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ed me their agent to stand in their place and fight their battle. I will not give any particulars in connection with it. There were nine elevators in Rothen district and one of the owners travelled with me on the train coming to Regina two years after and said that as a result of the fight I put up I had done him out of \$4,500.

"When in 1905 I was elected as a member of the legislative assembly, I was not elected as a politician at all. I was elected principally because of my association with the Grain Growers' movement. I might give you a further word of explanation by saying that up to the time of the formation of the province I had been a loyal supporter of the Haultain administration and I will go a step further: since that time my personal friendship with Mr. Haultain has not dimmed in the slightest degree, although I have been a supporter of Mr. Scott. I am dwelling on the personal note a little because I am anxious that you delegates should see clearly the fitness of myself and my brother commissioner, Mr. Green, for the office we were chosen to fill as members of this commission. I have not been the best of party politicians since I have been in the assembly. My friend, Mr. Raitton, will bear me out when I say that in the assembly of which I am a member and supposed to be a supporter of the government, I stood up and fought them on my own side of the house in favor of what I thought was in the interest of the farmers of the province. I only mention that personal matter in order to clear the way to give you to understand that in accepting the work that was put on us as a commission there was nothing in the world that any farmer in this province could object to in my accepting the position.

The Elevator Commission

"Let me now remind you of the facts that led up to the appointment of the commission. I was present in the convention that was held in Regina in 1907. This question of marketing grain was up for discussion. Mr. Partridge, who has spoken to you today, had a very skeleton of a scheme which he put before the convention and of which they did not take much notice. Mr. Green also had a scheme which he put before the convention and which they did not do much with. We separated from that convention without coming to any decision at all. We held the next convention at Saskatoon and at that convention two similar schemes were again put before the convention. I have to make the frank confession that I think my friend Mr. Green was not sufficiently well informed. He did not do justice to his scheme and in consequence it was turned down. Mr. Partridge's scheme, which involved a question of public ownership, was discussed and accepted by the convention and endorsed. But do not forget this: these public ownership schemes were not intended to bind us to a fetish in any way at all. They were all proposed as a means of ridding us from the evils that attended the marketing of our grain. I want to point out distinctly that public ownership was not the end we were aiming at. The next convention was held at Weyburn and at that convention we were more decided than ever that a definite and practical and finished remedy should be found for the evils we were suffering from. At this convention I said I would agree to anything that would give to the farmers of this province a remedy against

the exactions made upon them by the grain dealers of the province. That has been my position all through. Therefore, when Mr. Partridge gets up and says it was public ownership we have been striving for, he is wrong. We were only advocating public ownership because that was at the time the best remedy we could see against the evils of private ownership.

Approached the Government

"Last year we met at Prince Albert. Previous to that meeting our friend Mr. Green had appeared before the agricultural committee of the assembly and there had laid out the evils that our farmers were suffering from in the marketing of their grain. He made the suggestion of public ownership. As a member of the house, I was a member of that committee, and I specifically asked Mr. Green this question: 'Is this plan you have laid before us a cast-iron plan which we are called upon to accept or refuse?' Mr. Green replied (and this is on record in the little book you have all seen): 'It is a suggestion, and not a cast-iron plan. If the object we have in view, which is for all time to free the farmers from the monopolist, can be attained by any other plan, we do not mind.'

"All these facts were known to the delegates at last year's convention. Mr. Partridge somewhat misrepresented the case when he spoke this morning. He spoke about some one speaking against public ownership and not being very favorably received. He had reference, of course, to the minister of agriculture, Mr. Motherwell. That was not the case at all. I say distinctly that why Mr. Motherwell was not favorably received was for a different reason altogether. The reason he was not favorably received was that he conveyed the impression that there would be a commission appointed in which the members of this association would be in the minority. (Cries of 'no, no,' and 'correct.') I will not convey any further information because I have made up my mind, whatever may be the decision of this convention, to say nothing I cannot endorse when I read it in the coolest and calmest of blood. I say again, Mr. Motherwell spoke of a commission of five, two of that commission being members of this association. I took the platform and begged the delegates at that convention to stand tight; that we had discussed the question until it had been put into practical form, and to put ourselves in a commission where our opponents would be in a majority would be madness.

Not Anxious to Sit

"Finally, the commission was appointed. You know what happened. The government requested Mr. Green and myself to become members of the commission. In his statement in the House yesterday, Hon. Walter Scott made reference to the fact that neither of us was anxious to accept the position. Why? To stand in front of a troop of farmers and make a speech while they cheer you to the echo is a very delightful thing. I have done it again and again. (Laughter.) I remember a meeting at Radisson where I had a sympathetic audience, and I dwelt on the exactions of the elevator people, and I pleaded as strongly as I could with farmers to stand together and have conditions altered—and I had a good time. After it was over an elevator man said to me: 'You are unfair. There are two sides to this question. Why do you not put both sides?' I replied:

'I have got all I can do to put my own side, and if the other man has got a side, let him get up and put it.' (Laughter.) That is what Mr. Partridge does. (Cheers.) I should be unjust to him if I did not say that he does it well. When I accepted this appointment as a commissioner, I could not do that sort of thing any more. Candidly, I wanted somebody else to be on that commission, so that I could put it right up to him. As members of the commission, we had to see both sides of the question. There were times during the work of the commission when my own feelings alarmed me; when I wondered whether I was really doing justice to the men who had reposed their confidence in me. You will remember reading certain items in the press relative to a row between myself and another member of the commission. Why? Because it seemed to me that we were not getting all we ought to get in favor of the farmers' case, and rather than be closed up in my endeavor to get everything the farmer wanted, I would have broken the commission up.

