

no good. What comfort the government is going to get out of that I do not know. We want a capable, as well as honest, government; this kind of inquiry, I am afraid, will not convince the country on either one point or the other.

Now, I have referred to these items, first as to the railway question generally, and then as to a few of the disclosures during the two days of investigation when we were present in the committee, for the purpose of emphasizing the fact that I realize that our duty was to stand to our guns and fight in the interest of the country if we could fight effectually. But I take the position that, while it is my duty to stand firmly in the interest of the people in this committee of mystery, it is also my duty to select my fighting ground to some extent, and also to select my weapons. And now, I come to the point of why we left that committee—or, the more important point, as not involving the personal question, what was the attitude of that committee which necessitated the retirement of three of its members. And first, let me say that I am not afraid of fighting. Perhaps, sometimes, I am recklessly bold. I do not mean that I fight effectively, or that I am a match for the hon. gentlemen who were on that committee. But I do say that I am not driven away by any feeling of timidity. I left that committee when I came to the conclusion that, by reason of the manner in which the proceedings were being carried on, and by reason of the drift of matters, it was impossible to serve the public in that committee, and that if I remained I would become a party to a farce—a laughing farce if it were not so serious in the interest of the country, a farcial investigation which was an insult to the intelligence of the people of Canada. Now, the position was this:

On the first day of the inquiry, the commission appeared by counsel. Mr. Lumsden announced that he was merely a witness, and he did not propose to have counsel. It is said in a lying pamphlet—I want to choose my language on this occasion—it is said in a lying pamphlet that is circulated by supporters of the government from week to week, that goes out every day during the session, and that has been dealing with this investigation, goes out under frank of that sapient gentleman, that very busy gentleman, the Solicitor General (Mr. Bureau), that goes out under his frank the year round, both during the session and after the session, that the members of the minority insisted that Mr. Lumsden should have counsel. That is not true. No member of the minority committee suggested that Mr. Lumsden should have counsel. We recognized from the first that, not Mr. Lumsden, but the commission, and ultimately the government, were

Mr. LENNOX.

the people on trial. You cannot shirk that issue, the government is on trial, the commission is on trial, and Mr. Lumsden is merely a witness. It is absolutely false to say that the minority of the committee ever urged that Mr. Lumsden should have counsel. But what we did say was, that before this investigation went further, there should be counsel to represent the people. Mr. Lumsden did not appear by counsel, and I think he was a wise man. He had no axe to grind, no fight to put up, although the government is fighting to-day tooth and nail, as they fought Mr. Hodgins. The government is on trial in this matter, and we said that as the government was represented by counsel, there should be somebody to represent the people. The chairman took the ground that it was a fight—just imagine!—a fight between the subordinate engineers and Mr. Lumsden, and therefore there was no need for counsel for the people. Another gentleman, the hon. member for Laval (Mr. Wilson), did not know who the people meant, and so far as I know he does not know yet. What a pity, what a lovely position that is to be in, that we have on this investigation a gentleman who does not know who the people are. Let me read his exact language. I had been talking about the people, and he said:

Mr. WILSON. I understand that Mr. Lumsden has made some charges or some reflections against some engineers, and I for one will be delighted if Mr. Lumsden is represented by counsel, and that the party or parties against whom he has laid complaints should also be represented. But when you talk about counsel to represent the public, that seems to me a very vague word.

There is a good deal in that. When we have gentlemen who sit in their seats until the Prime Minister rises, and if he should make a mistake and sit down, they would not get up, men who think that Providence, and Canada, and the nation are bound up in the Prime Minister—when you get men of that kind on a committee, it is not surprising that they do not know who the public is. They are fighting for the Prime Minister, they are fighting for the government, fighting for the party. But nothing for the public, nothing for the people. I was thinking of this as I walked up to-day, and I remembered that possibly I could find some lines that fit the case in a poem of Riley, which I find in a little volume called 'The Flying Islands of the Night.' I will only read a line or two:

We follow ever on and on—
O'er hill and hollow, brake and lawn;
Thro gruesome vale and dread ravine—

And there have been many gruesome vales and dread ravines in the political history of our hon. friends opposite: