

## THE WELLAND CANAL INVESTIGATION.

### ENQUIRY.

HON. MR. MCCALLUM resumed his speech on his notice to—

Enquire what action the Government intends to take on the evidence taken before A. F. Wood, Esquire, Commissioner, as to the conduct of the officials on the Welland Canal, in the management of that important public work.

He said: When last I addressed you on this question I was speaking about the evidence of Mr. Alexander Abbey, regarding an arrangement made with him by one of the deputy superintendents of the Welland Canal, about getting a certain amount of money towards the payment of the Superintendent's debts. I wish you particularly to read this evidence if it is published, as I hope it will be. (See page 697.) This is a most extraordinary arrangement; Mr. Ellis must have known about it, because he asked Mr. Smith—told him he was in trouble—in fact, that the sheriff was after him. Mr. John B. Smith, whom I will call Mr. Ellis' broker, was sent to make this arrangement. See what Mr. Abbey says: he was employed to go as master of a scow to do some work on the canal; he was told to get a horse. Mr. Abbey asked him to say what amount would be given for the horse. The reply was, we will pay you \$1 a day; but that was not enough for Abbey; he would not furnish a horse for that. Then, on condition that he would allow one-half dollar of the horse's hire to go to the payment of Mr. Ellis' debts they agreed to give him \$1.50 a day, and every month this gentleman, John B. Smith, came around regularly and got this money to pay Mr. Ellis' debts. And there are several others, I am satisfied—I was told so, and I told the commissioner so—in the same position as Mr. Abbey; but the commissioner would not allow me to prove it, as I will show you by his ruling. He did not want it shown what this money was got for; that is why I call this gentleman, John B. Smith, a broker of Mr. Ellis, because he was negotiating for Ellis with employes of the canal to draw money to pay his debts. Here is a man getting \$1,450 a year of the money of this country to manage a canal through which but one vessel a week passes. That is the evidence of Mr. Thos. R. Merritt, of St. Catharines, and we are paying this man \$1,450 a year

to superintend this canal, and he has got two or three foremen under him. That is the way the money of this country is being paid out. They are not doing their duty, they are looking after themselves, as I will show you. Abbey swears that Mr. Smith took him aside and made a private arrangement with him, and if you will look at John Smith's evidence he confirms Mr. Abbey's statement in every particular but one. But when Mr. Abbey gave this evidence, what did the commissioner do? He gave him a lecture—such a lecture as I have never known a witness get in this world before. He told him the "receiver was as bad as the thief:" but I see it is put down in the type-written copy of the evidence—I suppose my friend Holland was not unkind enough to put it in "thief," he calls it a "third." But any man can see what is meant; I spoke to the commissioner privately after the proceedings were over that evening, and told him if he lectured witnesses in that way it would keep them from testifying, and I would not be able to get anything out of them. You will see by his rulings on this question of borrowing money to pay Ellis' debts that when I told him there were others who could swear to the same effect as Abbey he did not allow me to ask any questions about it.

HON. MR. O'DONOHUE—I rise to a question of order. My hon. friend is speaking, and has spoken for days, on this subject. He simply is giving us a commentary upon evidence that was taken in court, which is not before us. We cannot form any opinion or judgment until the report and the evidence are laid on the Table here. When this is done, and the evidence is before this House, we will be in a position to form a judgment in the matter; but I submit that with this commentary we have nothing to do. What Mr. McCallum refers to is only a copy of the evidence. It is the rule of every court, and especially of the court of Parliament, that the best evidence must be produced. The best evidence in this case is what was taken at the investigation, and we should have no debate upon this subject until such time as the report and the evidence upon which it is based have been laid upon the Table of the House. What object can we have in considering the matter? We have no evidence—only a copy, which is