

846. Are you merely a recording clerk for Mr. Blow, or did you find the figures out for yourself?—No. I am corresponding clerk in the next office to him.

847. That series of figures were dictated to you, or had you to rummage in the books?—Oh, they were dictated to me.

848. You had nothing to do with the task of compiling them?—No.

849. You merely recorded what was told you?—Yes.

850. Who told you?—It was between Mr. Blow and Mr. Clapham. Whether Mr. Blow told me them all I am not quite sure.

851. You recorded them?—I put them down.

852. *Hon. Mr. Seddon.*] I did not give you any figures?—No, sir.

853. *Mr. Wright.*] You feel satisfied that these figures were dictated either by Mr. Clapham or Mr. Blow?—Yes, I feel satisfied of that.

854. So that if Mr. Clapham says he knows nothing about them, then it must be Mr. Blow.

*The Chairman:* I cannot allow that question.

855. *Mr. G. Hutchison.*] Can you say how long ago it is that you put these figures down?—No, I cannot say exactly how long ago.

856. Twelve months ago would it be?—It is about that, most likely.

857. Have you ever seen the paper from that day to this?—No; I have not.

858. How many years have you been in the Government service?—About fourteen months.

859. Then you were there two months or so when you put these figures down?—Yes; most likely two months.

860. About that?—Yes; that is, as far as I know.

861. *Mr. Guinness.*] In whose department or under whose control are you in the Public Works Department?—Mr. Blow's.

862. You are not under Mr. Clapham?—No.

863. Can you tell the Committee under what circumstances or for what purpose these figures were required?—No; I cannot.

864. You have no recollection?—No; I cannot say.

865. You have no idea for what purpose they were required?—I have no idea for what purpose they were required at all. I have nothing to do with figures as a rule.

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WEDNESDAY, 30TH AUGUST, 1893.

Mr. S. COSTALL, re-examined.

866. *Hon. Mr. Seddon.*] By the *Hansard* circulated, it will be found that the corrected figures of the Public Works Statement are therein given. Can you tell the Committee, first, whether any correction has been made, and, secondly, by whom?—There was a correction made, and it was made in an ordinary and simple manner. The *Hansard* report was set from one of the earlier copies, which was cut up, as is usual, into convenient sizes for the compositers. When it was finally read, before being sent to press, it was compared with a complete copy, and that copy happened to be a revised one. The Reader, seeing the discrepancy—he was at the time aware that the Under-Secretary for Public Works had made an alteration—himself corrected the figures accordingly. No one outside of the office was aware of the circumstance, it began and ended with the Reader.

867. Then the slips of that particular part of *Hansard*, and which contained the particular part of the Public Works Statement, was not sent to me at all?—That I cannot say, Mr. Seddon.

868. Would they be sent in the ordinary way?—Yes, they would.

869. And they would be returned in the ordinary way?—They would.

870. And returned unaltered by me?—And returned unaltered. There can be no doubt about that.

871. *Mr. Guinness.*] Or not returned at all?—Or probably not returned at all. In that case we should proceed, and go to press. It would be exceedingly improbable that the Financial Statement or the Public Works Statement would be read by the author. The sending of the *Hansard* slips would be a mere matter of form.

872. What is the name of the Reader?—Mr. Henley.

873. *Mr. Tanner.*] Did Mr. Henley bring the fact of this discrepancy before any other person in the office? You stated this alteration of *Hansard* began and ended with the Reader?—No; he did not.

874. *Mr. Wright.*] One further question, in justice to the Reader. He was doubtless aware that the Public Works Statement had been corrected?—Yes. I stated just now he was aware of it.

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