

CALLS N. T. R. REPORT A TISSUE OF FALSEHOODS

Graham Riddles the Findings

Government Sat Dumb as Ex-Minister of Railways Showed By the Records That the Scandal Hunters Had No Facts to Base Their Conclusions on—Convicts Them of Misrepresentation by a Mass of Reports and Evidence.

Ottawa, March 28.—It was not a defect, it was an attack. By the time Hon. George P. Graham got through, shortly before midnight tonight, with a complete and exhaustive analysis of the Guelish-Lynch-Staunton report on the National Transcontinental railway, there was not a finding of the partisan investigators that had not been ridden, not a criticism of the late government or of the National Transcontinental commission that had not been shown to be unjust, and scarcely a point in the whole report that was not turned against its own authors and against the government which had inspired it.

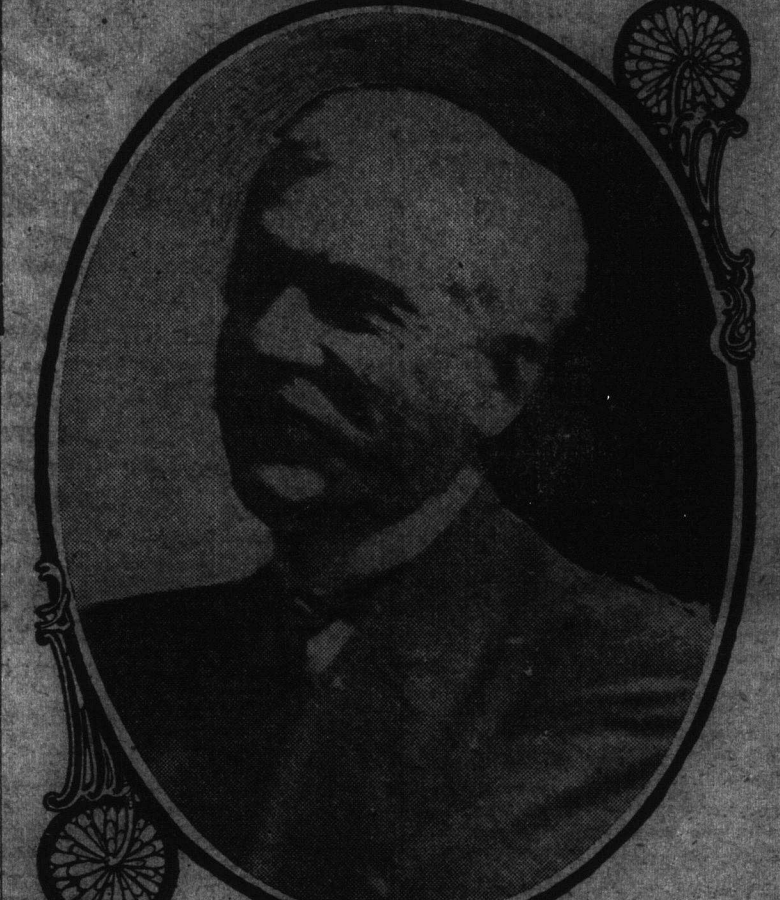
From the opening of his speech in which he convicted the acting minister of railways at the very outset, of a deliberate misrepresentation, to the extent of \$4,000,000, calculated to seriously injure the credit of the G. T. P., to the end of his four-hour analysis, Mr. Graham exposed in a trenchant and absolutely compelling manner the deliberate disregard of facts common sense and national or judicial considerations marking almost every paragraph of the report.

Two notes, he said, ran all through the report. One was to discredit the whole undertaking, thus playing the game of rival railway interests. The other was to injure the Liberal party. The former motive, Mr. Guelish, the ex-acting minister of railways, the latter motive, Mr. Lynch-Staunton, the partisan Conservative lawyer, ever remembered. Between the two it was a compilation of partisan views prepared for partisans, for party purposes.

