

WITH each successive morning the organized Grain Growers make a new demand upon Parliament. At a meeting of the Council of Agriculture at Winnipeg a few weeks ago it was decided to revive the trade agreement with Washington which the country rejected seven years ago, and to have free trade with Great Britain in rapid marches. The organized farmers of Ontario took a step beyond their Western associates. They adopted the whole Western platform, and also decided that any offer of free trade from Washington must have instant acceptance at Ottawa.

This looks very like an invitation to Washington to make a tariff for Canada, or at least to determine, wholly without regard to Canadian interests, in what articles and products American manufacturers and producers may want the free run of the Canadian market. Still more revolutionary proposals were adopted by the Manitoba Grain Growers at Brandon. It was resolved to demand immediate pledges from members of the House of Commons that they would work and vote at the next session of Parliament to give effect in legislation to the Grain Growers' platform, unless some great national issue which would supersede all domestic issues should arise. It was further resolved that against members who should refuse to give the pledges required, the District Associations should at once call conventions and make all necessary arrangements to nominate, finance and elect candidates who would support the farmers' platform to the last letter.

This reads very like coercion. The Manitoba Grain Growers not only determine to elect members upon their platform, but to control members who have been elected upon other questions and who perhaps entertain old, inherited notions about the freedom of British institutions, the right of independent judgment and the responsibility of elected representatives to all elements of the people. It is de-

manded that members shall effect a fiscal revolution in Canada without consultation with the constituencies, without consideration for the soldiers, for labor, for manufacturers or for merchants, and that they shall absolutely surrender the right of private judgment to a single class organization. One does not believe that these demands express the general feeling of Canadian farmers or even of Western Grain Growers. The war has demonstrated that national feeling is as active, as self-reliant, and as dominant in the West as in the old Provinces. If we can find where lies the national interest there will be as patriotic co-operation for peace as there was for war. But if we begin in the spirit of conflict we shall not discover the common bond of union. If either East or West believes that its true welfare is to be sacrificed to class or national interests, only disaster can result. Does any intelligent Canadian really believe that the manufacturers are a league of robbers, or the Western farmers unpatriotic and irresponsible destructionists?

There could be no more inopportune time for fiscal uncertainty and confusion in Canada. Between 250,000 and 300,000 workers have just been released, or will shortly be released, from munition factories and war contracts. As many soldiers are coming back from Europe to be re-established in industrial and other pursuits. At best the industries face a difficult period. They must adjust themselves to peace conditions and make large expenditures in the process. If they fail to run on full time, fail to find a home market for their goods, or fail to secure export orders, tens of thousands of workers must go without employment and wages must sink to lower levels. If the industries are inactive, merchants must suffer, and clerks, teachers, ministers and all persons on fixed salaries will suffer still more severely by the high cost of living from which farmers derive some advantage. For farmers still enjoy good prices.