

Penna. Capitol Contractors Charged What They Pleased.

MISSING ARTICLES PAID FOR

Harrisburg, June 15.—How John H. Sanderson collected \$5,000,000 from the state for furnishing and equipping the new capitol under his "per foot" and "per pound" contract with the board of public grounds and buildings was told to the investigation commission in the report of the Audit Company of New York, presented through James Cameron, the chief auditor.

The auditors found that what was known as a "quantity book" was used as a basis for making out bills for articles as well as furnishing them, the schedule upon which the contract was awarded to Sanderson being apparently disregarded in favor of the compilation of quantities made up by Architect Joseph M. Huston and approved by James M. Shumaker, who was superintendent of grounds and buildings during the building and furnishing of the capitol.

Mr. Cameron said that in making the audit he had not gone by the "quantity book" at all, as from the records the contracts were based on the schedule. But the "quantity book" was what Sanderson went by and afforded him the means to make his enormous charges.

Overcharges running into hundreds of thousands of dollars were shown by the auditors to have taken place under the arbitrary fixing of prices by Sanderson. Mention was also made of pen and ink interlineations in the "quantity book" on which large orders to Sanderson were based. It was also brought out that in the case of carpet some one had marked out "yards" and inserted "feet" in red ink in this book.

The report recommends that Shumaker be asked to explain the absence of certain articles, among them window seats, for which the state paid Sanderson, and which the auditors were unable to locate. It was suggested that Shumaker be asked to tell the whereabouts of mirrors which he had certified as having been delivered in good condition while he was superintendent.

The report also brought out these facts: The painting as done by Sanderson cost the state \$924,500 more than it would have cost if the contract had been awarded to John Gibson, the lowest bidder.

Mahogany on walls cost \$880,000 and should have been furnished by George F. Payne & Company, under their original contract for the construction of the capitol.

Sanderson was allowed to get in on Payne's contract for parquetry flooring under an order from Huston, and did \$45,000 worth of work before he was stopped. Payne collected \$114,534.50, in addition to being paid for a yellow pine floor under his original contract.

No known method by which designed marble was measured and for which Sanderson was paid \$219,500 at the rate of \$15.49 "per foot."

Sanderson collected \$575,005.40 for "designed" furniture, one invoice for \$618,840.40 being paid for without affidavit as to correctness being required.

Overcharge of \$83,000 on desks, as they were furnished under one item when they could have been charged under another.

Sanderson also bid by the piece for the furniture and other supplies, but he was paid by the "per foot" and "per pound" rule.

Ornamental desks for heads of departments cost the state \$38, while Sanderson collected \$610 each for plain desks supplied to subordinates. Loss to the state on desks through this measurement \$132,322.50.

The "quantity" book called for 60 desks more than were invoiced. In other words the state paid for this number of desks that it did not receive.

Sanderson collected \$222,095.50 for 3054 chairs under the "per foot" rule, an overcharge of \$70.25 per chair, or \$214,592.75 in the aggregate. The "quantity" book called for 438 chairs that were not invoiced.

An overcharge of \$46,172.30 on tables for which Sanderson collected \$31,241.

The quantity plans and "quantity book" called for many items which have never been invoiced, and include many other items similar to those which have been invoiced or which have been invoiced only in part. These items alone at average weight or measurement charged by the contractor and at the unit price called for by the "quantity book" for the respective articles or work amount to approximately \$2,700,000. The report says in conclusion:

"It is evident on the face of the records that other claims for restitution of an identical nature can be made, and we further recommend a general audit of the accounts of all contractors in the department of the auditor general covering that period at least wherein a reclaim might not be defeated by the statute of limitation."

The report also states that the quantities as placed by the "quantity book" rule the items painting and decorating, designed bronze metal for gas and electric fixtures, etc., and designed special finished white metal gas and electric fixtures, were contemplated at the time of the award of the schedule. Sanderson's bid exceeded that of the lowest bidder by \$1,922,092.75.

After Mr. Cameron had finished the reading of the report, Sterling H. Thomas, a representative of the American Car & Foundry company, of Wilmington, Del., was called. He testified that his firm had furnished Payne wainscoting for the attic for \$8000, and that Payne had secured some of its office stationery and made out a bill to the state for \$16,000. Sanderson collected from the state \$545,136.80 for cabinet work, which had been furnished to him by the Wilmington concern for \$86,073.

CAUGHT SCANNING BOOKS

Former Penna. Treasurer Mathues Surprised in Midnight Visit to Capitol. Harrisburg, Pa., June 14.—A sensation was caused here by the discovery that William L. Mathues, a former state treasurer, who figures in the new capitol scandal, was detected at work on the books of the treasury department at midnight Wednesday night with one of the clerks of that department and a political lieutenant of Mathues from one of the other departments. The discovery was made

by Patrick McGrann, a clerk under Berry in the treasury. McGrann said he heard John E. Stott, a clerk in the auditor general's department, tell George F. Young, of Gettysburg, a clerk in the treasury, who was originally appointed by Mathues, that he should be around, "for we are going to pull off a job."

McGrann says the perspiration rolled from the face of Mathues, who had presence of mind enough to offer the him and his associates a cigar and shake hands with them. Mathues, Young and Willis left the department soon after. Young was immediately discharged.

When seen Mr. Mathues declared: "Yes, it's so. I was in the treasury department with Mr. Young. I had met him on the street, and asked him how he was getting along under Mr. Berry. He said, 'first class.' Then he took me into the treasury to show me some of the books that he had kept. That's all. I had no evil intentions."

There are no indications that the books had been tampered with.

