

LUMSDEN INQUIRY.

FACTUM PREPARED BY F. H. CHRYSLER, K.C.

The Order of the House for the appointment of a special committee, dated 27th January, 1910, recites the letter of Mr. Hugh D. Lumsden, late chief engineer of the National Transcontinental Railway, dated 25th June, 1909, in which he uses the following language:—

In view of the general disregard of my instructions, and having lost confidence in the engineering staff, I have concluded to resign my position as Chief Engineer.

And in a second letter, dated 26th June, 1909, addressed to the commissioners, Mr. Lumsden wrote as follows:—

Referring to my letter of yesterday wherein I stated that I have lost confidence in the engineering staff, I beg to state that this does not apply to the whole staff, but applies only to a portion of the staff, who are responsible for the measurement, classification, supervision and inspection of considerable portions in District 'B' and east of Rennie Crossing in District 'F,' lately gone over by me.

The resolution further recites:—

While this House deems it not desirable to take any action which might prejudice the position of either of the parties to the arbitration proceedings now in progress between the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway Company and the said Commissioners, yet the said recited allegations of said Hugh D. Lumsden, stated by him as the reasons for his resignation of the said position of Chief Engineer, are, in the opinion of this House, of such great public interest and involve such grave charges against a portion of the engineering staff of the Transcontinental railway as to make it desirable that the same should be investigated by a committee of this House.

Mr. Lumsden, when examined before the committee, at page 71 of the proceedings, read a statement referring to the two letters which have been received in the Order of the House:—

My recent trips over portions of Districts 'B' and 'F' in connection with the arbitration, had led me to the conclusion that neither the general specifications, nor my instructions regarding classification, had been adhered to, but on the contrary, large amounts of material had been returned as solid rock which should only have been classified as loose rock or common excavation, and that material had been returned as loose rock which was or could have been handled by ploughing and scraping, and should have been returned as common excavation. I added that, on several residencies, there seemed to have been no attempt by the engineers to carry out my instructions and measure rock returned, either by showing the same on cross-sections, or by measurements of individual pieces, but that they appeared to have simply guessed at the amount by taking percentages of the total cutting. Further, in some cases where cross-sections were prepared showing ledge rock, same proved to be erroneous, resulting in a very much larger amount of the solid rock being returned than actually existed. Also, what is known as overbreak had been returned in