

people of the west that he challenged investigation; yet three times in this House he and his followers had voted down any effective investigation whatever into these matters. Moreover, he challenged comparison, and we have heard the statement made by him and by the Minister of Railways and Canals and by other members on that side of the House and repeated in their subsidized press throughout the country, that the building of the National Transcontinental railway must be accompanied by this huge expenditure, at least three times greater than that stated by the government in the first instance, because all government undertakings are so accompanied. I desire to inform the Prime Minister and the Finance Minister that this has not been the experience of the people of Ontario in connection with their government because I have the authority of members of the Ontario government not more than six weeks or two months ago that the estimates which they made for very extensive works in Toronto and elsewhere have been verified, nay, that the expenditure in more than one case has been well within the estimates submitted to parliament by the Ontario government. So it is idle to tell the people of this country that this huge increased expenditure is absolutely necessary, and it is idle to tell the people of the west, or the people of the east of Canada, or the members of this parliament, that my right hon. friend challenges investigation. He has been challenged over and over again to give investigation, and on not one of the three occasions has he ventured to accept the challenge.

Then, on the first of April, 1909, as recorded in 'Hansard' at page 3723, my hon. friend from St. Anne (Mr. Doherty), in a moderate and reasonable speech, urged upon the government a further inquiry into the several departments. I will not go over the arguments which he used. He quoted from leading Liberal organs, and showed from their statements that while the election of 1908 was in a certain sense a tribute to the Prime Minister's personality, it was not intended or desired by the Liberals of this country to choke further investigation or to put aside any efforts to purge the public departments of that cloud of suspicion which was hanging over them. One of these journals referred to the Prime Minister as the Canadian Hercules, whose duty it would be to cleanse these Augean stables, to restore to the country and to the departments of government their good name, and I think one journal said that in this humbler work the Prime Minister might find as high a tribute to his memory as in any work in which he had been engaged during the twelve years in which he had been in power. My hon. friend from St. Anne referred to all this, and made almost a personal appeal to the Prime

Minister to have an investigation, and concluded by moving this resolution:

That in order to lift the cloud of suspicion that rests upon the administration of the various departments, to satisfy the demand of the country for honest and businesslike methods, and to purge the public service of inefficiency, reckless waste and corrupt practices, it is advisable and necessary in the public interest that a thorough and untrammelled investigation be made by a competent business commission into the workings of all the great spending departments of government.

What was the answer of the Prime Minister? It was no answer at all—rather a mere quip. He said he was surprised at the hon. member for St. Anne, that to the pure all things are pure, and therefore my hon. friend from St. Anne must put aside all these suspicions and regard all the departments of the government as absolutely pure; and he called upon his followers to vote down the resolution, which they did.

Then, on the 15th of April, 1909, as recorded in 'Hansard' at page 4313, my hon. friend from St. John (Mr. Daniel) moved:

That in the opinion of this House in view of the serious character of the matters aforesaid, the allegations contained in the solemn declaration and all relevant matters touching the said dredging contract ought to be referred to a committee of this House to inquire into and investigate the same and to report thereon in order that the truth or falsity of the said allegations may be determined, and that any public moneys improperly paid out in connection with the said dredging contract may be recovered and restored to the public treasury.

My hon. friend from St. John, by means of that motion, of which I have read the concluding paragraph, brought to the attention of this House and the country certain very grave incidents, to use a very mild expression, in connection with certain dredging contracts in the harbour of St. John. I need only recall to members of this House that according to a sworn declaration produced in parliament, and laid on the table of this House, it was alleged that a prominent Liberal of the city of St. John was receiving, without being interested in the contract in any way, a very considerable proportion of the money that was being paid out by the people of this country for dredging and not for political influence. If I remember rightly, the contract was 50 cents per cubic yard, and of this some 10 per cent, or 5 cents per cubic yard, went, not to the contractor who was doing the work, but to the leader of the Liberal party in the city and county of St. John, a man who had been for many years the leading guide and organizer of the Liberal party in the province of New Brunswick. No less than \$35,000 was paid out of