

7-8 EDWARD VII., A. 1908

The commissioners sent Mr. Gordon Grant, appointed by them notwithstanding the chief engineer's objection to inspect District 'F,' and the said Grant.

(1) In going over District 'F' with the contractors and in their presence and in presence of their engineer and sub-contractor, criticised the classification, stating that it was too low, that the engineers were robbing the contractors, who had not been fairly treated, and suggested classifying common excavation and loose rock as solid rock, and that every yard of stripping should be solid rock, and that would classify the commencement of rock cuttings that contained earth and loose rock from grade until the solid rock was reached as solid rock, and the clay cutting at the Wabigoon as all loose rock, and talked freely of the liberality of the classification in Quebec in which the contractor was given in mixed cuts more rock than there actually was, and which classification the chief engineer had to approve. He also advised that engineers should classify at cost plus 20 per cent in loose rock cuts, and when the price of loose rock did not cover cost the addition of solid rock when solid rock did not exist.

(2) The said Grant raised the classification at La Tuque from 30 per cent to 80 per cent, and after objection from the Grand Trunk Pacific district engineer, Mr. Armstrong, it was raised to 86 per cent, and he so stated to Mr. Hodgins in July, 1907.

(3) The said Grant also made a written report to the chief engineer containing statements as to Major Hodgins and his engineers, many of which are untrue and were intended to create an impression of a state of affairs at District 'F,' which did not exist. The chief engineer then advised the commissioners (see his letter July 31, 1907, produced at page 40) that he did not agree with portions of both reports and could make no intelligent report thereon without going out on the work and judging for himself. The chief engineer then came up to District 'F,' went over five miles of McFarlane's division, agreed that the classification thereon disputed by the contractor was correct and discussed with Major Hodgins the situation in the district, some of the circumstances of which are set out in his letter (a) to the contractor dated June 27, 1907, and (b) to the commissioners, dated August 27, 1907. The copy of the letter to the contractor should be produced. On that occasion Major Hodgins and the chief engineer discussed the situation, and Major Hodgins suggested that he should give an order, subject to the decision of the commissioners, which was to be obtained at once to use force account plus 10 per cent as a quick settlement of classification in dispute, and as a businesslike arrangement designed to prevent the contractor and sub-contractor from throwing up the contract. This suggestion did not obtain the approval of the commissioners, and Major Hodgins was notified within five days; it was not acted upon in classification, and is stated by the Chief engineer in his letter to the commissioners of November 19, 1907, not to be his reason for recommending the change of district engineer.

11. That 'Major Hodgins was removed for other (alleged) reasons, and that no investigation into his case was allowed, and that his opinion and the opinion of the next senior engineer on the district were smothered.' Major Hodgins was dismissed at the instance of the commissioners on Grant's untrue statements of the commissioners' unwarranted and wrong inferences that he was approving of a departure from the specifications at a time when he was investigating, under the orders of the chief engineer, the over-classification which had crept in since Grant's visit, owing to the latter's statements, and when Major Hodgins was actually disallowing such over-classification in two divisions or District 'F.'

12. Major Hodgins adheres to the statements made in a letter of April 16, 1908, as containing his charges which are repeated in a specific manner as above.

13. Major Hodgins requires for the proving of the above charges documentary evidence in the possession of the commission, of the Auditor General, and of the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway Company or its officials. Those in the possession of the commission consist of the various progress estimates and progress profiles sent in