MIDDIES' BODIES FOUND

Three Victims of Launch Disaster Discovered in Chesapeake Bay.

Newport News, Va., June 18.—Clad in full naval uniforms and with face and hands fearfully mutilated, the bodies of Midshipmen P. H. Field, Virginia, class 1906; W. H. Stevenson, North Carolina, class 1907, and F. P. Holcomb, Delaware, class 1907, were found in Chesapeake bay. The bodies, after being examined and identified, were taken by the naval tug Potomac to the naval hospital at Portsmouth.

All the vessels of the fleet have their flags at half-mast. The bodies of four of the 11 men drowned in the Minnesota's launch a week ago have now been found. The one discovered in the launch was that of a fireman, G. W. Westfall. The bodies of three midshipmen and four seamen are still missing and launches and tugs are still searching the lower bay and roads for them.

On account of the fact that the bodies found had drifted 10 or 12 miles from the scene of the tragedy gives rise to a fear that all of them will never be found. Others may be picked up in the bay, but the body of Midshipman Holcomb was drifting rapidly seaward when it was found, and some of the others may have been carried past the capes into the Atlantic ocean. The identification of the corpses was confirmed on board the Minnesota.

THE DUMA DISSOLVED

Second Russian Parliament Comes to Sudden End.

St. Petersburg, June 17.—Emperor Nicholas affixed his signature to an imperial ukase abolishing the present duma and ordering that the elections of members to its successor, which is to meet November 14, be held under the new election law, which provides against the "submergence of the educated classes by the uneducated masses."

This act constitutes a virtual coup d'etat, and overrides the specific provisions of the fundamental laws of the realm, solemnly proclaimed by his majesty on the eve of the convocation of the first duma, which declared that the electoral law could never be changed without the consent of parliament itself.

The dissolution of the second duma was received throughout St. Petersburg with perfect tranquility, thanks to the precautionary measures, and in no place in Russia, so far as is known, were there any serious disturbances.

MAYOR SCHMITZ OUSTED

Removed From Office By San Francisco Supervisors.

San Francisco, June 18. — Mayor Schmitz was formally removed from office by the supervisors. Supervisor James Gallagher was named as acting mayor in his place.

This is the first step taken by the graft prosecution in the execution of the plan to restore good government in San Francisco. The ground on which Mayor Schmitz was removed is that, owing to his incarceration in the county jail following his conviction on a felony charge, he is no longer able to perform his official duties.

THE ROPE BROKE

Half-Dead Negro Was Quickly Placed on Scaffold Second Time.

Roanoke, Va., June 15.—John Hardy, a negro, who shot and killed Police Officer Robert M. Beard, last October, was hanged in the Roanoke jail yard. The rope broke, when Hardy shot through the trap and he rolled over on the ground, half choking. He was again placed on the scaffold, and the second drop broke his neck. He was pronounced dead in five minutes.

Beard and other policemen were searching the Allegheny Institute for thieves when Hardy shot him.

Shot Wife and Called Police.

Buffalo, June 17.—Frank E. Jackson walked up to the door of his house and rapped. His wife opened the door and Jackson stepped inside. Then he shot the woman three times and she fell dead at his feet. Locking the doors to the room in which the murder occurred, so his little children could not come upon their mother's body, Jackson went to a neighbor's house and telephoned to the police that there was trouble at his house. Then he walked out to meet the officers and gave himself up. They had been quarreling.

Duchess of Roxburgh Robbed.

London, June 18. — The Dowager Duchess of Roxburgh had a jewel case containing gems valued at many thousand of dollars stolen from her during a railway journey from London to Doncaster.

Artificial Marble.

The lack of marble in Denmark has led to many attempts to produce a substitution which would equal in decorative effect the natural product, and would not exceed it in cost.

Some success has been achieved in the manufacture of this article in Sweden, but the thin slabs would not keep their shape, inclining to bend and warp. The veins were stiff and angular, and the soft transitions of color which make variegated marble a thing of beauty were wanting.

A significant advance has been made in this industry by a Danish master builder who is producing a stone of such delicate transition of tints and play of color that it is impossible to distinguish it from the real product; while as to cost of manufacture, it can compete with all other artificial marbles.

The inconvenience hitherto met with, that the mass had to be greased to prevent adhesion (thereby destroying the crystalline surface characteristic of the genuine article), has been overcome.

The process of manufacture is simple and easily learned, and the cost of the outfit does not exceed \$175. The article can be produced in any form—columns, plain or fluted, and capital—as readily as flat slabs.

It is claimed that even pictures may be made of this material. It seems to have the durability of genuine marble, but its cost is only one-tenth as much. At the present state of the development of the industry the maker is able to produce a slab about one-inch in thickness at about 14 cents per square foot. The inventor's name is Solingard.

Ants as Pests of Rabbits.

The most curious plan yet proposed for combating the rabbit pest in Australia is the employment of ants, which was recently advocated in the Journal of the Department of Agriculture for Western Australia.

As is known generally, the rabbit has multiplied in parts of Australia almost beyond man's comprehension so that it is difficult to raise many crops and resort must be had to rabbit-proof fencing, poisoning, etc.

It is now proposed to introduce from South America a red ant which is not afraid to attack living animals, especially the very young. Just now a large number of these ants are under observation in their native habitat for the purpose of definitely establishing their feeding habits so that no mistake will be made in their introduction.

It is just possible it will be found that their carnivorous appetites may lead them to attack domestic animals, in which case, should they obtain a foothold, the proposed remedy would doubtless be worse than the disease.

"Don't let the gallery cause you to lose your temper," cautioned the old actor.

"Why not?" "Whom the gods will destroy they first make mad."

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