

every session is going to prevail; if deputations with a "pull" are allowed to work the strings while the Government dance at the pleasure of those who manipulate the ropes. The system is bad and wants reform.

But supposing one of the political parties promises to eschew wire pulling, and special privileges in connection with the framing of the tariff and to regulate it on an honest independent basis. Well, what of that? Who, in that event, would be the arbiters of our business interests? Simply a Government of lawyers and politicians. Who endowed lawyers and professional politicians with the special knowledge required to frame a tariff for business men? They might be better or worse than their predecessors, but they would not be any better qualified to decide purely business questions, and we would have a repetition of the same old methods that have disgusted business men the last twenty--yes, thirty--years.

Both political parties have officially announced that some kind of a tariff is required to raise a revenue. That much is settled and definite. And what THE DRY GOODS REVIEW contends for is that the kind of tariff we are to have should emanate, not from the politicians but the business men. That can only be done by some open, above-board method of getting at the opinions and wishes of the commercial interests--importer, manufacturer, merchant and consumer.

The Montreal Board of Trade has asked for a commission, or board of customs experts, to decide disputes arising under the tariff. That is good--as far as it goes. But why shouldn't we begin at the beginning and have the tariff itself settled by persons who know something about the matter? Why should we be at the mercy of the professional politicians--of either party--who are not specially endowed with the experience or the capacity required in the circumstances?

If a man is sick he does not send for a veterinary surgeon; if he has a lawsuit he doesn't call in the carpenter; if he is going to enlarge his barn he never thinks of consulting a Cabinet Minister. Why, then, should a business question be entrusted to lawyers and politicians?

Now is the time--when we are on the eve of an election to extort from both parties a definite promise that future changes shall be recommended by our commercial men.



A GOOD SIGN.

It seems probable that this year will be a good one for wheat exports. War in Europe has not broken out, but the demand promises to be good. Shipments via the St. Lawrence route are already being contracted for, and the arrangements for spring shipments are earlier than last year. It is reported that space for 750,000 bushels of wheat and corn has been contracted for, and inquiries for more are recorded. This is an early movement and does not indicate lower prices. No one wants a war, but if one is bound to come--and the European situation is more menacing than it has been any time in the last ten years--the effect on prices would be marked. The Canadian merchant knows what it means when prices for wheat are good, and there is plenty on hand to sell abroad. It is also gratifying to note that the leading dairy authorities believe that 1896 is going to be a satisfactory one. Prices are higher, and the British demand is fully expected to improve. Cheese is now so important a factor in all the provinces that country storekeepers may well be glad to hear of these indications of better times.

The representative of a large loan company doing business in Manitoba and the Territories told the DRY GOODS REVIEW the other day that western farmers were in far better shape after the 1895 crop. The transactions of this concern alone showed that over \$100,000 had been paid off since the crop was gathered, mostly by owners of small farms. The larger proprietors are holding for better prices, and there must be pretty near 75 per cent. of the wheat still to be sold, with good prospect of disposing of it later on. Another such season would make Manitoba trade gilt-edged.

BRITISH PRICES KEEP UP.

It is a remarkable feature of the war scare in Britain that prices, as far as dry goods are concerned, have not been depressed. There was an instant flurry in financial stocks, and a good deal of money lost by speculators in these lines, but in staple dry goods there has been no such slump. The reports from the woolen, cotton and silk manufacturing centres all indicate continued firmness and sustained activity. Of course, in some lines the war scare has actually tended to keep prices up, because the heads of the war and naval departments of Government have had occasion to go over their stores, note what shortages there are, and authorize replenishment. Take the case of woollens, for example: large orders have been placed for blankets and clothing, which tends to keep the mills busy, and acts directly on the foreign markets.

THE PRIESTLEY FIRM AND FABRICS.

Among the front rank men connected with the Bradford trade, says the Bradford, England, correspondent of an American exchange, the name of Messrs. Briggs Priestley & Sons stands forth very prominently. "No Yorkshire manufacturer's dress goods are so well known on this side as Priestley's, and I hardly think any maker's goods have been shipped across the Atlantic so extensively as this firm's production. Mr. Briggs Priestley, member of the British House of Commons for one of the leading textile divisions of Yorkshire, established the firm, and has risen from the position of an ordinary working mill hand to one of great commercial importance, of personal affluence, and also of social and political eminence. Although primarily and pre-eminently a maker of ladies' wear, yet the entire business has become one of the largest and most impor-