

for the gathering, which was presided over by the Premier, were summarized as follows: "Canada possesses one of the largest areas of virgin forest of any country in the world and is ranked by European experts first, or among the first, of the important sources of the world's supply for the future. The preservation of the streams in perennial and constant flow, which is largely controlled by the forests on the watersheds, will have an important influence on the industrial and agricultural development of the Dominion. In all the older provinces the clearing of the soil has been carried to such an extent that the ill effects on the water supply and in agriculture are clearly marked, while in the western prairies the need of sheltering trees for houses and fields is seriously felt by the settlers. The early construction of the Transcontinental Railway and of other railways through our northern forested districts and the consequent opening of those districts to general traffic, will increase the danger from fire which has already been a most active agent of destruction." One direct and practical result of the convention was the passing of a Dominion measure concerned with the preservation of forests and extension of the present reserve system. As the Premier remarked in his speech in the House upon the subject, the object of the Bill is to set aside certain areas in the different Provinces and make of them state forests. "It will not be possible for the Governor-in-Council to alter in any way the areas set apart for these forests, and in this we will be following the examples set by France and Germany. The Government will not have the power, under any circumstances, to alter the area or sell part of these lands. Should a condition of things arise which would make it advisable to alter the area of the forests so created. Parliament alone will be able to do so."

Compulsory Arbitration.

Compulsory arbitration, as a means of settling labour disputes, is announced to have failed in Australia and the Act is to be repealed. The reason given is that the Government has no machinery to enforce the decisions of the arbitrators when they are against the workmen. This would seem to be an excellent reason, not for repealing the Act, but for providing the necessary machinery for enforcing it. If there is any one thing that is going to interfere with the progress of any country, it is such one-sided legislation as this which can be enforced against one party to a contract and not against the other. Every trades union should be registered, and made subject to the law, and if there be any combination of any body of

men, or any importation of strangers from abroad to interfere with the working of the law of the land, they should promptly get what they deserve. Compulsory arbitration of labour disputes is a vital necessity for the labourer no less than for the community.

Australian Tariff Changes.

The new Australian tariff raises the duties on all the principal Australian manufactures, and embraces an elaborate scheme of duties on iron subject to the passage of the iron bonus bill. Great Britain receives a preference on 250 items. The new duties are estimated to produce £800,000 annually. No preference is given to Canada and Sir Wm. Lyne is reported to have stated that the Commonwealth could not accept the Dominion's proposals, particularly in connection with the duties on machinery.

British manufacturing interests evidently consider that the preference extended to them is somewhat like the shopkeeping method of "marking up" prices before making bargain sale discounts. Special dissatisfaction has been felt in Britain on account of the new tariff coming into operation without notice, and representations in reference to the hardship entailed were cabled to the Australian Government, but without effect.

Municipal Ownership.

The City of New York undertook to convert absolutely waste material into electric light by utilizing its garbage as fuel. At a cost of \$50,000 it managed to produce an amount of electricity that a private company can sell at a profit for \$25,000; and this we understand ends the experiment so far as New York is concerned. It will not however prevent some other cities from wanting to see the folly of municipal ownership for themselves. Railway, steamship and manufacturing companies are generally ready to profit by each other's experience, civic corporations seldom. The aldermen and the people they represent are both too ready to back the schemes of theoreticians and faddists with no practical experience and little sense of responsibility.

Pacific Flour Shipments.

Word comes from Vancouver as to considerable shipments of flour from the Ogilvie Company for Chinese and Japanese merchants. The Canadian product is said to be displacing the American article, which is mostly milled from soft wheat of Washington. The Ogilvie Company recently, through Prince Fushimi, presented the Japanese Imperial household with fifty barrels. The gift will assuredly do much toward advertising the Canadian product in Japan.