

of Railways and Canals has set gentlemen opposite to scolding and figuring. Those who could not or would not scold, started to figure, and those who could not or would not figure, started to scold. And, between these two characteristics, it is no marvel that they should come to such diverse and mixed-up conclusions as we have seen to-day and on previous occasions when this matter has been up for discussion. Those who attempted to figure in this matter have illustrated the old saying that while it is true that figures cannot lie, those who use them frequently do. A very few examples will suffice to illustrate that. By referring to the "Hansard" of 1897, when this matter was being discussed somewhat briefly, it will be seen that the ex-Minister of Finance (Mr. Foster) stated that the Drummond County people had received subsidies to the amount of \$782,000. That he stated categorically. Almost immediately afterwards, or as soon as he could get occasion to express himself, the ex-Controller of Customs (Mr. Wallace), in the most positive way, affirmed that the amount of subsidies was \$603,000. The ex-Minister of Finance further stated that the company had expended \$720,000 on this piece of road. He does not state the date up to which that amount was spent, or whether upon the forty-two miles of road or upon the whole 132 miles, or whatever it is. The ex-Controller of Customs again comes out, and in a more conservative way, but with equal positiveness, states that the amount expended was \$360,000. Then the "Mail and Empire," inspired doubtless by hon. gentlemen opposite, stated that the cost to the owners of this road—again they do not state the date or the extent of road—was only \$749,000, and that the profit to the owners, in consequence of some dealings of this road, amounted to \$714,356. But the minority report makes the profit \$1,209,548. Now, taking all these deliberate statements, made by gentlemen who pretend to be men of repute, where do we find ourselves? Which is the true statement and which is not? For they cannot all be true. That is a sample of the result of some of the figuring of hon. gentlemen opposite in regard to this important matter; and I will give further illustrations as I proceed. Now, they start out, as I said, by scolding and figuring; and, as in the case of all gossipers, the older the gossip, the more vile, misleading and unfounded the gossip. Scandal, of course, was evolved, and must be investigated. As hon. gentlemen opposite did not seem to be sufficiently matured to grapple with the question, they passed it on to the other House, and the hon. gentlemen of the Senate made a giddy pretense of dealing with the matter. I may say, without wishing at all to use the language of the street, that they made quite a bluff at an investigation; they dilly-dallied from day to day until this House and

the Government got tired waiting, and the Government took hold and forced an investigation. However, these matters are historic. The Government proceeded with an investigation, a committee was appointed, the committee sat from day to day, and elicited all the available information. Evidence was taken even from such remote countries as Mexico, and everything that gentlemen opposite suggested should be produced in the shape of evidence, was produced, at the expense of the ratepayers of this country. Every opportunity was given to gentlemen opposite to come forward and produce any evidence which might be pertinent to the question at issue. In fact, the investigation could have been closed some days sooner than it was, had the majority of the committee elected by the Government chosen to close it. At one sitting, notwithstanding that the amplest notice was given of the sitting, not a single gentleman representing the Opposition appeared, and, at the request of Mr. Greenshields, one of the men who, above all others, is blackguarded and slandered in this connection, suggested a postponement of the investigation, and it was postponed in order to give the Opposition absolutely no ground to say that there was any disposition to stifle or curtail any evidence they had to adduce. The evidence adduced at that committee, evidence which has not been impeached and which cannot be impeached or controverted, is now before this House and the country. Every hon. gentleman in this House may have a copy of that evidence if he wishes, indeed, I am sure that every member of the House, on both sides, has a copy of it. It is not often, in discussing any question in this House, that we have before us so explicitly and clearly all the available and pertinent facts in relation to it. Hon. gentlemen cannot go behind these facts, they cannot escape from the conclusion to which the evidence points, and in producing which they had full swing.

Now, based upon that evidence two reports were made, a majority and a minority report. The majority report was based on the facts produced at that investigation; the minority report, I am sorry to say, was not based upon the facts or evidence produced at that investigation, and I think I will be able to satisfy the House that I am correct in saying so. Those are the two judgments delivered upon the evidence taken on that occasion; and I venture to say that among gentlemen, reading all that evidence, there can be only one opinion derived from it, and that is, that the arrangement made by the Government through the Minister of Railways and Canals, is not only the best arrangement that could be made at the time, but the very best possible arrangement that could be made at any time in the past up to the present date. To any one who gives the matter a moment's consideration, the question will occur: Why did gentlemen opposite allow the affairs of the Intercolonial Railway to exist in the shape in which they were