

A PARLIAMENT of FARMERS



LEST you should think these are photographs of any common convention—such as knights and preceptories or grand lodges—observe the faces, and some of the coats in this congress of 300. There is more behind those coats and faces than meets the eye. Here are more farmers in one picture than we have M. P.'s at Ottawa. And the Parliament of Canada never carried so extensive a programme as the more or less united grain growers of the three prairie provinces did in Winnipeg a few days ago.

And what do they want? Reduction of duties on British goods; reciprocity agreement uniting food-stuffs, farm implements, and machinery, vehicles, fertilizers, etc.; direct taxation on unimproved lands and all incomes over \$4,000, on large inheritances and all profits over 10 per cent.; nationalization of railways—

That's enough for the present. Lloyd George should take that convention into his Cabinet. For boldness and statesmanship of programme we doubt if any similar congress ever held in the world was



ever so important. There was an idea in some people's minds that they came to discuss seed wheat and prices and improvement of roads. Perhaps they did. The grain growers are experts in all these things. They sell wheat on the exchange, and buy it. They buy on the co-operative system. One section operates the elevators of Saskatchewan on a co-operative basis. They are an economic organization of remarkable growth dating back in various forms to 1901, and steadily growing and consolidating since that time. The great Grain Growers' Grain Co. arose out of those various associations. This company has enormous economic power. But there is more than economics. There is politics. In the West these are very often one and the same thing. The convention amalgamated various associations. It did not include the Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevators. There was a reason. But there may come a time when this great organization will merge itself on the movement which it has done so much to create. The reason, then, may be more directly political than economic.