understand the politics of Canada, and he had been very interested to read of the struggles of the farmers' organizations of Australia. The Farmers' and Settlers Association of South Australia complained that the farmers were being very badly treated by the Labor party which was in power, but they were not satisfied with the Liberal opposition, and in 1914 formed a farmers' party. The result was that at the ensuing election the votes of those opposed to the Labor party were split and that party was returned triumphantly to power. At the next convention the farmers adopted a resolution stating that the time was opportune for steps to be taken by the Farmers' and Settlers' Association to join forces with all the other interests opposed to Socialism, with a view to forming a united party with a progressive policy. A third party was all right to talk about, but what was the use of taking a course that would be against their own interests, and that they could not successfully carry thru. He moved an amendment similar to the resolution adopted by the Australian farmers.

Are There Two Parties?

T. W. Knowles, of Emerson, supported the third party resolution, and stated that if they did not know that Mr. McKenzie was entirely free from party politics, they would have thought that he was concerned about the interests of one of the parties. They might as well try to drive a six-inch spike with their fists as to get legislation favorable to the farmers from either of the two old parties, which he claimed were really one, and he was for the establishment of a Free Trade party.

Andrew Graham, of Pomeroy, opposed the resolution, and pointed out that many grain growers who were strong partisans a few years ago were now very independent in their views. Let the good work proceed, was his counsel.

J. R. Dutton was for the resolution, and could not understand how any Free Trader could be against it.

R. C. Chaplin, of Nings, was against the third party, and feared that if the Grain Growers went into politics they would wreck the association without accomplishing their purpose.

J. I. Brown and W. H. English also spoke against the resolution, and the latter predicted that if it was carried it would break up the Grain Growers' Association.

J. S. Wood advised the convention to be very careful about passing such a resolution, recalling the days when the Patrons of Industry took such a step and suffered very bitter disappointment. His experience was, he said, that farmers would never put up a campaign fund or even give two or three days of their time to work for a farmers' candidate, and until they had made a good deal of progress he considered it would be unwise to form a new party.

The President's Position

The discussion was brought to a close by a motion proposed by Frank Simpson, of Sheal Lake, that the resolution and amendment be laid on the table. No discussion being possible on such a motion, it was put to the convention at once and carried by a large majority.

The president, who had taken no part in the discussion, expressed his pleasure at the manner in which the subject had been disposed of. Mr. Henderson was nominated last spring as an independent candidate for the federal constituency of Macdonald, and he said that if he had been offered the nomination by either of the political parties he would not have considered the matter for a moment. When he was asked by the people to become an independent candidate, however, he consented, and he hoped that it would be his privilege to go to Ottawa with a number of other representatives of the farmers to proclaim the principles which the Grain Growers' Association stood for. If this resolution had been carried, however, it

would have been necessary for him to go to the people of Macdonald and tell them that he could not be their candidate. If the resolution had been carried the farmers' movement would have been set back fifteen years, and he was too old a man to spend another fifteen years in struggling for what they already had in sight.

FREE WHEAT CANDIDATES

Brandon and Lisgar Seats To Be Contested

Free Wheat was naturally a very live topic at Brandon convention, and resolutions on the question had been sent in from dozens of branches. The one presented to the convention and adopted was, "Resolved, that we endorse the action of the executive of the Manitoba Grain Growers' Association and the Canadian Council of Agriculture in the matter of Free Wheat."

On the program was the question, "What is our next move for Free Wheat?" and this brought out a lively discussion.

Robert Fisher, of Oak Bank, suggested that after the war the farmers should go on strike and produce only enough wheat for home consumption. This proposal, however, was not taken seriously.

Charles Poole, of Manson, suggested that the best way to get Free Wheat was to make it the issue at the next election. He proposed that when the constituencies of Lisgar and Brandon, now unrepresented in the Dominion House, were opened, the association should put candidates in the field and make Free Wheat the sole issue. His resolution also pledged the whole convention to support the Free Wheat candidates and to use every honorable means to secure their election.

R. J. Avison supported, and said he

thought the fight should be made on the single issue of Free Wheat, so that it might be practically a referendum on the subject.

The resolution was carried unanimously.

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