

question is to a retained advocate in the case. I do not want to prolong the discussion further than to say that I am prepared to answer in the most explicit manner the only point which the hon. gentleman has named, and that is with regard to the superannuation of Mr. McNab. I have told the Committee the ground on which Mr. McNab was entrusted with the important duties which were placed in his charge; that having been entrusted for long years with vastly more important duties for the Government they were quite safe in placing the maintenance of the Prince Edward Island Railway under Mr. McNab's control. The facts were these: In order to reduce the expenditure we considered it unnecessary to have an engineer, a professional man on the 200 miles of the Island Railway. And what is the fact to-day? To-day the chief engineer of the Intercolonial in addition to his duties, makes a rapid trip over the Island Railway (Mr. McNab was engaged as a man of high standing knowledge and large experience), and yet hon. gentlemen opposite will not state that the Island Railway is not in a better condition to-day than at any time since its construction.

Mr. DAVIES. I said nothing about the bad condition of the road.

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. And yet there is no engineer on the road, but it is only occasionally visited by Mr. Archibald of the Intercolonial. With respect to Mr. McNab's superannuation, the party press of which the hon. gentleman gave us an illustration, when he declared it was hounding Mr. McNab with the statement that he was to be arraigned for murder, made the management of the Island Railway the principal political topic of discussion in the Island.

Mr. DAVIES. No.

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. Yes. I tell the hon. gentleman that not only was that so, but when this accident occurred a brutal press—I do not hesitate to say so—taking advantage of this unfortunate and terrible accident, hounded Mr. McNab nearly out of his senses. I say that Mr. McNab, an able man, an engineer of high standing, an engineer to whom Mr. Brydges, after five years experience, gave a large salary on account of his worth and ability, was struck down by that press of Prince Edward Island which daily accused him of murder in the most foul manner, and aroused the population against him until Mr. McNab went to a doctor and said: Give me a certificate, I am unable to sleep.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Hear, hear.

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. Hon. gentlemen laugh; I say Mr. McNab, who had been an able man was stricken down and became a child. His doctor found him completely wrecked mentally on account of the violent assaults made upon him, and Mr. McNab brought that certificate to me and stated that it was absolutely necessary, if his health was not to break down utterly and become destroyed, that he should have one year's rest from duty. What could I do? Leave the Island Railway for one hour in the hands of a man who brought me a certificate from an able physician to say that he was utterly prostrated and incompetent, that his nervous system had collapsed and that it was utterly impossible for him to attend to business without danger to his life. What did I do? I said to Mr. McNab, I will relieve you to-morrow. Mr. McNab went back to the Island and in three weeks he implored me to put him back in his position, saying that he was as well as he ever was. I had all the evidence a man could desire of Mr. McNab's ability to hold the position; and he wrote a letter just before the accident stating, not that he was overworked, but that he was able to perform the duties with the most perfect ease, and was astonished to think that the chance of doing away with an engineer in addition to a superintendent had not occurred long ago. I desire further, merely to correct a statement of the hon. gentleman's that I had insinuated that the observations which had fallen from

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him would prejudice the case; but we will not permit the hon. gentleman's indiscretion to have that effect in any way whatever.

Mr. BRECKEN. I think it is my duty to make a short statement in regard to the subject before the Committee. I am not acquainted with the details of the case as is my hon. friend (Mr. Davies) because he was counsel for some of the parties, and I have not been engaged professionally in any way in connection with it. I should be very sorry to allow any remark made by me to in any way prejudice the claim, if it is a claim, which Mr. McLeod and others may have on the clemency and grace of the Crown. But I must say this, that Mr. McLeod may say: "Save me from my friends." I do not hesitate to say that this very unfortunate accident was made a political hue-and-cry. I recollect when this accident took place, that two gentlemen, both in their graves now, one of whom was my political opponent in 1878, and for whom I had personally the greatest respect, and the other was a violent politician, went out to survey the debris of the accident. I agree with the language used by the hon. Minister of Railways, that the attacks made on Mr. McNab were atrocious, and I was intimate with that gentleman, and those attacks had a great deal to do with upsetting his nervous system and placing him in the state of nervous depression in which he was when he came to Ottawa. He was an exceedingly sensible man, an honorable man, a kind-hearted man—not one of that class of men who, if he escaped from an accident, would laugh at it. That man felt it as keenly as these men, who made their attacks upon him. He was an able man and very conscientious, and he believed he was doing his duty faithfully. He believed that this railway was in a good state. I am not prepared to say, because I was not out there, whether it was or not; but I saw two or three rotten sleepers exhibited by ardent politicians on the opposite side, and looked upon with as much curiosity as portions of the willow tree that drooped over the grave of Napoleon, on the Island of St. Helena. They were exhibited as one would take a specimen brick to show what a building was like. Little bits of crumbling railway sleepers were exhibited to prove the incapacity and worthlessness of the right hon. Sir John A. Macdonald's Administration over the Dominion of Canada.

Mr. DAVIES. Where did the hon. gentleman see those exhibits?

Mr. BRECKEN. Well, I can hardly tell you, but I saw them where they had a right to be. I am stating what is the case. Two violent politicians, who were just as well qualified to judge of the efficiency of this road as any two of the first men you might meet out of the Parliament buildings, went out there and filled the papers with atrocious attacks on this man. I know where I saw some of the specimens, however. It was where they had a perfect right to be—in a court of justice.

Mr. DAVIES. Did the hon. gentleman ever see them, except in a court of justice, in the hands of a sworn witness?

Mr. BRECKEN. Those you had I saw, but I do not know what pieces you had in court.

Mr. DAVIES. Did you ever see any other? I know you did not.

Mr. BRECKEN. Yes; I know what I am speaking of, and how dare the hon. gentleman say I did not see them. This little game of bluff of which the hon. gentleman has been accused time and again, is now practiced in this House. I do not want to bring in names; but they were brought in by hon. members now dead in their graves. The hon. gentleman knows, that two of our most violent opponents—if they were not heaven-born engineers, what took them there—went out and made a great ado about this matter. Another thing reached my ears. A man who was