

would, in the long run, be effected by a regard for efficiency, and a road of the highest standard known to modern engineering was accordingly decided upon.

The work of constructing the Government portion of this road, which was to run from Winnipeg to Moncton was entrusted to a Commission known as the National Transcontinental Railway Commission, and the work of construction both as to route and standard was carried out by this Commission in accordance with the terms of the Act respecting the Transcontinental Railway as passed by Parliament.

Effort to Discredit Laurier Administration

Since the Conservative party came into power in September 1911, it has sought by every conceivable means to find something which would reflect upon the Laurier Administration. Royal Commissions have been appointed by the score. Every branch of the Administration has been investigated. Departmental files have been searched and ransacked and not a tittle of information has been brought to light which reflects in any way upon an Administration which covered a period of fifteen years.

Among Commissions appointed with this end in view was one of which Mr. George Lynch-Staunton, and Mr. F. P. Gutelius were the members. This commission was appointed in January 1912, and it was given the task of investigating the manner in which the National Transcontinental railway Commission had carried out the work of construction on the N.T.R. Here it was thought, a case could surely be made out which would attract public attention. And for two years at \$65.00 a day, the Commissioners worked to this end.

The personnel of the Commission, the methods by which it conducted its inquiry, the manner in which its report was presented to Parliament and the report itself, all disclose the partisan political purpose which the Commission was intended to serve. Notwithstanding, the report of the Commission reflects in no particular upon any member of the Laurier Administration, nor in any specific manner upon any member of the National Transcontinental Commission, nor for that matter upon any individual or group of individuals having to do with the carrying out of this gigantic undertaking. Is it not the highest commendation conceivable that after a two years' search, with all the powers of a Royal Commission, the Commissioners have been unable to bring home to a single individual a charge of profiting by graft on an undertaking which has been carried on over a period of nearly a dozen years and involved an outlay of millions of public funds?

The report is in the most general terms, critically analyzed it comes down in the main pretty much to a declaration that had a road of inferior standard and quality been constructed a smaller expenditure of money would have been required. In the loose and general manner of the whole report, it names in round figures the sum of \$40,000,000 as the sum that might have been saved, a point which few will be inclined to dispute, granted it could be shown that a road of inferior quality were as good a national investment as one of the highest standards known.

The Investigating Commission and Its Rewards

Look first at the personnel of the Commission and its rewards! For duties such as this Commission was expected to perform, it might reasonably have been expected that as its Chairman, some member of the Judiciary, wholly removed from party politics, and accustomed to the impartial weighing of evidence, or some engineer highly skilled in the special technical knowledge required, would have been selected. Mr. George Lynch-Staunton, the Chairman appointed, was neither the one nor the other. Mr. Lynch-Staunton is quite as well known in his profession for his staunch and aggressive Conservative tendencies as for his legal attainments. Even while drawing a salary from the Government as Commissioner in this important inquiry, he found it impossible to refrain from participating in the South Bruce campaign in the interests of the Conservative candidate. In addition to fees obtained in the regular practice of his profession, he received for services in the preparation of the report the sum of \$24,038. Mr. Gutelius, the other member of the Commission was at the time of his appointment, an American citizen, employed in the capacity of a Divisional Superintendent by the Canadian Pacific Railway, Company, a rival of the National Transcontinental. Mr. Gutelius was, to use the expression of the Minister of Railways which reveals the known close connection between the C.P.R. and the Government "loaned" to the Government by the Canadian Pacific for the purpose of this inquiry. After serving a little over a year as investigating Commissioner, Mr. Gutelius who had become naturalized in the interval, was appointed in preference to all other British subjects, the General Manager of the Canadian Government Railway system, at a salary of \$20,000 per annum. For his services in connection with the preparation of the report Mr. Gutelius received \$27,465, and in addition to that amount some \$15,000 as General Manager of the Intercolonial Railway within the period between the appointment of the Commissioners and their signing of the report.

Besides the amounts paid the Commissioners as salary and which total \$42,465 an additional \$11,884 was granted by the Government as allowance for their travelling and incidental expenses. Whether it was because Mr. Gutelius was not a British subject at the time of his appointment or for some other reason, the Commissioners were not specially sworn, as is customary in the case of all Royal Commissions, "to faithfully and impartially perform their duties." Nor did the Commissioners when conducting their inquiry hold their sittings in public, or call to appear before them many of the parties on whom it was intended the report should reflect. Whatever evidence they took was taken in private. They were both counsel for the prosecution, and judges as to the conclusions to be drawn from the evidence they sought.

The manner of presentation of the report to Parliament serves also to disclose the political purpose it was intended to serve. After being two years in course of preparation the report was presented in typewritten form and forthwith taken away to be printed before any member of Parliament had a chance to see and examine either the report itself or the evidence. In advance even of this, a partisan press report had