Both in point of law, in point of fact, and in point of common sense, Mr. Graham convicted the commissioners and the government out of their own mouths. Even the government, as Mr. Graham put it, "disowned its own offspring."

Time and again Mr. Graham specifically challenged Premier Borden and other ministers to say whether certain parts of the report, which he said were true to the facts, each time he passed for a reply, and each time silence from the government benches gave assent to his criticisms.

He told of suppressed reports on the official files which contradicted the statements made by Guelish and Lynch-Staunton. He noted that not a single charge of graft or dishonesty had been found, as a result of the whole two years' investigation.



HON. GEORGE P. GRAHAM.

leading the house, consented, and the house adjourned.

Mr. Graham will conclude tomorrow, making by the department. The total estimated cost of the four sections now under contract was \$20,180,000, which was several millions less than was estimated by the department. The minister would be called for in a short time for sections eight of the canal, which would be let by contract.

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structed. It would appear from the evidence given by Mr. Wood, chief engineer of the Grand Trunk Pacific, that this 400 miles of railway was floated on the company and that the Grand Trunk Pacific had no right to take it at will, and was aware from the first that it would not be a paying proposition.

Hon. Mr. Graham's raising was greeted by prolonged Liberal cheering. The Grand Trunk Pacific was taken into the hands of the acting minister of railways to the effect that the whole management of the N. T. R. was being conducted by a "silly" segment of an unimpaired demagogue. What was needed at the head of a great enterprise was executive ability. An engineer was not the man for the job. The Canadian Pacific engineer was not at the head of the Grand Trunk; an engineer was not at the head of the Canadian Pacific.

A Misstatement of \$4,000,000. "The acting minister of railways has pointed out what the G. T. P. would have to pay annually, and he put the figure at \$2,000,000. He said that he had to have to pay this on \$228,000,000. It could not operate the railway at a profit because of the increase in carrying charges. The G. T. P. does not pay interest on its bonds. It has a term on \$228,000,000, but upon the outside, \$181,000,000. Will any member on the government side dare to challenge the responsibility of the minister?

Dealing with the western division of the N. T. R. from Winnipeg to Prince Rupert, Dr. Reid said that on the prairie section of 915 miles the expenditure had been \$40,000,000. On the mountain section the line had been completed to Fort George, a distance of 269 miles from the end of the prairie section. There was a gap of 128 miles between Fort George and Prince Rupert, on which rail-laying was now in progress. From Wordsworth to Prince Rupert steel had been laid.

"It is fully expected," said Dr. Reid, "that by the month of June next all track-laying will be fully completed and that a transcontinental train can leave Quebec and proceed through Prince Rupert. A total of 1,279 miles out of the entire 1,796 west of Winnipeg is now open for public traffic."

Turning to a resume of the year on the government railways, Dr. Reid noted that the increase in freight rates on the Intercolonial had been under consideration for some time previous to the retirement of the former board of management appointed under the late government by the department.

Turning to the reasons making this necessary, Dr. Reid noted that the maritime companies had advanced their prices on coal to the C. P. R. sufficiently to compel an increased expenditure of \$800,000 for fuel. The salary increases granted to the I. C. R. employees, putting them on the same basis as employees on other railways in Canada, meant an increase in operating expenses of about \$925,000 per annum.

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Mr. Graham, "but I do not think the government can be so much as a few hours to deal with what it took their hired men two years to concoct."

Dealing with the charges concerning grading, Mr. Graham again quoted Mr. Berry in justification of the course of the former administration. He also quoted Elliott Cooper, president of the British Institute of Civil Engineers, of London, England, who came to Canada to examine the new transcontinental and reported upon this matter that the grading had enormous economic advantage.

Dealing with the question of the entrance into Winnipeg and the Transcona shops, Mr. Graham declared that Mr. Staunton had declared cost upwards of \$8,000,000 more than was necessary. Mr. Graham noted that the commissioners had estimated the cost of the shops at \$1,000,000. He said that the cost of the shops was \$1,000,000.

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