

IF HE CUTS HIS BID

Then Mr. Wakefield Will Get Drydock Contract.

HE REFUSES TO LOP OFF \$5000

Board Decides Once to Make Award to Him, but Reconsiders, and Will Probably Take Final Action Today.

For one brief moment yesterday afternoon the contract for the construction of the sectional drydock for the Port of Portland was in the hands of Robert Wakefield, president of the Portland Bridge & Building Company. But just when Mr. Wakefield's grasp upon the much-sought-for plum appeared to be secure, it was suddenly torn from him and was laid over until 2 P. M. today for him and others to again complete for. The failure of Wakefield to land the prize was due to his fecklessness. He had offered a double set of figures, and although they were the lowest, the board wanted him to make a cut, but he would not yield a single dollar.

"It is optional with the board to let this contract," was in part the substance of its ultimatum. "You may do as you please. My bid of \$100,000 for the short timbers is the lowest that you have. For long timbers, if you want them, I will charge \$500 extra. Yes, my price for long timbers is high, but I shall not reduce it."

All the trouble attending the awarding of the contract was sudden and unexpected. When the meeting was called to order, with President Bantfield and Messrs. Adams, McCracken and Kelly in the chairs, and Consulting Engineer Blackwell and the bidders and their representatives looking on, a solution of the drydock problem appeared to be in sight. A call for bids was made, and the figures were opened and found to be as follows:

J. E. Bennett	\$102,500
Portland Shipbuilding Company	\$100,000
N. J. Elgren	\$100,000
R. Wakefield	\$100,000
Joseph Paquet	\$114,500
E. B. Blackwell	\$115,000
Brigham & Haskell, Seattle	\$115,000

All the bids provided for the construction of the drydock within 12 months from the date of the signing of the contract, excepting that of Paquet, which asked for an extra year. When the bids were opened, the board decided to award the contract to the lowest bidder, but the board was divided, and the matter was referred to a committee.

The committee reported that the figure of \$100,000 of Brigham & Haskell to that of \$100,000 of Blackwell, Wakefield's figure was \$500. When the figure was made known, the bidders took their departure and the board settled down to business. All the bids were referred to Mr. Blackwell for tabulation, and he retired to another room. Then another phase was added to the question. A letter was received from Fisher, Du Paur & Donnelly, of New York, indicating another figure from James H. Macklin, attorney for F. C. Lang, patentee of a sectional drydock. It stated that the attorney had been advised that the commission was about to construct a dock which would infringe upon the patent of F. C. Lang.

The attorney had been instructed to give notice that if an attempt to construct a dock which would constitute an infringement upon Lang's patent was begun, restraining proceedings would be begun. The Donnelly letter stated that the Macklin commission might be taken as legal notice that an action would be begun if the contract were let under the plans and specifications submitted for bids.

Like all Donnelly's letters, the two letters were placed on file. When the letter had been laid aside, Mr. Blackwell appeared with his report. Wakefield's bid of \$100,000 was the lowest, and he recommended that it be accepted, and on motion of Mr. Kelly this was done.

The bill contained a provision for top timbers. Mr. Blackwell said that the lengths, the timbers to be from 72 to 90 feet in length. Such timbers would strengthen the dock, but he thought the figure named—\$500 too high. In his opinion \$200 was enough to allow for long timbers. Commissioner Swigert, who was unable to be present, was called up by telephone, and he took the same view. The contract having been read, there seemed to be a question as to future action.

"The bid is the lowest; what will you do?" inquired Mr. Blackwell. "We will have the long timbers for \$100,000," answered President Bantfield. There was a question as to how to proceed in the matter, and Mr. Wakefield, who has a neighboring office, was called in.

"We think that bid of \$100,000 is out of proportion," said the president to him as he entered the room. "No, the bid for the dock is out of proportion," coolly answered Wakefield. "I will go ahead with the work without the extra \$5000," was the next inquiry.

"No, sir; I will not," with the dignity of a man who refuses to be underpaid for his services. In reply to further questions Mr. Wakefield said he would build the dock with short timbers, just as the bid read. "It is optional with the board to accept or reject the bid," he continued, nonchalantly. "I had no object in asking the extra \$5000 excepted that I want it."

