

Public Accounts Investigation

1915

HOW THE INVESTIGATIONS WERE BROUGHT ABOUT.

Repeated and insistent demands by Liberals in Parliament were met by subterfuge and delay. Results of investigations fully justified the Liberal demands. But for the insistence of Liberals, the facts as to middleman's graft, Government incompetence, lack of proper inspection, etc., all resulting in enormous waste of public money, might never have become known.

Prior to the meeting of Parliament, which was formally opened on February 4th, rumors of irregularities in the purchase of war supplies in Canada were rife throughout the Dominion, from Atlantic to Pacific. There were hints in the newspapers, street gossip everywhere indicated something wrong, but there was no proof and there could be no proof because all the official information was locked up in the various Government departments—and the Government was not giving any information.

MANUFACTURERS COMPLAINED OF MIDDLEMEN.

There is proof that the Government knew very well that there was something wrong.

Early in the autumn, not very long after the War broke out, the Canadian Manufacturers' Association found there was something wrong and they wrote letters to Sir Robert Borden himself. They complained of the manner in which they were being treated by the Government; that they could not get orders while politicians acting as middlemen could get all the orders that were going. The manufacturers complained that they could sell their goods only through these political middlemen.

BORDEN'S DUTY WAS TO INVESTIGATE.

Premier Borden answered, asking for specific instances. Very rightly the Manufacturers' Association replied "**You are the Government, it is your duty to investigate.**" The Premier asked again for specific cases which were supplied and referred to the Militia Department. Of course the Department said they were not true.

Half a dozen times in Parliament, Premier Borden was asked to produce this correspondence. He admitted it was in existence