

TRADE AGREEMENT WITH WEST INDIES.

The principal changes effected by the Bank Act (chapter 9) are as follows: (1) making more secure for all interests affected the obtaining of a certificate to carry on the business of banking; (2) making it obligatory to have a shareholders' audit; (3) provision for the granting of loans to farmers on the security of their grain; (4) returns to be made by banks as to interest and discount rates charged; (5) central reserves: deposits to be made by the banks in the reserves of gold or Dominion notes. Against these deposits the bank may issue its own notes. Gold reserves will be under the control of trustees, three to be appointed by the Bankers' Association, with the approval of the Minister of Finance, and one by the Minister of Finance. The Minister shall from time to time, not less frequently than twice in each year, cause an inspection and audit of the gold coin and Dominion notes held by the trustees to be made by officers of the Department of Finance.

An Act was passed to authorize the construction of branch lines in connection with the Intercolonial Railway. Votes were passed to provide for improved terminal facilities for Halifax and for St. John Harbour, Quebec, Toronto, Vancouver, Victoria, Port Arthur and Fort William, French River improvements, Red River, St. Andrew's Locks and Dam Construction. Other acts provide for a tri-weekly instead of a weekly trans-Atlantic steamship service, an inter-imperial telegraphic service at greatly reduced rates and for the establishment of a parcel post system. The agreement with the West Indies and the treaty with Japan were ratified.

The Agricultural Instruction Act, assented to on June 6, 1913, repeals chapter 3 of the Statutes of 1912 and provides for the appropriation of a sum of \$10,000,000 during the next ten years for the purpose of aiding and advancing the farming industry by instruction in agriculture, including the work carried on by the Veterinary Colleges. The sum available under this Act for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1914, is \$700,000, for 1915 \$800,000, for 1916 \$900,000, for 1917 \$1,000,000, and for 1918 to 1923 \$1,100,000 annually.

Trade Agreement with West Indies.—Following a suggestion made by the Canadian Minister of Finance (the Hon. W. S. Fielding) in a report to the Committee of the Privy Council on August 31, 1908, His Majesty, on the recommendation of the Imperial Government, appointed on August 9, 1901, a Royal Commission to inquire into the present conditions and future prospects of trade between Canada and the West Indian Colonies and to suggest measures for promoting closer trading relations between them. The Commissioners were Lord Balfour of Burleigh, K.T. (Chairman), the Hon. W. S. Fielding, the Hon. William Paterson (Canadian Minister of Customs), Sir John Dickson-Poynder, Bt., D.S.O., M.P. (now Lord Islington), and Sir Daniel Morris, K.C.M.G. (formerly Imperial Commissioner of Agriculture for the West Indies). Having taken evidence in Canada, the West Indies and London during the years