

SESSIONAL PAPER No. 33

IMPERIAL WAR CONFERENCE.

Further meetings of the Imperial War Conference, including representatives of His Majesty's Government, of the self-governing Dominions and India, took place in London in the months of March and April, 1918, important matters of a confidential nature being discussed. Canada was represented at this conference by the Prime Minister, Sir Robert Borden, Sir George Perley, the Hon. Robert Rogers, and the Hon. J. D. Hazen.

QUESTIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES.

(1) *St. Mary and Milk Rivers.*—The question of the apportionment of the waters of the St. Mary and Milk rivers between the two countries as provided for in article 6 of the Boundary Waters Treaty of 1909 had been considered by the International Joint Commission on several occasions, and in consequence of an announcement by the Acting Chairman of the United States section at the St. Paul session that the hearing would have to proceed upon the initiative of the Commission itself without stated issues, the United States Government on the 7th November, 1917, addressed a communication to the commission setting forth the view that that tribunal was not competent to pass upon the interpretation of article 6 of the treaty unless some matter of difference as to its meaning had arisen and been referred to the commission; and stating that for this reason no conclusion reached by the tribunal in this matter would be considered binding by the United States Government.

In April, 1918, Mr. A. P. Davis, Director of the United States Reclamation Service, was appointed as the United States Officer to undertake the measurement and apportionment of the waters of the two rivers, and on the 24th May, 1918, an order was issued by the commission instructing the duly appointed officers of the two countries, as to the steps for carrying out such apportionment.

(2) *Fisheries Commission.*—In December, 1917, Chief Justice the Hon. J. D. Hazen, Mr. G. J. Desbarats, C.M.G., Deputy Minister of the Naval Service, and Mr. W. A. Found, Superintendent of Fisheries, were appointed commissioners to consider, together with United States Commissioners, the Hon. W. C. Redfield, Secretary of Commerce, Mr. E. F. Sweet, Assistant Secretary of Commerce, and Dr. Hugh M. Smith, Commissioner of Fisheries, outstanding fisheries questions. Meetings were held at Washington and Boston in January, 1918, and later at points on the Pacific coast, as a result of which there is every reason to expect a satisfactory arrangement in regard to these questions.

(3) *Renewal of Arbitration Convention of 1908.*—On the 3rd June, 1918, an agreement was concluded by His Majesty's Government with the United States extending, for a further period of five years, the Arbitration Convention originally entered into in 1908, by which provision is made for reference to the Hague Tribunal of questions of difference between the two countries. The first renewal was made in May, 1913.

(4) *Fur-seals question.*—The stipulated annual payment of ten thousand dollars due to Canada while the killing of seals is suspended on the United States sealing rookeries, was made for the period ending the 24th August, 1917. A report on the condition of the herd, made 21st November, 1917, showed it to consist of four hundred and sixty-eight thousand seals; killing was resumed by the United States in the season of 1917, but Canada did not become entitled to the delivery of any share of United States skins owing to the treaty provisions arranging for the reimbursement of the United States Government for the advance payment of two hundred thousand dollars made on the conclusion of the treaty, and for the annual payments of ten thousand dollars made during the suspension of killing.