

protesting against the action of the government. However, their protests will not be very impressive at Ottawa in view of the fact that many of these same farmer organizations were objecting with equal vigor against the wheat board when they thought the board was securing a price beneath the American guaranteed minimum. The farmers themselves, however, are divided on this subject, as Hon. T. A. Crearer, the recognized agrarian leader, spoke against wheat control in the house.

Tariff Inquiry Will be Extensive

Sir Henry Drayton is preparing to hold the long-delayed tariff enquiry in the early fall. It is not yet decided whether the inquiry will be by a committee of the cabinet or a specially appointed board. It has been decided, though that the inquiry will not be behind closed doors, that it will be broad in its scope, thorough, and will give every section of the country and every class an opportunity to be heard. This will be the first systematic tariff inquiry since 1908, when a committee of the cabinet, headed by Hon. W. S. Fielding, went over Canada on a similar mission.

Sir Henry, by the way, has instituted a simple but practical reform in presenting the Dominion financial statement in such a way that the public can more clearly realize what it means. In former statements it was the custom to place various kinds of non-active assets against the gross public debt, the result being to give the country a false impression of its actual net obligations. Sir Henry has written off a number of non-active assets, such as loans to the G.T.P. and C.N.R., which, for the time being, at all events, are really not assets at all, with the consequence that the public is enabled to know exactly what is the net debt. Another promised improvement is tabulation of the financial statement in such a way that the amount of revenue from different sources is clear. This is particularly necessary now that there is so much direct taxation.

Central Purchasing Commission

When the government appoints a central purchasing commission to buy for all of the departments an entirely new board is likely to be selected. At present there are two commissioners, Sir Hormisdas Laporte and Mr. H. W. Brown. It is known that Sir Hormisdas is anxious to return to his own business, and Mr. Brown will probably return to his permanent post at the Militia Department. The new board will consist of a chairman and two members.

Pensions May be Commuted

Commutation of pensions, or payment to pensioners of a lump sum in final settlement of their pension claims, as provided for by amendments to the Pension Act adopted by parliament, is a matter that is now engaging the attention of the Board of Pension Commissioners. In a memorandum the board points out that the important point for pensioners to bear in mind is that no pensioner need have his pension commuted unless he desires to do so. It is emphasized that only pensioners with disabilities between 5 and 14 per cent. may have their pensions commuted. Pensioners entitled to commutation of pension will be forwarded a statement within the next two months, in which they will be asked to decide whether or not they wish to have their pensions commuted or continued for the period of their disability. All cases will be dealt with automatically, and it is not necessary for pensioners to communicate with the board.

Labor Supply for West

The question of a supply of help to take off the west's crop was discussed a few days ago at a meeting of railroad representatives with the department of labor. Through the employment service, a careful survey of the labor requirements for the harvest was made and it appeared that about 40,000 harvesters would be needed, of whom probably 10,000

could be secured through the offices of the employment service in the prairie provinces, and an effort would be made to recruit the remaining 30,000 in the east. Of this number 13,000 will be required for Manitoba, fifteen thousand for Saskatchewan, and 2,000 for Alberta. It was agreed at the conference that harvest excursions will be despatched west from all the eastern provinces in order to distribute the burden of supplying this volume of labor over all parts of the east as evenly as possible. At different times in the past, objection has been taken by some provinces to the recruiting of harvesters within their boundaries, but it is obvious that no discrimination in any of the provinces should be allowed. All provinces are alike interested in the successful harvesting of the western grain crop, as the industrial prosperity of the whole country is vitally affected thereby.

Excursions from Coast

The decision to send harvest excursions out of British Columbia is a new departure, agreed upon with a view to further lessening the strain upon the east, and also with a view to absorbing any labor that may be available on the coast. It is thought that probably about 5,000 harvest hands will be secured in British Columbia, most of whom will be placed in the province of Alberta. It is probable that the first excursion from the east will reach Winnipeg August 10th. The Manitoba harvest will start prior to that date according to the present indications, but the employment service plans to recruit a sufficient number of workers from the local labor supply to meet the demand until the first quota of workers from the east arrives. The Saskatchewan and Alberta harvests are expected to commence about the middle of August. Much of the United States harvest will have been completed before a beginning is made in the Canadian west, and numbers of these men should be available for the Canadian harvest. Negotiations with the United States Department of Labor in the matter are now in progress. Harvest hands from the United States whose services are utilized in this way will be given temporary entry into Canada and will be returned immediately after the harvesting is completed. This should prevent the drawing of labor too heavily from the eastern provinces.

Trade Position Officially Explained

On July 15th Sir George Foster, minister of trade and commerce, issued a statement to the effect that there was no embargo to prevent a Russian citizen making purchases in Canada, or opening a place of business here. He said: "With reference to various rumors which have been afloat and the statements purported to have been made by various parties as to trade between Russians and Canadians, it may be stated:—

"(1) No recognition has been asked or is called for of the Soviet or any other Russian government.

"(2) Russian correspondents from the United States and elsewhere have been informed that there is no embargo in Canada against exports destined for any part of Russia and that it is open to any Russian to make legal purchases from Canadians on such terms and conditions as they will mutually agree upon and that no restrictions will be placed upon either the making of the contract or the carrying out of the same by export or otherwise which is not at the same time applicable to transactions between Canadians and peoples of other countries, and that the Canadian government is not in any way supporting by advance credits or otherwise any such transactions between Russians and Canadians, nor is it the intention of the Canadian government to make any credits in relation thereto.

"Any Russian individual or corporate company is at liberty to set up his place of business in exactly the same manner as the citizens of any other friendly country. No recognition has been made of the Soviet or any other form of Russian government by the minister of trade and commerce or by the government of Canada."