

ought to be reduced. Second. The very high duty on the raw material, which, in my opinion, ought to be reduced. Third. The prohibition of the importation of oil in tank-cars which should be removed. If they would make the changes I have urged upon them they would confer a great benefit upon the consumers of coal oil in this country, and I am sure they would receive the blessings of the consumers, if not the blessings of the few oil men. I have shown you that the industry is an extensive one and requires the careful consideration of its interests. The Government should consider the interests of the consumers also, and I hope that next week, when the Government declare its policy on this question, it will be found that it has done something in the interest of the people of Canada by reducing the duty on coal oil.

Mr. MONCRIEFF. Mr. Speaker, the motion in your hands is one for which I can certainly ask of this House its most careful consideration. Before this House is in a position to decide one way or the other it is most important that the members should be possessed of the facts concerning this business. It requires its most serious consideration, for fear that we may do an injury which we do not desire to do, to any particular trade or any large number of our fellow-citizens in this country. It is under these circumstances, representing, as I do, one of the ridings of Lambton, that I feel very deeply the responsibility that rests upon myself in endeavouring, in my humble way, to represent fairly before this House the industry which exists in that county. Sir, I refuse to treat this question in any other than in a broad and national spirit.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Hear, hear.

Mr. MONCRIEFF. Yes; you may say "hear, hear," and I say "hear, hear." also—I refuse to deal with the question in any other way. True it is, that the industry is confined, at the present moment, so far as developed, to the county of Lambton; but surely for all that it is a Canadian industry; it is one of the most important of Canadian industries; it is an industry which is of so important a character that its destruction would prevent the development of the oil regions of Canada for a long time to come, if not for ever, and would remove from the minds of Canadians any idea of further developing the oil resources of Canada. The petroleum wealth of the county of Lambton is as much a part of the national wealth of the Dominion as the petroleum wealth of the United States is part of the wealth of that country. Do you think that they will not guard their petroleum industry because it is confined to the states of Ohio, Pennsylvania and one or two other places? Certainly they will. It is to-day one of the greatest industries of the United States, and has been developed there in a manner almost unprecedented in the history of the world.

Mr. MACDONALD (Huron).

Sir, I repudiate the statesman, and I would repudiate any man in this House, who would be so narrow and so contracted in his views as to refuse to look upon this question in a national light. The production of crude oil, as I stated, is alone being successfully carried on in the county of Lambton; but is it not well known to this House—is it not well known to Canadians—that the county of Lambton is by no means the only place in this country where oil is to be obtained? It is well known that in the Athabasca region we have to-day a very large section which by a report made to the Senate has shown to embrace an oil territory and which, when developed, will be larger than the Russian and the American fields put together. Then let us pass eastward. It is well known that there is oil in the Gaspé district. My hon. friend from that district (Mr. Joncas) tells me that an English company with a capital of £330,000 sterling, have already spent nearly \$220,000 in operations in that district. He showed me a letter yesterday from one of his constituents in Gaspé, some one, I presume, connected with the company, saying that if any change of tariff was made which would affect that industry in this country, these men would have to cease their operations, because their prospects would be ruined, and they would have no object whatever in carrying on business, feeling, as they would, that the moment that they discovered oil the Americans would control the market, and they themselves would get no return for the capital they had invested. I think, considering the great importance of this industry, the House will permit me to read a short extract from a lecture delivered by Mr. Marvin before the Royal Engineers, at Chatham, England, about three years ago. He says:

The area of 40,000 miles recommended to be reserved by no means represents the total, which one witness estimated at 100,000 miles of oil-bearing territory. To avoid minute details of a region of which few maps in England give an accurate representation, I may say, in general terms, that if the reader find Calgary, a well-known station on the Canadian Pacific Railway, and strike about a couple of hundred miles due north to Edmonton, which is connected with the station by a coach road, he will reach a fringe of this great oil region. From the Edmonton district the oil belt stretches the whole distance in a north-westerly direction to the mouth of the Mackenzie River; a length of quite 2,000 miles as the crow flies. The Athabasca River runs through the middle of the oil district, which includes the whole of the Lesser Slave Lake on the one hand, and touches the shores of the Beaver Lake on the other. The Peace River is entirely included in the district, from the moment it quits the Rocky Mountains until, with the Athabasca, it flows into the Great Slave Lake, a course of over a thousand miles; and from Fort Smith, close to where they jointly flow into the lake, to the mouth of the Mackenzie River, a navigable run of 1,360 miles, there is oil the whole way. The general area is larger than that of all the petroleum districts of the present oil-producing countries put together, and the selection of the best southern section as a Crown domain is a measure that should be copied by the Indian Government without delay.