

Mr. COOTE: May I ask whether any work is still being carried on in Ontario in connection with the peat industry, and if so, how much will be spent on it this year? Is it intended to carry on that work any longer?

Mr. GORDON: The investigation in connection with the peat industry covered quite a number of years. If my recollection serves me aright it was started about 1908 or 1909, and the main effort has been at Alfred in the county of Prescott. The work first was carried on under the auspices of the department; then a fuel committee was formed, and the work grew to some pretensions, at least as far as the expense was concerned.

Mr. COOTE: Does the minister know about how much has been spent on it?

Mr. GORDON: Yes; to date there is \$352,445.71 charged against it, with certain small credits which may be taken into consideration, amounting to about \$25,000 or \$30,000, leaving a net expenditure of about \$323,000. As the hon. member for Macleod well knows, at the time the peat was being investigated the fuel problem of this country was not a problem of the producer. It was rather a problem of the consumer, and I think in the main that investigation into the possibility of peat as a fuel could be justified. Errors may have been made during the course of the years, but at any rate, with the abundance of fuel available in this country at the present time and the difficulty of keeping coal mines working, I seriously question if we will continue the investigation of peat as a fuel for a long time to come. Certainly the government will not pursue the investigation further in Ontario.

Mr. COOTE: It is not the intention to pursue the investigation further this year?

Mr. GORDON: No.

Mr. BRADETTE: I should like to ask the minister if the government of Ontario has asked for any help, or if any help has been given, in the development of the lignite field north of the town of Cochrane, at Blacksmith rapids?

Mr. GORDON: If my hon. friend means cash advances, this government has made none. However, when those lignite fields were discovered and the development started, the department, following the policy which has prevailed for years, made an investigation from the departmental standpoint in order to add to their knowledge of that field. Also, at the request of the Ontario government,

they have carried on certain tests of those lignite fields in order to determine the fuel value. I believe the results of those tests were made public, although I am not sure about that.

Mr. NEILL: I should like to ask the minister if he can give us some description or summary of the work carried on last spring at the request of the government of British Columbia. There was an agreement made with the government of British Columbia to test some ten or twelve carloads of the different varieties of coal, and through the kindness of the government of British Columbia I have seen a highly technical report in connection with those tests. However, that report contained nothing of what might be called practical benefit to the ordinary man in the street. The idea was to test this coal to see what kind was best suited to be pulverized, for instance, and what treatment was best calculated to produce the best results with coal from the different mines. This is a matter of great importance to British Columbia, because I believe in this way we will find uses for the abundant coal supply which we cannot sell.

Mr. GORDON: About ten tests were made of different coals at the request of the British Columbia government, under different boiler ratings, and reports of those various tests were sent to the provincial government. I must confess that I struggled with the reports myself, and found them too technical to understand. The tests are being carried on with respect to the coals most suitable for coking purposes, and these tests already have opened up the possibility of finding customers for western coal, particularly in Manitoba.

Mr. NEILL: I do not think there is much need for information with regard to the coking qualities of the coal, because in years gone by we have had practical demonstrations. If I remember correctly there were quite a few coking ovens at Union Bay on Vancouver island, using Vancouver island coal, and there was a coking plant at Fernie in connection with the Crowsnest pass coal mines. If we have the information both with regard to Vancouver island and Fernie, I would suggest that we do not need to conduct further experiments along that line.

I believe we should attempt to demonstrate the possibility of using British Columbia coal in pulverized form. The other day I visited the plant which heats this and a number of other buildings. Last year the Department of Public Works installed a system for using pulverized coal, and I am told that it has