

*Alluvial Gold-mining.*

The Board, having inquired into the matter, recommended the Government that alluvial gold-mining should not be considered an essential industry, and pointed out that it had been informed that owing to the excess-profits tax there is reason to believe that alluvial gold-mining was not being carried on to the best advantage, inasmuch as some claims were being worked only to produce an amount equal to that which had been produced in previous years, whereas if the tax were not in operation a larger quantity of gold could probably be obtained with the same expenditure of labour.

*Quartz Gold-mining.*

The Board, at the instance of the Minister of Munitions, looked into some matters relating to the gold-mining industry.

*Dyes.*

The Board also inquired into certain questions relating to the export of dyes from Great Britain which are required in the woollen-mill industry, and made recommendations to the Minister in Charge of the Department of Munitions and Supplies with a view to securing continuance of supplies needed for the Dominion.

*Shortage of Paper.*

Since the Board took office it has had the honour of being specially requested by the Government to advise upon several matters which were of pressing importance. In May the Minister of Customs placed before the Board for its consideration the question of the threatened shortage of supplies of news printing-paper, likely to be caused by lack of shipping facilities. The Board recommended the Minister to make further inquiries from the newspaper-proprietors as to how far they desired relief in connection with their advertising contracts, and as to what proposals they have to make for the reduction in the number of pages or the size of their issues. The Board advised that in view of the shortage of ships to carry supplies the Minister should inform newspaper-proprietors that all serial and other matter which is not of daily interest should be deleted, with a view to reducing the size of, if not entirely abolishing, the issue of supplements. The Board was further of opinion that in many cases newspapers could be combined with great advantage to the Dominion.

*Shortage of Petrol.*

The Minister of Customs also referred to the Board the question of the shortage of petrol-supplies. The Commissioners made careful inquiries, and the Board reported its findings to the Minister.

*INQUIRIES.*

The Board has conducted several special inquiries respecting subjects which seemed to demand attention as vitally affecting the efficiency of the Dominion. For the purpose of some of the inquiries public advertisements were inserted in the daily newspapers notifying the Board's intention to deal with such matters, and inviting interested parties to tender evidence. During the month of April inquiries upon these lines were conducted respecting the advisableness of the restriction, continuance, or abolition during war conditions of agricultural and pastoral shows, amusements (including picture-theatres), and sports (including racing). Each Commissioner sitting as a Royal Commission received evidence in the principal centres in his own district, and by this means the whole of the Dominion was covered in about a fortnight. The evidence so obtained was considered by all the Commissioners, and at the following monthly meeting of the Board recommendations were submitted to the Government.

*Agricultural and Pastoral Shows.*

The Board reported that it affirmed the educative value of agricultural and pastoral shows, and was of opinion that under present war conditions the continuance of such shows is not inimical to the public welfare.

*Horse-racing.*

In the matter of horse-racing the Board reported that it was of opinion that racing is non-essential, and that no man should be exempted from military service owing to his connection with or employment in racing or the breeding or handling of horses for racing purposes; that during the continuance of the war and for six months thereafter no special trains should be run nor any railway facilities given by means of special concessions in rates or otherwise in connection with race meetings, either for passengers or for the carriage of horses; that during the continuance of the war and for six months thereafter races should be held upon the following public holidays only: Boxing Day, New Year's Day, Anniversary Day, Easter Monday, King's Birthday, Labour Day, and after 2 p.m. on the statutory weekly half-holiday.

*Picture-shows.*

In the matter of amusements the Board reported that it considered that the picture-show industry, both wholesale and retail, should be regarded as non-essential; that it recommended that no exemption from military service should be granted to any men engaged in the industry; and that no permits should be issued during the continuance of the war and for six months thereafter for the opening of any new picture-theatres; also that no building permits should be granted during the war and for six months thereafter for the erection of or alteration to any building for use as a theatre or picture-show. The Board further recommended the Government that it should consider the advisableness of instituting a censorship of theatrical and picture-