"But this is a public matter," interjected Mr. Adams. "We have been good to the public," answered Wakefield. "Now," he went on, "long sticks cause us a whole lot of trouble. We have to skid them for them, and to get them causes delay. We have no trouble to get short sticks—in fact, we are buried with them; but we find long ones missing. The material with which we can work most economically is that which we can get most readily."

"Could you not place orders for the long timbers here?" was asked. "Yes, but we will always find ourselves lacking. The fault is not with the mills, but with the loggers."

That ended the colloquy for a time. Mr. Wakefield stepped back and listened to some gratuitous advice that he reduce his figures, but he shook his head negatively. "Not I," were the only words he was heard to utter. The four Commissioners got together in a whispered consultation, and finally Wakefield was called forward. The tenor of a whispered conversation with President Bantfield was soon received, for Wakefield leaned back in his chair, shook his head and said loudly, slowly and firmly: "No, no! If I had nothing else to do, I would not be able to make my living out of the business of that dock. The price of \$100,000 is very low for its construction. There is a legitimate difference between the figures of \$100,000, but that is for my trouble in getting the long sticks. Those sticks are worth about \$1500."

"A dock built of long sticks," he continued, after a pause, "would be worth \$200,000. But I want to build that dock, and that is why I made the figures of \$100,000."

"Well," observed Mr. Kelly, "Mr. Wakefield is the lowest responsible bidder, and is entitled to the contract." Everybody looked at Mr. Kelly except Mr. Wakefield, who learned carefully back in his chair. For a second it looked as if the award of the board would stand, but suddenly a motion was made to reconsider the vote by which the contract had been let, and it went through unanimously. The matter then went over until

OREGON MAN IN CHILE.

American Vice-Consul at Iquique on a Visit to Portland.

Edward E. Muecke, a prominent young business man of Iquique, Chile, is spending a few weeks in Oregon, visiting his parents at Aurora. Mr. Muecke, once lived at Aurora, where he was engaged in the general merchandise business, but being anxious to see something of the world, he went to South America to seek a fortune. He left Oregon some seven years ago, and, after traveling through Chile, settled at Iquique, a seaport town in the southern part of the country. Here he built up an extensive business, and is today one of the most influential men in Southern Chile. He is American Vice-Consul at Iquique, and is resident agent for several German steamship lines and a number of large American concerns. Iquique, a city of 20,000 inhabitants, is famous as a nitrate center. The nitrate mines, which are located a few miles from the city, produce annually about 3,500,000 pounds of nitrate, which is shipped to foreign countries for use. Mr. Muecke was in the city yesterday, and was seen by an Oregonian representative, said:

"The isthmian canal problem is of great interest to the western coast of South America, as the completion of such a canal will give us direct connection with the markets of the world, enabling us to reach the seaports of North America and Europe in less than one-half of the time now required. All along the Pacific coast of South America is heard a demand for the canal, the Panama route being the favorite. On my way to Oregon I came by way of the isthmus and New York, the trip requiring more than three weeks, passed directly over the half-finished canal on the isthmus, and saw the ruins of thousands of dollars worth of machinery. It will take a great deal of money to finish that canal, but the investment will prove a profitable one, and a benefit to the whole Western Hemisphere. I will take any ambitious man who goes to South America, as there is plenty of money there for those who are willing to work and abandon the blessings of dear old America."

Mr. Muecke is a native of Oregon, and was born in the city of Portland. He is a graduate of the University of Oregon, and has been in the city of Iquique for several years. He is a member of the Chamber of Commerce of Iquique, and is a prominent citizen of the city.

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VICTIM OF THE LOCK TRICK

"CAN I OPEN IT? JUST WATCH ME," SAYS C. W. HAMMER.

He Bets Steerer \$100—Then a Bunch of Policemen Appears and Gets \$300 Hush Money.

Three bunches men cleverly worked the scheme known as "the lock trick" on an unsophisticated native of Iowa, C. W. Hammer, yesterday, in the City Park. Hammer, a business man of about 30 years old, and he left his home in Iowa a few days ago to take a trip to Seattle. On board the train he met two strange men, who told him that his trip to the Pacific Coast would be incomplete if he did not stop at least several hours at Portland. The men, from their conversation at least, professed to know everybody worth knowing in this city, and they talked about the natural beauties of the place with the skill of a land agent.

