

fortunate enough to escape, lying at the Nun's Hospital ill, told me, that when it was thought he was going to die, the man who filled the office of coroner said: "I will be the man who will hold that inquest;" before he was acquainted with the evidence, in his political zeal to help his party, and to help his opponents, he was prepared to hold an inquest upon that man, and whether the hon. Minister of Railways, or Mr. McNab was to be indicted for murder, I suppose, was a matter of perfect indifference to him if he could thus help his political cause; that is the fact.

Mr. DAVIES. Who was that?

Mr. BRECKEN. I will mention no names. The hon. gentleman can very soon find out. I do not know what the hon. gentleman said of Mr. McNab, but I admired his colleague during the campaign last June.

Mr. DAVIES. I said nothing against Mr. McNab.

Mr. BRECKEN. I went from hustings to hustings, and I observed that at every one of the meetings the hon. gentleman never opened his lips against Mr. McNab, but his colleague (Mr. Laird), did. I know when the political machines went down to Prince Edward Island, I was ill at the time, and had not the privilege of hearing their speeches. The leader of the Opposition, Mr. Huntington, and Mr. Anglin, those gentlemen who were so secure in their own seats, certainly possessing the confidence of the people, that they need not look after their own constituents, became a commission to look after other people's constituencies, and the burden of the song of Mr. Anglin was the superannuation of Mr. McNab. I state that as a fact. I am not going to say what the cause of the accident was. I do not know. I saw specimens of sleepers, which were certainly very much decayed. I recollect this much about it: There was a car laden with coal, and some material was taken up to a factory. This was laid across two cars and lashed to them. And I know where the accident took place—at the foot of a grade at the commencement of a curve—after that trains—and I may be told, and that very properly, that this was on account of negligence—passed over this track the day before, and the day before that, and daily for years. And therefore, not professing to be a heaven-born engineer, I take that as sufficient proof, at any rate, that there was no *malice prepense* with which Mr. McNab was charged; and that the road was not in a deplorably rotten state, though, it is true, it is the last straw which breaks the camel's back. It was in evidence that new sleepers were put in there. It might have been, and probably was. The sleepers were left there in a state of decay; and if that was so, it was a very great misfortune and ought not to have been. But is that little circumstance to be made so much of? Why, if Mr. McNab had secretly instructed one of his employes to put a sleeper there and throw the train off the track, he could not have been attacked more vehemently than he was, as is well known. I cannot speak about Mr. McNab's superannuation, I know nothing at all about it, I had no right to know, my late colleague, Mr. Pope, was then in the Government, and I supposed, that this superannuation was based upon certain calculations; and I venture to say, that there is no Government official in Prince Edward Island, who found it necessary to be superannuated, that would not have made as big a claim as he possibly could. I do not know Mr. McNab's political claims, but I lived in Charlottetown while he was a resident there, and my hon. friend will agree with me, that he was a most estimable and honorable gentleman.

Mr. DAVIES. I have not said anything against him.

Mr. BRECKEN. I do not know that the hon. gentleman could. No man grieved more sincerely than that poor man owing to the terrible accident that occurred; and I think, to say the least of it, that my hon. friend's closing remarks

might have been just as well reserved. I believe that the press particularly should watch public works of this kind, where the lives and the limbs of the travelling public are every day at risk, and I am sure that the Minister of Railways, a humane man, I am confident, is as anxious as any hon. member on the other side of the House to have this work efficiently carried out. I will go further: Although I heard every particle of the evidence, perhaps the statement I am about to make will cause me to be told that I ought not to make it, because I do not give names, but I pledge my veracity for it, and hope that since I have been in the House, no hon. member has found me deviate from it; but I may say that not a fortnight ago, I was in conversation with a gentleman in Charlottetown, as intelligent as my hon. friend, and as well acquainted with the facts and circumstances of this case as almost any man not professionally engaged in it, and he said to me: "Brecken, that evidence was fearfully exaggerated." He gave me an instance of it; but it is a piece of information that I cannot, as an honorable man, in justice disclose, and he said he had the evidence of himself, having heard two statements from the same man, when he came into court. He stated that this evidence was frightfully exaggerated and was not up to the evidence which, he had stated, a few days before, he was prepared to give. Mr. McLeod is a gentleman for whom I have the greatest respect; he sustained fearful injuries, and I hope that the Government will see their way to make some compensation to him, as well as to several others. I believe that Mr. McLeod conducted this matter upon business principles, and that he had too much discretion to be inclined to join in a political howl. But I do say, Sir, and I know it, and I do not know where my hon. friend's ears could have been when he did not know it, that it was treated as a political question and almost wholly as a political question in Prince Edward Island.

Mr. DAVIES. I never heard it.

Mr. BRECKEN. I have heard it a hundred times. The Minister of Railways sent out a professional engineer, a gentleman who once had charge of works on the Intercolonial railway, to take charge of a small road 200 miles long on Prince Edward Island. The hon. gentleman will not deny that a more conscientious man does not live in the Dominion of Canada. But supposing one of these men were negligent, does it follow that the Minister of Railways is responsible for the conduct of the thousands of men he has employed in the Dominion of Canada whom he has never seen and never will see? Supposing a track-master improperly lays the track and passes by three or four sleepers which are rotten, is that to be charged against the head of the department? If the hon. gentleman will look at the charges which have been made in the newspapers against the Minister of Railways, he will see that these charges could have had just as much foundation if they had been made against me; and I do not wonder that the Minister of Railways, looking at the animus found in these attacks, should not have come to the conclusion to which he came. I say this, that the indiscreet conduct of my hon. friend will not be allowed to prejudice the case. I know that that man suffered fearful injuries, and I for one would be sorry to take his injuries for damages the judges awarded. I hope the Government will see their way to make some compensation, because his injuries, as well as those of Mr. Stewart, were very severe, indeed. I say this, however, that the attacks which emanated from the Opposition were not prompted entirely by their feelings of humanity, or a desire to see this man compensated, but like everything else they have tried to turn the matter to political account. These attacks were tintured and permeated by that bitterness and acrimony which has always distinguished the political conduct of these gentlemen in Prince Edward Island.