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the task of getting out of the difficulty he was in, of turning his back upon this question, and of explaining the extraordinary change of attitude. He evidently felt very much oppressed by that task. But I notice that he addressed himself much more cheerfully to it this evening. Possibly the idea had just occurred to him that he could draw a red herring across the trail by indulging in an hour's abuse of the Minister of Railways and Canals, an idea which, apparently had not occurred to him in the afternoon. So, as the main reason why he changed his attitude upon this question, he said, that further light had come to him. And, as one of the other great authorities which had changed its opinion on account of the new light that had come, he quotes that very reputable and well known paper the Montreal "Witness." At least, he quotes part of it. I suppose it would not be kind for me to refer to the fact that sometimes the hon. gentleman does not quote the whole of a document which he submits to this House. In this particular case he has not quoted the whole, or even the material part, of the document which he was reading for the purpose of explaining the position he took before this House. Now let me read it:

The details of the bargain of the Mackenzie-Mann syndicate reveal objectionable features that do not appear in the information which came to light before the presentation of the contract to Parliament. It was not then known that the railway was to be a very narrow gauge one. It was not then realized, as it seems to be admitted, that the Stikine is not navigable for sea craft, and that bulk must be broken in American waters, and there are, as we have pointed out, possibilities connected with the parcelling of the land grant which are interesting to contemplate.

Will the hon. gentleman say that these were the reasons that caused him to change his opinion, and that the "Daily Witness," of Montreal, is in the same position as he is upon that question?

An hon. MEMBER. Read on.

The MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR. Well, we will read the balance of it:

We doubt, however, if a business man acting in his own interest would, even with all considerations fully before him, recall the bargain as a whole, if he could, much as he might wish he could alter many of its details. We doubt if any of the Government's critics would, were the case their own, recall the bargain.

The hon. gentleman quotes as a reason for changing his opinion, an article which approves of the contract, and states that it would not be recalled if it could be. Now let me—

Mr. DAVIN. Read all the article.

The MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR. I trust that the hon. member for Assinibola (Mr. Davin) will not allow this debate to terminate without addressing the House on

the subject, and he will have an opportunity of reading the article himself when he comes to speak. Another thing which the hon. gentleman did, and which I thought was somewhat beneath the dignity of a gentleman of his age, and position, and experience, was to make an attack upon my hon. friend the Minister of Railways which was totally unjustified by anything that was said by my hon. friend. He alleged, again and again, that the Minister of Railways had attacked the engineer of the Government, Mr. Jennings. Now, I listened to my hon. friend when he was speaking, and I think I know an attack when I hear it, and I think I can recognize whether a gentleman speaking of an engineer's report, is speaking in a hostile tone and attacking it; and I assert most positively, and there is no man who listened to my hon. friend who will not assert with me, that there was nothing whatever in the words of the Minister of Railways to justify the statement that he made an attack upon the engineer's report, nothing whatever. Mr. Jennings made an estimate of the cost of a railway. If the hon. gentleman will read that estimate he will come to the same conclusion, in the light of his great railway experience of which we are so constantly reminded, as my hon. friend the Minister of Railways came to, as I come to, as anybody will come to who reads that report, and who endeavours to get any knowledge whatever of the actual cost of the work. He will come to the conclusion that that estimate was based on normal prices and normal conditions, and that abnormal prices and abnormal conditions such as will prevail in the execution of this contract, must be taken into account when the cost of the work which is going to be done by these contractors, is taken into consideration. That, it appears to me, is a fairly intelligible proposition, and it is a proposition which no intelligent man reading that report, can fail to grasp. That is the proposition which the Minister of Railways made this afternoon; I make that proposition now, and I am not attacking Mr. Jennings, the engineer, who was employed by me for the purpose of making that report, and who has my complete confidence, and the complete confidence of every member of the Government. If the hon. gentleman will take the trouble to look at the report and see the prices that are figured on there, he will see that ordinary prices and ordinary cost of material are all that is figured on; and extraordinary conditions, the extraordinary difficulties of getting freight up the Stikine River, the large number of special steamers that have to be purchased and employed by them for that purpose, all the difficulties that crowd upon contractors when they are forced to do their work much more rapidly than in ordinary course—all these circumstances have to be taken into account; and I am satisfied myself that