

alterations I have had to make, for which I had to tax my memory. Every man has to do it, and I suppose it was in contemplation of that fact that the statement was submitted to me for correction. I say again, as a statement of the case it is absolutely correct—not as full as I made it in some cases, but as full as the shorthand-writer could take it. I was subjected to a great many interruptions, and I have had to mark out a portion which was a jumble. I cannot say whether I am right in that instance or the shorthand-writer; nor can any one else—it is impossible.

Mr. Miles: It seems to me, Mr. Chairman, that the charges we have to deal with are of such a character that—

Mr. O'Connor: Excuse me, you refer to the statement as charges. That statement is not the charges. The charges have been in the possession of the directors for about three months, and were handed to the directors on last Friday week, I think. That is my statement—it is not evidence; it is my statement pure and simple. I am not aware that the committee have been taking any evidence yet whatever before the inquiry. I am quite willing that any evidence taken shall be put into the possession of the directors, but it must first be in the possession of the committee of inquiry before going into theirs and be accepted by them. I object to my evidence that I proposed to bring before the inquiry as a statement being put into their hands before those of the committee.

Mr. Miles: I want to put this question very clearly to Mr. O'Connor: Do you say that all the charges contained in this statement are true?

Mr. O'Connor: You will have to indicate what portion of the statement you refer to. That is the report of the shorthand-writer, and communicated to the committee as such. You ask me about any particular part.

Mr. Miles: I am going to ask you in my own way, and you can decline to answer or not. You seem to want the questions put in your way. Do you say that all the charges contained in this statement, to which your certificate is attached, are true?

Mr. O'Connor: Yes. Do you want any more than that?

Mr. Miles: No, sir.

Mr. Greenland: No. 6 of the paragraphs in Mr. Macarthy's statement on Wednesday night says, "In order to enable the committee to report on the general management, accounts, and affairs of the company from its incorporation, we propose to submit to their notice the minute-books, and other books, vouchers, and documents, and such other evidence and witnesses as we may deem necessary." I wish to say on this that we have got everything we could possibly have to go on with the inquiry. It is simply absurd to stay here from day to day like we are doing now. We are not holding an inquiry at all. All the evidence is in these circulars and books, and the books, according to Mr. Macarthy's own statement, are here to enable the committee to report. Why wait any longer? Why not go on with the inquiry to see if Mr. O'Connor's statements are correct?

Mr. O'Connor [to Mr. Macdonald]: You said, in the course of your remarks, that a copy of the extracts from the books was to be taken for greater expedition, according to my letter. I demurred to that statement, and I asked you to read the letter, which you have not done. It does not tally with what you have stated. I ask now that the letter be read and placed on record.

Mr. Macdonald: Your letter is not here, and cannot be read.

Mr. O'Connor: Well, I say that letter pointed out to the committee the unfairness of having my evidence—the evidence I proposed to take—extracted and not furnished to me. I was promised a copy of these references. It was proposed, according to the statement of Mr. Macarthy and a director of the company, that a copy of the books and papers should be given by them, but, far from it being given by them, they have offered every obstruction possible and caused every delay they could to prevent them being obtained and the inquiry going on. My claim in that letter, I repeat again, was to be supplied, and in accordance with the claim of that letter I have been supplied, and I have to thank the committee for their kindness in doing so. Mr. Macdonald said that when a witness in Court makes a statement it is signed by him, but Mr. Macdonald has not added, what he must know to be the case, that that statement is taken in longhand word for word as he makes it, read over to him, and signed or not, as he may think proper. My statement was not, and has been declared by me not to be, a statement of evidence, but an elaboration, or, as it would be called in a Court of law, the statement of the counsel. No instance can be produced of such a statement made in a Court of law ever being signed by counsel or taken as evidence, or handed by the Court to the opposite side before the case would be gone on with. The committee has no right to provide the directors with any copy of evidence except that from day to day as given. Up to the present time no evidence has been taken, except some documents of my own which I handed in, and which have been handed over to the directors. I protest against that. I say that this inquiry ought to keep their records safe from the other side. He has stated that I was to provide my statement, and, after correction, to sign the shorthand-writer's notes thereon. I have corrected that to the best of my ability, and I have signed it; but the charges have been in the hands of the directors for three months, and have again been put into their hands, as I have before stated, last Friday week.

Mr. Macdonald: Mr. O'Connor, we need not indulge in hair-splitting and technicalities. We have had it that your statements in the report—in reply to Mr. Miles—are correct, and you rely upon them.

Mr. O'Connor: I did not say I rely upon them.

Mr. Macdonald: To be exact, you have said they are correct. There is a graver matter than that to be dealt with, and it is this: that you have obtained possession of certain documents and records from the clerks of the committee, and I ask you now whether you are prepared to hand over to the committee those copies and records—

Mr. O'Connor: I refer you to the two letters as a contradiction of your statement.