

THE WESTERN FOREST.

Hon. J. A. Calder, Minister of Immigration and Colonization, has given out the following statement dealing with the question of the natural resources of the western provinces:—

"Numerous statements are appearing in the press of western Canada to the effect that the Federal Government has refused to deal with the question of the transfer of the natural resources to the Prairie Provinces. Those responsible for these statements must know that they do not represent the existing situation as regards this problem. Briefly stated, the following are the facts:—

"Early in the year it was decided by Sir Robert Borden, upon the request of Premiers Norris, Martin and Stewart, that the question of the transfer of their resources would be made the subject of discussion at a general provincial conference to be held later in the year, which conference was finally held last month.

"At the conference it was clearly intimated that the Federal Government agreed with the principle of the transfer of the resources, and the whole discussion proceeded along the line of endeavouring to arrive at an agreement on the terms and conditions under which the transfer might be made. All the provinces of Canada, except the Prairie Provinces, maintained that they had an interest in the matter, and that the Prairie Provinces should not be permitted to retain their grants in lieu of land and at the same time have transferred to them their natural resources as well.

"Tentative suggestions were made by the Federal Government to the effect that it might be advisable for the Dominion to retain control and ownership of the forest reserves, national parks, and water-powers, and that in the public interest some provision might be made whereby the Federal Government in the future, if it so desired, could secure limited collieries. These were merely suggestions for discussion.

"At the close of the conference it

was apparent the representatives of the provinces could not agree, and finally the Prairie Provinces, the Eastern Provinces, and British Columbia submitted their views as to the question either by formal resolution or statement.

"As yet the Federal Government has reached no decision regarding the final settlement of the question. The matter is still under consideration, and the purpose of the Government is to endeavour to find an equitable solution of the problem. Any policy which may be formulated must of necessity be submitted to and approved by Parliament. The Government itself cannot decide a question of this nature.

MAKING BUTTONS FROM WOOD

The wooden button industry in the United States has received a decided impetus, as a result of the activities of the Government in the prosecution of the war, according to a bulletin just issued by the United States Tariff Commission. The centre of this industry is in Providence, R.I., although some wooden buttons are being made in other New England cities.

Before the war the industry had an extensive foreign trade, exports going to England, Germany, France, Belgium, Austria and South America. England was perhaps the largest customer until shipments ceased, as a result of Great Britain placing an embargo on the enameled wooden button.

White birch from the forests of New England provides the raw material for manufacturing these wooden buttons. The trees are cut in the winter and the logs are sawed at the mills into squares four feet long, each side measuring from $\frac{1}{2}$ to 4 inches, the squares differing in size. They are seasoned or cured for about six months so that the wood may be worked into all shapes. At the factories these squares are known as "Spool Stock."