

anything to do with the project which was discussed before the Imperial Conference? He will pardon me if I speak on this subject while he is giving such valuable information to the House, but I think he will remember that at the beginning of the war—he was not in the Government then—we passed legislation giving the Imperial Government a sort of prior right to all oil-bearing lands. My hon. friend will, of course, understand the reason for this. The British navy depended considerably on a constant supply of oil during the war, and it was felt that it was necessary as much as possible to corral, so to speak, the oil-bearing lands in the various dominions. Now I would like to know if the company to which I have referred has anything to do with the project of which we have heard.

Mr. ROWELL: I am afraid I cannot fully answer that question as I am not familiar with some of the matters to which my hon. friend has alluded. With reference to the Shale Oil Company, the hon. Minister of Immigration (Mr. Calder) in his answer indicated that the application had not received favourable consideration at the hands of the Government.

Mr. LEMIEUX: Is that final?

Mr. ROWELL: So far as I know, it is. As it is not in my department I cannot undertake to answer the question, but that is the general situation as I understand it. As regards the other company to which my hon. friend has referred, I am not familiar with it and know nothing of its operations.

I can only say that any company that is operating out there must be operating on the same terms as any other oil prospector under the provisions of the law governing the opening up and developing of oil lands. I may say, in answer to my hon. friend's general observation as to petroleum, that the prospecting in England is being done under the direction of Viscount Harcourt who, as chairman of the committee, presented a confidential statement to the conference disclosing how vital this oil question was to the Imperial navy as well as to the general mercantile marine and other services in the Empire. Viscount Harcourt very strongly emphasized the importance of developing all the oil supplies of the Empire and making them available for the purposes of the Empire particularly in times of stress. The resolution passed at the conference was as follows:—

The Conference takes note of the Memorandum on the question of Petroleum, and, having regard to the great and growing importance of petroleum and its products for

Naval, Military, and industrial purposes, desires to commend the suggestions contained in the memorandum to the serious consideration of the Governments concerned.

That memorandum has been referred to all the Governments of the Dominions for their consideration.

It was decided at the conference to have a gathering, after the war was over, of representatives of the statistical branches of the Governments of the Empire with a view of considering the question of establishing an Imperial Bureau of Statistics. (This is dealt with by resolution No. 8:—

The Imperial War Conference having considered the correspondence as to the improvement of Imperial Statistics arising out of the recommendations of the Dominion Royal Commission, is in favour of the proposal to hold a Conference of Statisticians after the war, and that such Conference consider the establishment of an Imperial Statistical Bureau under the supervision of an Inter-Imperial Committee.

Another matter that came up for consideration at the conference was the report of the Imperial Graves Commission. The report was accepted by the first resolution of the conference:

The Conference desires to place on record its appreciation of the labours of the Imperial War Graves Commission and is in favour of the cost of the carrying out the decisions of the Commission being borne by the respective Governments in proportion to the numbers of the graves of their dead.

I should think the House would be interested in knowing just what the recommendations of the commission were in reference to the decoration of the graves of the dead. I turn to page 227 of the report which sets out the decorations which are to be placed over the soldiers' graves. The report recommends:

(i) That the principle of equality of treatment laid down by the Commission should be carried out by the erection over the graves of all officers and men in the war cemeteries abroad of headstones of uniform dimensions, though with some variety of pattern.

(ii) That each regiment should have its own pattern of headstone, to be erected over the grave of every man of that regiment wherever he may be buried, and that regimental feeling should be consulted as to the design of the headstones.

(iii) That there should be carved on each headstone the rank, name, regiment, and date of death of the man buried beneath it, and that relatives should be allowed at their own cost to add a short inscription of the nature of a text or prayer, subject to the approval of the Commission.

(iv) That in every cemetery there should be two central monuments: (a) at the eastern end, a great memorial stone upon broad steps and bearing some appropriate phrase or text, and (b) elsewhere in the cemetery, a cross.