

Mr. LENNOX. Has the minister ever met our director and had a conference with him?

Mr. GRAHAM. The communications and discussions have been with the deputy and chief engineer who is practical on these questions, more practical than my hon. friend and myself.

Mr. LENNOX. I am a little practical myself and look at this in a practical way. I would have expected that, when we have a director and have been committed to this scheme for nearly five years, there would have been repeated conferences and consultations between the minister and our representative on the board as to the line of policy that would be advocated and would be, as far as possible, carried out by our director. I would have imagined that gentleman would have referred to the minister from time to time and that they would have put their heads together to protect the people as far as possible in the construction of this railway against possible invasion of their rights by the Grand Trunk Pacific. I do not think it would have been improper to have anticipated that that might be necessary. I think the country will learn with surprise that although five years have elapsed there is no reason to believe that any Minister of Railways has had a conference at any time with our director upon this railway board, and that we are to-day, at the end of five years, without a line from this gentleman except possibly an application from time to time for his cheque; that the conferences and correspondence have been between this gentleman and the deputy,—and when I say that I speak with the greatest respect which I actually entertain for the deputy minister. I repeat that the actual living head of the institution, the minister, is the primary person to consult, and we now have it on record that not a word has passed, written or verbal, between the Minister of Railways and our representative on this board.

Mr. BERGERON. I believe my hon. friend from Simcoe (Mr. Lennox) is quite right in trying to find out the work done by Mr. Brunet for the money he receives; but I wish to say that I know Mr. Brunet very well, he is a wealthy man to whom \$2,000 a year does not amount to much. He has been a real estate man in Montreal for years has been manager of the Banque Nationale and was one of the commissioners of the Transcontinental Commission. He is very well qualified to act as director if he does so. The government could not have a better man for the position of course with the condition suggested by my hon. friend that he does something. I know him to be a very honourable man, and—

Mr. GRAHAM.

Mr. LENNOX. My hon. friend will understand I am not speaking about Mr. Brunet but about the singular attitude of the government in this matter.

Mr. BERGERON. I heard some one ask who he was, and I thought it my duty to say that he is a very honourable man and a good man for the position.

Mr. HAGGART. Do I understand that the minister has received no formal communication from Mr. Brunet informing the Department of Railways that the Grand Trunk Pacific engineers take a different view of the classification from that of the government engineers?

Mr. GRAHAM. I have no communication. I am speaking for myself, for no other member of the government. I have had no such verbal communication. Mr. Brunet may have had many interviews with the Railway Commission which represents the government.

Mr. SAM. HUGHES. Is this officer the servant of the minister or the servant of the Railway Commission?

Mr. GRAHAM. He represents the government on the board of directors.

Mr. SAM. HUGHES. To whom does he report?

Mr. GRAHAM. Probably he should report to the minister. There is no difference as to the specifications, that is arranged for between the commission and the board, and agreed to by both parties. The only difference is as to whether the specifications are being lived up to. The point is as to whether the engineers are interpreting the specifications properly and compelling the contractors to live up to them.

Mr. LENNOX. It is more than that, it is also the question whether the men who are carrying out the work are honestly classifying it or not.

Mr. GRAHAM. That is what I said, whether they are obeying the specifications and interpreting them properly. My hon. friend should not say 'honestly or dishonestly.' The one thing I always try to do is to be careful not to impute dishonesty to any person. It is a fair presumption that the great majority of mankind are as honest as we are. The Act provides for just what has arisen between the engineers when they may have a difference as to the interpretation of the specifications; the Act provides that if the chief engineer of the Railway Commission and the chief engineer of the company cannot agree, then the Chief Justice shall appoint a third man and the majority shall decide, which means of course this third man. But the third man is not appointed until the engineers fail to agree.