There must have been a third bunch man on the train who did not reveal himself to Hammer, and the latter was carefully attended to by the two steerers. They realized that there was probably no chance of their fleeing their victim on the train, so they waited until they got to Portland. They had hardly set foot in this city when they began to complain of feeling a thirst that had to be attended to, and Hammer was used as a good thing to buy beer. Still, he did not think he was being tricked for a purpose. His new acquaintances told him that the City Park was the spot where the crowd could obtain the best and only view of mountains and river, and Hammer decided to go there. The party sat down on the cool grass and talked about the various cities they had seen on their tour, when suddenly one of the two steerers said: "Hullo! look at that funny-looking lock."

"Where?" innocently said Steerer No. 2. "Here," said his confederate, reaching over the grass and putting out a door lock.

"Open the affair," said No. 2 man. "But you \$100 you can't open it," said No. 1, looking at Hammer. The latter flushed, but was game, and the three were in the midst of a loud dispute as to the details of this bet, when a serious-looking man, dressed in citizens' clothes, suddenly walked among them and said, in severe tones: "I've heard what the fellow has been proposing to gamble and bet in the public park, pointing to the unhappy Hammer. 'Now,' said the guardian of the peace, speaking in a confidential tone of voice, 'do what I say, and you'll be all right. But the thing can be fixed. If any of you have any money, give me \$30 and I'll not arrest you. But if you don't do what I say, I'm an officer and I'll stand no nonsense,' and the bogus policeman dramatically opened his coat and showed what appeared to be his official star. The three men lying on the grass held their breath, and of course Hammer was the only one who had any money, and he handed over the \$300, amounting to \$30 and gave it to the 'policeman.'"

"That's right," said the bribe-taker. "Now, I'll tell you what I'll do with your fellows. No more betting or gambling. Each one must go in a different direction, and right now. If that don't go with you, why, you'll all be arrested, and away he strode with his gun."

Hammer's two friends fled and left him to his own reflections, but the more Hammer thought about the strange adventure the more he was disgusted, and the suspicion arose. Had he been duped? Hammer immediately interviewed the Chief of Police, and was beginning to read that astonished official a lecture concerning municipal corruption in the city, when the Chief said that all policemen in the City of Portland wear uniforms, and that there were no policemen on duty at the City Park. The victim took the train last night for Seattle, feeling that some one had fooled him badly.

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Meier & Frank Company

Trunk, Traveling Bags, Suit Cases, Telescopes, etc., at very lowest prices—(Third floor).

Store Open Tonight Until 9:30 Usual Concert on the Third Floor

Stationery Bargains



More bargains in Summer Stationery—Thousands of boxes of new writing materials have just come to hand—We offer for today six important values.

500 boxes cream satin-wove Paper, with envelopes to match, bargain 7c box

300 boxes cream satin finish Paper, with envelopes to match, 15c value 9c box

500 boxes real Linen Paper, with envelopes to match, big value 19c box

Roxboro Tablets, 60 sheets fine cream satin finish Paper, letter size, 25c value 18c each

Orgon Souvenir Tablets, 25c value 15c each

Kodak Albums, 4x5, at 9c each

Children's Department



Two very inviting values in Children's Summer Suits, suitable for dres or vacation use—Extremely low prices on the following:

Children's Percal Sailor Suits, plain colors and stripes, neatly made and trimmed, all ages, \$1.50 and \$1.75 values at \$1.12

Children's high-class Sailor Suits, splendid style in galateas, French percales and linens, all our best novelties, this season's dresses, \$4.50 values at \$3.45

Children's Gingham Aprons low priced—(Second floor).

Handkerchiefs

Saturday bargains in Ladies' Handkerchiefs.

Shirtwaist Handkerchiefs, colored borders and colored embroidered borders, fine quality, 25c value 17c each

Ladies' Swiss Embroidered Handkerchiefs in dainty patterns, 25c quality 18c each

All our fine Chiffon Veilings greatly reduced.

Satin Taffeta

Ribbons

3 1/2-inch Satin Taffeta Ribbon, superior quality in lavender, white, cream, maize light blue, pink and black. An opportunity to buy neck ribbon for a long time to come at a big saving—35c and 40c quality 27c yard

Best quality Japanese corded wash silks, per yard 39c

Outing

Goods

All our \$3 Hammocks, full size, close woven, with stationary or loose pillow, head and foot spreaders \$2.39