Endorsed by Grain Growers

"Before we accepted that position, both myself and Mr. Green had the absolute endorsement of the only authority that could speak for every man in the room. We were your servants, selected by you, approved by you and with the stamp of your approval on us. (Applause.) Our work may not have been satisfactory. Our recommendation may not appeal to you. You may vote it down, but do not forget—and I will press it home to you—you will repudiate your own sanctioned servants in this work. We had Mr. McCuaig before us this morning, and he told us about the Manitoba scheme. Were I in the humor, and did it serve any practical end, I might have a word or two to say in criticism. I will only call attention however, to one phrase he used. He said: 'I believe, gentlemen, that the Manitoba system will succeed.' Can you read between the lines? (Loud laughter.) What does it mean? That it is not succeeding at present. That, I think, is a fair inference.

"Nine out of ten of the farmers that came before us to give evidence, when asked if they wanted a scheme like the Manitoba one, said no. This convention may vote for that scheme if they like; but if they do, they vote against the expression of every witness who appeared before us. If you wanted such a scheme, why did you not come before the commission and say so? Mr. Partridge himself said he did not want it, but I am afraid that he has been won over by the blandishments of Mr. McCuaig since. Every member of the executive said he did not want it. I noticed my friend, Mr. Noble, of Oxbow, on the platform when Mr. McCuaig was covering up the weaknesses of his system as well as he could. Mr. Noble clapped his hands very vigorously when Mr. McCuaig was trying to show the beauties of the Manitoba system. But when he asked Mr. Noble if he wanted that system he said he did not. What was the poor commission to do? When you have a dozen witnesses from all over the province come before you and tell you they do not want it, it is like taking a young lady home to your son's, and every one refusing to look at her, and then the boys get mad and grumble afterwards because they couldn't get married. (Laughter.)

Evidence Before Commission

"There were one or two reasons cited by witnesses who came to us against the Manitoba system. One of them was the want of security in patronage of the elevators. We had before us Mr. Simpson of Regina. When we asked him if he wanted the Manitoba system, he said, 'No. If you cannot get a monopoly of all the elevators, do not touch it at all.' Mr. Noble has told us that he did not want a monopoly, and that was the kind of evidence we had to put up with. We had your president (F. M. Gates) before us, and he did not want the Manitoba scheme because of the lack of security. But then, the president is a man of resource. He said to us, 'I would be willing to pledge five cents a bushel on all the wheat I grow that I will take it to the government elevator.' When we asked the others if they would do that, they said no. Mr. Maharg, one of your executives, said that he would mortgage his farm to the government. We asked the other witnesses if they would do that and they said: 'Not on your life.'

"And then there was another reason, that it did not benefit the small farmer. That is the defect of all our proposals for government ownership. So long as a man has a carload of wheat to take, he can store it in the government elevator and it will be in secure hands. And just here, let me make an aside. I have a much better opinion of the government than most people. My experience of politics has not revealed the cesspool of wickedness of which we hear so much. I can make this statement: that during my six years in politics, outside of the session allowance, which I have taken, I have never had one single twenty-five cents directly or indirectly because of my connection with politics. (Applause.)

Bad Scheme for Small Farmers

"To take up the second point again: While the large farmers' grain will be safe in the custody of the government, what does the Manitoba scheme do for the small farmer with a few wagonloads of wheat? Mr. McCuaig told you that in some cases they had amalgamated and sold it at carload prices and the farmers had got the benefit. But he also said that there were a lot of other places where they would not do it. The Manitoba scheme, as it is at present worked, offers no security to the small farmer. Mr. McCuaig will probably pardon me saying this, but I wish to say it in the presence of the president of the Grain Growers' Grain Company. But for the Grain Growers' Grain Company, the government system in Manitoba would have practically died on the threshold. That company sent out fifty buyers, not into fifty places, mark you, but into a great many more places. The buyer would be at one point for two days and then go to another point for two days, and if the farmer at the first place did not catch the Grain Growers' Grain Company's buyer, then he would have to wait until Mr. Buyer came back. Do you think the farmers of this country will be satisfied with that? (No, no.)

Mr. Hordern: "That is a perfectly satisfactory arrangement."

Mr. Langley: "Suppose you were living twenty miles away from the station and knew that the buyer would be in town but two days out of six. You get ready to go on the day that the buyer would be

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