

Q. I understood you told us yesterday you had been on the patronage list for some twenty-one years?—A. About that, twenty or twenty-one or twenty-two years.

Q. Did you ever sell goods to the railway when Mr. Barker's friends were in power?—A. Yes.

Q. Consequently you are in a position, from your knowledge of the methods and knowledge of railway business, to be able to deal with parties outside in regard to what we may call these staple articles, which the railway buys?—A. Yes, I have a good knowledge of their requirements; that is about the best way of putting it.

Q. I suppose this is not the first oil you have sold to the road?—A. No, I sold large quantities to the road some years ago.

Q. How long ago?—A. In 1890, 1889, 1887, 1888, 1900.

Q. Has there been anything in connection with these transactions that differ from the transactions in previous years?—A. The only difference was I didn't usually have to tender.

Q. You did not have to tender?—A. No, that is the only difference.

Thus we see that Mr. Lodge, as manufacturers' agent, disposed to the railway, under Conservative administration, goods in exactly the same way and of the same character. Practically the only difference was this, that he did not then have to tender.

As regards the special oil, the lubricating oil, the belting and the wheelbarrows, the department obtained those goods at prices which, in most instances, were lower than those of previous years. They were staple prices; the country did not lose a cent. And I submit that my hon. friend is exceedingly suspicious when he endeavours to impute to the Minister of Railways something which the facts do not warrant and when he suggests that in any of these transactions there has been anything which the House and the country should condemn.

Mr. BARKER. As the minister has referred to the fact that a few days before he wrote his letter, there had been samples of the oil furnished to the officers—

Mr. EMMERSON. Not a few days; a few months.

Mr. BARKER. Here is a letter dated the 18th January, 1905, from Mr. D. Bryce Scott, electrician to Mr. Pottinger:

I inclose herewith a report of the test made of two barrels of oil furnished by the New Brunswick Petroleum Company as samples. This oil was tested during my absence by Mr. Lockhart. I talked the matter over with him and submit the report as it stands.

Yours respectfully,

D. BRYCE SCOTT,

Electrician, Intercolonial Railway.

Mr. Lockhart's report is dated the 17th January, the day previous. After testing the oil and comparing it with the Buffalo oil, this is what he says in his conclusion:

This oil would give good satisfaction at our plant in the summer weather, but we cannot

handle it in winter weather with the apparatus we have unless some arrangement is made for warming the oil and keeping it at a temperature of say eighty degrees Fahrenheit in the underground tank. This could be done by putting three or four lengths of steam coils in our underground tank and carrying steam through from some of the steam pipes in the furnace room. I am of the opinion that we could use this oil if such arrangements for heating were made. I would, however, again draw your attention to the fact that I had no chance to test the gas in actual service.

There is the report upon which this purchase was made. Mr. Pottinger writes a very careful letter. On the 23rd January the minister writes Mr. Pottinger:

Dear Mr. Pottinger,—If the report of the electrician is favourable—

He seems to have known that the electrician was then making an examination.

If the report of the electrician is favourable as to the use of New Brunswick petroleum for the manufacture of Pintsch gas, it would perhaps be as well to purchase from the New Brunswick Petroleum Company at the regular market rate.

Then, becoming impatient apparently, he telegraphed two days later to Mr. Pottinger:

Please arrange to purchase crude oil from the New Brunswick Petroleum Company for Pintsch gas purposes at market rate. Have written you on the subject.

That was somewhat peremptory. Then we have Mr. Pottinger writing on the 26th:

My Dear Mr. Emmerson,—I have your letter of January 23, with reference to an order of New Brunswick petroleum for the manufacture of Pintsch gas. The report on the test of this oil seems to be favourable, and we are ordering it for the making of Pintsch gas instead of the oil formerly used.

The hon. gentleman rather led the committee to believe they had been using it some time before.

Mr. EMMERSON. They had been purchasing oil from that company for some months but I did not know it.

Mr. BARKER. In August, 1904, about six months before this correspondence, they had been buying a little oil from this company. They bought in August 12 gallons; in September 1,102 gallons; in October, 1,029; and in December 1,243. But immediately after this correspondence, the purchase jumps to 8,226 gallons for February, in the winter when these gentlemen said they could not use it. And so it goes on into the spring and the following summer and I suppose is going on still.

The hon. gentleman must have known, when he wrote that letter, that this test was going on. His company had delivered two barrels as a sample in order that it should be tested. He knew it when he wrote that letter to Mr. Pottinger and when he telegraphed in the most peremptory terms and