

### **A Scandal Manufactured Regardless of Facts or Law.**

I will ask any member of this House, any business man who has had anything to do with the larger affairs of the country, or even with a company, if, with these facts before him—the law all against Mr. Staunton, together with the decisive award of Sir William Whyte, who had been asked to arbitrate by the Minister of Railways—he would not have said that the shops were properly constructed by the National Transcontinental Commission. Is there any—I was going to say, reason, but I will not insult the intelligence of the House by using that word—is there any imaginable excuse for not accepting that final award, of Sir William Whyte? What is the excuse? It would have robbed Mr. Staunton of charging the late Government with expending \$6,000,000 which, he contends, should not have been expended. The acting Minister of Railways spoke of this this afternoon. He prefers Mr. Lynch-Staunton's view on law to that of the gentleman I have named. He prefers the opinion of Mr. Gutelius, as to railway practice, to the decisive award of Sir William Whyte, one of the greatest railway men on this continent. And the people of this country are asked to believe this report. The minister himself does not believe it, and there is not a man in this House who will say that Staunton and Gutelius were right as against the opinions I have given. And yet this report is being circulated throughout the country to the detriment of the Grand Trunk Pacific, and with the hope of injuring the Liberal party.

Not satisfied with one answer, Mr. Staunton again asked the Justice Department on May 12, 1913, perhaps thinking that they did not know what they were talking about the time before. He does not seem to have had much confidence in the Department of Justice, and so he said: 'We will ask them again,' perhaps after Mr. Newcombe has read my view, he will think that he is really not a first-class lawyer after all, and will acquiesce in what I have said. But Mr. Newcombe does not acquiesce very often in that way. I want to make it clear that it was after Sir William Whyte's award that the Department of Justice was again approached to see if it could not relent from its former opinion, but Mr. Newcombe, the deputy minister, administered a very fitting and well-deserved rebuke, which did not, however, have any effect. The letter reads:

Sir,—Referring to your letter of the 12th instant, No. 510, enclosing copy of a letter dated the 15th February, 1912, addressed by Messrs. George Lynch-Staunton and F. P. Gutelius to Mr. Leonard, chairman of the Transcontinental Railway Commission, and requesting to be advised on the point raised by them, I have the honor to say that in a letter of the 5th March, 1912, to the Deputy Minister of Railways and Canals, I advised upon the question of the construction of shops for repair of rolling stock on the Transcontinental railway. I understand from you that Mr. Leonard has had a copy of this letter. I do not think I can add anything to the opinion I then gave which goes very fully into the whole question. Messrs. Lynch-Staunton and Gutelius say that the former commissioners apparently took a different view of the law to what they do and they add 'we have not as yet been furnished with the correspondence or opinions upon which they acted in committing the country to this great expenditure and it may be that when that information is before us we may modify our views, but from all the data before us at present we cannot find any justification for this expenditure.'

This letter was written, of course, before I advised in March of last year and I