

STRATHCONA DENIES PRESTON'S STATEMENTS

Declares He Never Admitted That Stolen Letters Were in His Office

Canada's Superintendent of Immigration at Ottawa Inquiry Yesterday Admitted That He Organized the North Atlantic Trading Company, But it Had the Approval of the High Commissioner.

Montreal, May 18 (Special)—A special London cable says: The Ottawa correspondent of the Tribune, in a cable, states that W. T. R. Preston, president of the Canadian Manufacturers' Association, before the public accounts committee, said he was unable to produce all his private papers because some of them had been stolen from his office last year and that he had traced the missing papers to the residence of a friend in Montreal. For Canada, and Lord Strathcona had admitted that they were in possession of his sec-

On being shown the Tribune cable by the Canadian Associated Press correspondent, Lord Strathcona, in a very emphatic manner denied ever having made any

"Never, never," said Lord Strathcona, "neither unofficially, officially, nor personally. I have never, and will never have letters obtained in such a manner as Mr. Preston asserts."

Mr. Preston proceeded to ask the name of the company. Mr. Preston said that when the trouble arose in Canada he wrote a letter to the company, a letter which was probably never received, an official, asking that the names be given because of certain statements made in Canada. All of the officials came to London and he was able to get the names of the members of the company, only one or two of them. He had a suspicion as to who some of them were. He asked for the names of the directors and he was told a letter last night which he had not delivered to the government and which was addressed contained the names of the directors. The committee would not know his just now for the names.

Preston on the Stand.

Ottawa, May 18.—(Special)—T. R. Preston, superintendent of immigration, was examined before the agriculture committee today by Mr. Monk. Without very much delay, Mr. Preston admitted that he was up the North Atlantic Trading Company. Mr. Preston said that organization of the company was carried on by him. He met the company at London, and afterwards at Bremen, and afterwards at Hamburg. This was in May or June, 1899.

Mr. Monk.—Did any of the company visit London?

Mr. Preston.—One or two of them did.

Mr. Monk.—Did they meet Lord Strathcona?

Mr. Preston.—Can't say whether they did or not.

Mr. Monk.—Did they come to Canada?

Mr. Preston.—Not that I know of. I think I would have known if they did.

Mr. Preston proceeded to give a brief history of the company.

Sharp Questions.

Mr. Devlin—Is there any Canadian connected with the company?

Mr. Preston—I am satisfied, none.

Mr. Devlin—Are you an officer?

Mr. Preston—No, no.

Mr. Devlin—You are not connected with it or have any interest in it?

Mr. Preston—No, sir, I am not slightest.

Mr. Devlin—Is there any official in the Canadian government connected with the company?

Mr. Preston—They could not possibly be so.

Mr. Cornell—Do you know of any Canadian in this country interested in it?

Mr. Preston—None, sir.

Mr. Devlin—Did Lord Strathcona approve of the agreement?

Mr. Preston—Lord Strathcona had full knowledge of all the negotiations and approved of the agreement. I called upon him twenty-four hours after I returned from the continent.

Mr. Devlin—It is understood that as Mr. Preston would not give the names that the intervention of parliament be demanded to make him do so, he has been refused evidence in this case. Is this reported to parliament forthwith.

There was a long and somewhat noisy discussion.

The Liberals took the ground that the examination of the witnesses should be proceeded with first and the questions he refused to answer referred to the house later on.

previous to the time he was speaking, 1898. Lord Strathcona had called a meeting in Hamburg for the purpose of discussing the possibility of obtaining permission for immigration in that country. Lord Strathcona addressed this meeting. It formed the subject of a report by Lord Strathcona which appeared in the "Morning Post." Shortly after the arrival of the high commissioner in London he was notified by the German government that the German authorities had taken umbrage at what he had taken place at Hamburg.

The matter came before Lord Selkirk and Mr. Chamberlain was the medium of communication with Lord Strathcona informing him that the German police had been put into requisition to investigate some explanation his lordship could not return to Germany.

"So as to the very beginning of my negotiations," said Mr. Preston, "I was confronted with police regulation and legislative enactments to prevent the carrying out of active propaganda work in England. As a result of this I think I should carry on as far as and as actively as I possibly could. Many of the people of the continent refused to discuss immigration."

Mr. Preston went on to give the steps of the making of the contract. The parties referred to were not named, but their names were kept secret. He reported the whole matter to Lord Strathcona, who gave his approval and consent, and who sanctioned and approved of the contract.

TERRIBLE FIRES IN WESTERN STATES; TOWNS WIPED OUT AND MANY LIVES LOST

Marientown, Wis May 18, 11 p. m.—The best information obtainable at this hour is that the forest fire which is sweeping the county north of here, is now burning in the south. This makes four counties which are suffering from fire. The county north of here is about 200 miles square. The country swept by the flames varies from pine timber land to barrens. Part is iron mining

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